

# THE SUNDAY SOAP BOX



## SUNDAY Territorian OUR SAY

### We need to know more on plastics

A SINGLE-USE plastics ban at council events is surely a good thing, but it must come with education.

Yesterday, Parap Market stallholders were still giving away plastic straws, containers, cups and cutlery.

While they may have been getting rid of old stock, it was disappointing to see no informative signs about the ban.

Some market-goers had no idea they should be thinking about bringing their own Tupperware.

And with no enforcement of the ban planned, how can we expect stallholders to want to change to other products?

Darwin council needs to be informative, offering cheap solutions to both marketgoers and stallholders.

Few people will be ethically opposed to sustainable waste, but many will fight against paying more for their laksas.

If we're truly going single-use plastic free, we need to be looking at the alternatives and making sure they're easy and cheap for consumers, particularly for tourists who fill our markets each year and couldn't be expected to know to bring their own.

### WHAT'S THE DEAL?

WHAT'S the deal with the so-called "summer of sport" not coming to the Territory?

The cricket goes to Adelaide, Perth, Melbourne and Sydney and the tennis has satellite games ahead of the Open.

If the sports stars really wanted to show off their

stuff, they'd come and play in the Darwin humidity or the Alice heat.

It'd be a baptism by fire for the European stars and would really make the great players stand out.

Put simply, if you can't play in Territory heat, you're probably not worth watching anyway.

# Driving change

THE Territory's road toll has always been an area of sadness and frustration.

Every road death is one too many and our Northern Territory road deaths almost doubled last year.

But it seems to me that every Monday we pick up the newspaper and discover more fatalities and it seems to me that the largest number are occurring out in the regional areas. I grew up in remote Arnhem Land and have worked with many in indigenous communities, especially around developing different methods to educate. Like those of us who have lived here all our lives, it became apparent to me the problems with literacy and numeracy were touching more than the ability of our indigenous to read and write.

It was overflowing into aspects like learning the ability to drive. It was for this reason I created the DriveAbout app.

DriveAbout is the world's first compliant driver education and test on an app approved by governments in four states. It is the world's most innovative and inclusive solution to teaching and promoting safe road use, regardless of language or literacy. I wanted to go further than online learning as I knew that mobile device take-up meant that desktops and laptops were no longer the devices to reach everyone.

Here in the Territory we have managed to translate the road rules into eight different indigenous languages, complete with the visual displays and soon it will be translated into 10 foreign languages.

We are within months of translating the app into Spanish for its use in Mexico. Our



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indigenous languages cover 80 per cent of Australia's indigenous population.

Through the app we take drivers on a journey from their familiar local roads, along the highway, to a small town or suburb, and into the city, introducing the rules, infrastructure and driving advice relevant to each section of the journey.

loted DriveAbout in Galiwin'ku with outstanding results. It's amazing to watch someone pick it up, watch and hear the rules in their own language, for the first time, then not put it down until all the content is consumed.

The Territory Government released a five-year action plan: 'Towards Zero'. We, like

targeting those with English as a second language and have since gone on to target teenagers who simply don't want to read the Road Users' Handbook.

DriveAbout fulfils the legislative requirements of NT, SA, WA and QLD, and with minimal variation will be nationally consistent.

When we built DriveAbout we initially targeted the learner's licence space with our EdTech solution. Once built we realised that there is something wrong with a system that only tests us on our road-rules ability once in a lifetime.

It has been more than three decades since I sat my road test. Given what is happening with our road toll and the way business is becoming more culpable for their workers' well-being, it might be time to consider making licence refresher testing part of a regular employment routine.

The NT Government has implemented a range of measures to address drink driving and drug driving. However, even with recent advancements in road safety, the fatality rate remains more than three times the national average. With a one and a half-hour DriveAbout training and assessment app based on the NT Road Users' Handbook, we might go some way to addressing some of the fundamentals.

You can access the DriveAbout app for a fee through the App Store and Google Play. We are working with the AANT and the NT Government to make it free to all Territorians.

Clinton Hoffman is the managing director for DriveAbout

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In total, DriveAbout comprises 33 TV-quality animations teaching the competencies required to pass the learner's test. We have incorporated the learner's test and it has the ability to collect test data and deliver it to authorities to show proficiency - when and if they take it up.

We have seen that delivering the Road Users' Handbook in an engaging way provides an accelerated learning experience. In March last year we

it want to reduce road accidents and road deaths. We believe the elephant in the room is 'education' in a way people can easily access, digest, understand visually, and in their learning language, is a big part of the solution. More importantly the education should be at all points through our road user's life.

We targeted road users with poor literacy and numeracy. We did it deliberately because we felt much could be achieved

**TOUCHED BY THE ROAD TOLL** THIS YEAR **0** LAST YEAR **1**