

Bottle attacks on taxis

Missing man found unharmed

By Lauren Vardy

VAPID chatter, the endless, mindless profanity, the stench of alcohol at the end of a drunken night and countless fares where barely a word is traded between the pickup point and the destination; Esperance taxi driver Frank Green has seen the lot.

But it doesn't end there.

Mr Green has worked as a local taxi driver for just over a year and while he loves the job for the people he meets, he says he hates it for the same reason.

In the last fortnight, drunken teenagers have been throwing bottles and cans at taxis passing residential parties and main roads, a move Mr Green says displays not only a poor attitude but a total lack of respect for others and themselves.

His worst nightmare as a driver is hitting a pedestrian - particularly while driving down main roads or outside pubs on a Saturday night, or at suburban house parties where he - like other drivers - finds himself surrounded by intoxicated people with a compromised awareness of their surroundings, desperate for a seat.

"It's a regular occurrence to have people jump out in front of your taxi - in a drunken stupor or as an act of intimidation," Mr Green said.

"It is as though they don't see taxis as a car."

While Mr Green said some passengers are grateful to make it home safely at the end of the night, he cops far more abuse from arrogant, impatient passengers to make it an enjoyable position.

"Some of these children are only 12 and are drinking," he said.

"Where is the parental accountability for their whereabouts?"

"Kids need to show taxi drivers a bit more respect."

"We are only doing our jobs - we get them home safe and the parents should be grateful for that."

"It's as though some kids don't care anymore because a lot of them don't adhere to the rules."

Mr Green said the drivers were often unaware of the impending problem as some passengers are quiet on approach to the taxi but become abusive as soon as the door shuts.

"At this point, service is going to be refused," he said.

Mr Green said the stress associated with the abuse on weekend nights in

particular was major and that the disrespectful patrons were spoiling it for the rest of Esperance.

"People often complain and say that their driver didn't smile a lot," he said.

"But when you see the treatment our drivers are enduring you have to think - what do we have to smile about?"

"Some respect would be good."

On a recent occasion, Mr Green said a passenger in his back seat tried climbing out of the passenger window while the taxi was travelling at 60 kilometres per hour.

"I'm not too fazed by it anymore - I see everything in this job, but the last thing I want to see is anyone getting hurt because of the actions of a few," he said.

A 42-year-old Esperance man who had not been seen since 12.40pm on Tuesday was located safe and unharmed on Wednesday afternoon.

Concerned for his wellbeing, the man's friend contacted police before a bushland search began at 7am on Wednesday.

Police located the man at 1.25pm in the Esperance central business district.

Officers had sought the public's assistance in locating the man and thanked all those whose assistance helped in locating him.

Funds for waste program expansion

By Rex Drabik

THE Esperance Shire Council will have the chance to benefit from an expansion of the Western Australian Transitional E-Waste Program (WATEP), with the announcement of an extra \$200,000 in funding for regional e-waste programs.

The State Government announced earlier this month that it would be expanding WATEP, which supports local government e-waste recycling programs, to include more non-metropolitan councils.

WATEP currently provides funding to 12 local government collection points, seven of which are in the metropolitan area and five in regional areas.

Esperance Shire Council chief executive officer Matthew Scott said the shire was considering WATEP and ways it could expand its current e-waste program.

"We are looking at this grant. We are always looking at new opportunities," Mr Scott said.

"We have taken a very pro-active approach towards e-waste."

"We've implemented our own program without outside funding."

The Shire of Esperance commenced its e-waste recycling program in 2010.

Its current program, a partnership with TechCollect, operates at no cost to the Esperance community or Shire.



WYLIE Bay Waste Facility manager Karen Naylor collects another television as part of the Esperance Shire Council's e-waste program.

Man bailed on driving, assault, damage charges

A MAN who police will allege committed offences including dangerous driving, assault and criminal damage has been bailed to appear in the Esperance Magistrates Court at a future date.

Esperance police sergeant Swadkins said at 8.30pm on Sunday night officers were called to a disturbance on Woods Street in Chadwick.

It will be alleged the man did burnouts and damaged a steel pole before being arrested by police.

He appeared in court on Monday morning before being bailed to a future date.

The man has been charged with one count of dangerous driving, three counts of assault and two counts of criminal damage.

Where did this come from?



A LARGE wooden structure, suspected to be a section of the iconic Tanker Jetty, washed up on the shore of Esperance Bay on Wednesday.

By Lisa Morrison

A LARGE unidentified wooden structure washed up on the shore of Esperance Bay earlier this week.

The sizeable structure consists of two pylons measuring between two and three metres in length and about one metre in diameter, and is located about 200 metres south of the Tanker Jetty.

The pylons are connected by two wooden beams about five metres in length.

Barnacles and seaweed are visible on the object, which was

partially embedded in sand to the right of a group of rocks on Wednesday.

An Esperance resident, who does not wish to be named, alerted the Esperance Express to the item and said it was noticed at 6am on Wednesday by early morning beach walkers.

The resident said the structure was not on the shore on Tuesday morning and could possibly be a piece of the Tanker Jetty that has broken away from the main structure.

Shire of Esperance chief executive officer Matthew Scott said, at the time of this paper going to

print, that he was unaware of the object's origin.

"Shire officers will be inspect the object and investigate its origin," he said.

"If it is confirmed to be a section of the Tanker Jetty, they will assess the implications for the jetty itself."

"Again, the source would need to be determined but it could demonstrate the need for works to be done to the jetty and highlight the reason why the Shire is closing access to the jetty in the interest of public safety during the Esperance foreshore project."

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