

# Fyles digs in on booze

CRAIG DUNLOP

ATTORNEY-GENERAL Natasha Fyles will ignore independent studies if they show the government's floor price to have failed because of her personal belief it will prove successful.

Ms Fyles yesterday repeatedly said the floor price needed to be given time to show it would work and that it would stay in place even if independent studies due before the

next election showed it to be ineffective.

A government review of the floor price laws is due after the 2020 election.

Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education chief executive Michael Thom last week said independent researchers "won't be waiting around for three years" to see if the \$1.30 per drink floor price

had worked to decrease problem drinking. When asked whether she would repeal the floor price if it proved ineffective, Ms Fyles asked for "any other questions".

Ms Fyles said she "believed" the floor price would prove effective.

When asked why she was acting on her personal beliefs rather than evidence, Ms Fyles

again asked for "any other questions".

Ms Fyles repeated the floor price would only affect cheap alcohol, despite the law's architects warning in a report that a floor price could distort the alcohol market overall and end up "penalising" moderate, responsible drinkers.

Ms Fyles said Opposition Leader Gary Higgins' withdrawal of support for the floor laws was proof he "doesn't support reducing crime in the Northern Territory".

Alcohol-related assaults are up 11.6 per cent year-on-year in Darwin and 16.6 per cent year-on-year in Alice Springs, according to the most recent police data.

"As a community, people

## Attorney-General insists floor price will be beneficial

are sick and tired of dealing with the harm, the crime of alcohol every day," Ms Fyles said.

She said she recently approached Federal Senator Bridget McKenzie about alcohol tax reform but that Ms McKenzie "ruled it out before I could even finish speaking".

Ms Fyles yesterday said the government's next wave of alcohol reforms would go through a parliamentary scrutiny committee, which the floor prices did not.

## Junior jabiru given second shot at life



Ark Animal Hospital's Dr. Stephen Cutter and Dr. Stefan Saverimuttu feed the young jabiru through a tube



### ISABELLA HOOD

STAFF at the Ark Animal Hospital worked around the clock at the weekend to care for an unwell baby jabiru found in a strange city location.

The sickly, dehydrated creature was first discovered sitting motionless on a vacant block of land along Dick Ward Drive and was brought into the hospital by a member of the public on Saturday.

Ark Aid Wildlife Hospital vice-president Andrea Ruske said veterinary staff put the bird on fluids for two days and ensured it was tube-fed three times a day to maximise its chances of survival.

"We fed the jabiru three times a day with a mixture of fish and high-protein dog food," she said.

"Feeding the bird was actually quite challenging as their beaks are very sharp and you need two people to do it - one holding the tube and the other holding the bird."

Once well enough to leave the wildlife hospital, Ms Ruske said the jabiru was collected by a volunteer on Monday who would continue to care for the animal once its health had improved even more.

"It survived the first critical 48 hours, so hopefully it will make a full recovery," she said.

Ms Ruske said this wasn't the first jabiru to be presented at the hospital, with two others admitted in the short space of just six weeks.

"Usually we only see maybe one or two a year, so it's quite unusual that we've had three jabirus in six weeks," Ms Ruske said.