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# Your Say

YOUR VOICE IN THE TERRITORY

EDITORIAL

NT News

## Alice warnings over the top

IT'S unfair to single out Alice Springs as a holiday destination tourists should avoid.

The report in today's paper that foreign travel advisories are warning against visiting Alice Springs points to a spate of tragedies involving international travellers.

It is ridiculous to target the town because two elderly tourists sadly perish in the heat in terrain and conditions they were unfamiliar with. It is also wrong to blame Alice Springs because people from other Australian states have travelled to the Territory to carry out murderous crimes. As for warnings not to hitchhike because of the threat of rapes, the same warnings could be issued for Queensland and South Australia where horrific incidents against foreign backpackers are currently before the public eye right now.

The reality is it doesn't matter where you travel you need to be aware of the environment you are in and the precautions you need to take. You can be anywhere overseas and the same applies. And even if you are aware there is no guarantee you are safe. The murder of Alice Springs family man Kevin Reid in Savannah Georgia is a tragic reminder of that.

In Australia, go to Sydney and you'll be told to be wary of Kings Cross, in Adelaide it's Hindley St, in Brisbane it's Fortitude Valley, in Melbourne it's just about anywhere these days and in Perth you could just die of boredom.

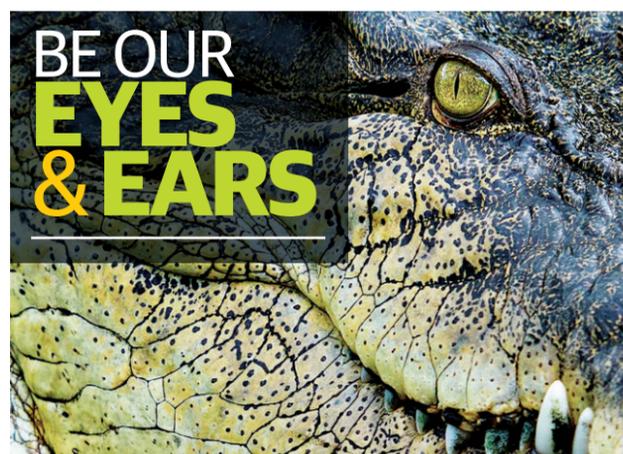
Alice Springs mayor Damien Ryan is right, the town doesn't suffer crime any different to other areas of the country. Alice just happens to be in the remote centre of Australia where its isolation paints a false picture of danger. The truth is Alice is a great place and to pluck out 10 year's worth of tourism statistics and say a drop in international visitors is because the town has a dangerous reputation is just plain wrong.

## ... and another thing

CASHLESS welfare has been controversial ever since trials began. Critics claim it robs vulnerable people of the right to spend money however they want, while supporters claim it stops people spending welfare money on grog and gambling.

It is encouraging to hear trials interstate have been a success. Like anything, there will be those who try to rot the system.

But it's important to remember that the focus of the welfare system should be to get people back to work.



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## Letters

### Tragic incident

AS the mother of a 15-year-old daughter that has lived in the rural area of Darwin for over 20 years, I was very upset to hear of the two boys killed in the rural area recently.

I can't express how sad I feel for the families of these dear boys whose lives did not deserve to be ended like this, nor did the driver of the car deserve this.

I am disappointed by the lack of coverage by the NT News on this. For me, this event has devastated so many people in our community.

That was not reflected in the news after the incident on Saturday or Sunday night, in TV or in the paper.

There was more coverage of interstate news that doesn't directly affect us.

I understand that the families of these boys require privacy but I feel that this story deserved more coverage in regards to its effect on the Darwin community.

It is utterly devastating and saddening for so many and I can only send my love and condolences to the families of these dear boys.

**Britt**

### Costly blunder

DAN Murphy is an absurd decision, and the sooner it is reversed, the better, so that the real evils can be tackled.

It is extraordinarily ironical

■ The Territory is saturated with alcohol outlets, and there is absolutely no doubt that alcohol abuse is causing so much harm, that it does deserve primary attention from government. But not like this! — SEE BELOW

that the Chief Minister, Michael Gunner, is facing his biggest test so far over one of the simplest issues in logic, the ban on building a liquor store of over 400sq m.

What has size got to do with it?

Outlet numbers and other cultural matters are the real culprits. The government has thrown its credibility away on the ridiculous basis of the size of a store to minimise harm caused by alcohol.

The argument is absolutely fallacious, but the intent to minimise harm, is too true. Give them that.

The Territory is saturated with alcohol outlets, and there is absolutely no doubt that alcohol abuse is causing so much harm, that it does deserve priority attention from government. But not like this!

This is the wrong way.

Michael Gunner does not understand what he has perpetuated, entrenching difficulties of alcohol harm-minimisation. How? That it will be harder now, because of this furore, for a start, to buy back takeaway outlets and drive-in liquor licenses.

They proliferate in a plethora of outlets in every suburb and supermarket. This should be one plank of a raft of policy

initiatives in identified areas the NTG could have developed thinking the issues through.

Now this avenue is prejudiced. Just one example: You think Woolworths, owners of Dan Murphy, and other supermarkets care about harm minimisation? They supply the overall market for the sake of profits.

They sell to the greater responsible consumer population, and have a limited range, hence DM (Woolies). But they do sell cheap plonk too...

The NTG now have a de facto mandate to bring back the Banned Drinkers Register (BDR), albeit it must be in a form that works!

Community hotels and tavern licenses are no problem, but the applicants always apply for additional takeaway licenses and get them.

That is a problem. Just ask former minister Peter Chandler, when one was granted right next to a special school at Bellamack, last year.

I shared his outrage.

There are 10 outlets within a few kilometres of each other, and that is repeated in other centres. Licensees will now have this contradiction in their favour; their lawyers will be aware of it, and the cost will be

astronomical.

Thanks Michael, or whichever Minister's bubble-thought is responsible for making an example of Dan Murphy's! That's just one ramification of un-thought-out process in an otherwise mundane matter. How many others? Your newspaper editorial of March 9 was spot-on, saying it was policy made on the run. Ah Michael!

**Ted Dunstan, Karama**

### The whole truth

LOVED your story last week on the first Jap caught on Australian soil in Tiwi islands, but only half the story was told.

The Jap went to Cowra Prison Camp who was the same Jap that led the Prison Break sounding his Bugle launching the escape that killed six or seven Australian Soldiers. The Jap was found in the morning dead outside the Camp.

**Brian Nolan, Rapid Creek**

### Trump's cruelty

TRUMP'S latest inhumane executive order on immigration leaves the Manus and Nauru refugees again in limbo.

We cannot leave human beings in indefinite detention.

All politicians need to take responsibility now and empty the camps on Manus and Nauru, bringing these people to safety in Australia.

**Dr Sue Cory, QLD**

## On this day IN THE TERRITORY

**10 YEARS AGO:** A Territory pilot and two passengers walked away from a mangled wreckage unharmed when the helicopter crashed on take off in Central Australia. Pilot Peter Sanders handled the emergency "very well", Arafura Helicopters owner Chris Collins said.

**20 YEARS AGO:** The Territory would fall into line with a national literacy plan because of threatened federal education funding cuts, Education Minister Fred Finch said last night. The scheme was accepted at a Schools Ministers conference held in Canberra yesterday.

**25 YEARS AGO:** Outback singer/songwriter Ted Egan has accused the NT Government of being divisive over the Alice Springs dam issue.