

BENEFIELD, Mark

From: DAVEY, Gary
Sent: Wednesday, 13 April 2016 11:55 a.m.
To: BENEFIELD, Mark

Safer Communities Together

Hi,

"Police not surprised by alcohol-fuelled violence in Auckland CBD"

Auckland City Police say they are disappointed but not surprised at the violence in the CBD over the weekend.

Two people were taken to hospital with serious injuries and two others were arrested following four large-scale fights within the city centre on Saturday night.

Inspector Gary Davey, Auckland District Prevention Manager, said: "Unfortunately, this type of violence is not unusual in the CBD, K Rd and Ponsonby. To varying degrees, some Thursday nights and most Friday and Saturday nights see alcohol-fuelled violence characterised by serious assaults, fighting and disorder in the early hours of the morning."

"While there has been a small improvement in alcohol-fuelled violence since bars started shutting at 4am, the level of intoxication and level of harm caused from abusing alcohol is still far too high and things need to change," Inspector Davey said.

"This is why Police are appealing the Auckland Council's Provisional Local Alcohol Policy. Police are disappointed with the Council's proposed on-license opening hours given the current levels of alcohol-related harm. We believe the Council has a responsibility to reduce the unacceptable levels of intoxication and alcohol-related harm, yet the proposed closing hours of 4am in the CBD and 3am in the rest of the city allows the current level of harm to continue."

"There is a tipping point in the CBD around 1am when the fun and laughter takes a decidedly nasty turn with intoxication levels increasing and fights and assaults occurring in the same areas in the CBD," Inspector Davey said.

"You only need to look at Sydney, which has had similar issues to Auckland to see what difference a change in closing times can make.

Sydney introduced a 1.30am one way door policy in 2014 and closes all bars at 3am. Twelve months after the move, alcohol related harm dropped by 40 percent.

"This is what Auckland needs if we want to stop the high numbers of people ending up in our hospitals after a night out," Inspector Davey added.

Police actively enforce the alcohol ban in the CBD to reduce side loading, he said.

"While some bar owners take their responsibilities seriously, others do not and Police will continue to enforce alcohol-related issues such as 'serving intoxicated people' and 'serving under-age drinkers'."

ENDS

Media Note: Inspector Davey will be available for interview at 12:00pm at Auckland Central Police Station.