

Medical pot is no defence

SA government won't follow NSW's lead to soften drug-driving law

Jacinta Round

A move to soften drug-driving laws for medicinal cannabis users has been ruled out by the state government, despite other jurisdictions introducing law reforms for patients.

A government spokesperson confirmed that it was "not considering" amending SA's drug-driving laws to introduce a legal limit for medicinal cannabis users, and nor did it support a co-ordinated, nationwide approach to the issue.

"We believe road laws should continue to be determined by each individual jurisdiction on a case-by-case basis



Jessica Nies

to ensure the safety of local road users," the spokesperson said. SA Health's current advice is that people taking medicinal cannabis should not drive or operate machinery. It can take up to five days for a dose of medicinal cannabis to exit a patient's system.

Getting behind the wheel with traces of the drug in the bloodstream is considered drug driving and a criminal offence,

even if the driver is not impaired and has a prescription.

The Minns Labor government introduced laws into NSW parliament last week that will mean registered medicinal cannabis users are not automatically penalised if low levels of THC (the chemical that produces a "high") are found in their system during roadside drug testing.

Under the reforms, those with a valid prescription who test positive to the drug would face an immediate 24-hour driving ban, but encounter no other consequences if laboratory testing on the sample showed the THC levels are

under a new legal threshold.

Saliva testing can detect as little as 15 nanograms per millilitre of THC, according to Australia's largest provider of drug and alcohol testing AusHealth.

SA Legalise Cannabis Party president Jessica Nies, 40, said the state's current laws left patients "stuck between a rock and a hard place".

"They are forced to decide whether they continue taking this medication, which has improved their quality of life, or risk the loss of not being able to drive," Ms Nies, who has the painful condition fibromyalgia, said.

"Cannabis is

the only thing that helps me to get out of bed every day, but I also have a four-year-old child who needs to get to childcare.

"That limits me in being able to safely and legally get him to where he needs to be and I generally have to risk either my licence or my health."

The cultivation of prescription cannabis for the treatment of various medical conditions was legalised nationwide in 2016, but specific legislation was left to be determined on a state-by-state basis.

Queensland's Liberal National Party government on Friday announced a road law overhaul with a "zero-toler-

ance" approach to drug driving, including for medicinal cannabis users.

Tasmania is currently the only Australian state or territory where motorists with a prescription can legally drive with THC in their system – but its official advice discourages patients from doing so.

RAA senior manager road safety and infrastructure Charles Mountain said the organisation's "central concern" was the potential impairment of motorists using cannabis.

The state opposition and SA Greens Party did not respond to questions about their position on road law changes.



No kidding, it's the goat escape

Ruby Stewart

When it comes to yoga, these goats aren't kidding around.

Barossa Palms Motel owner and goat enthusiast Elizabeth Hoyt adopted her adorable herd of miniature and pygmy goats last November.

The motel owner was inspired by her time living in the US and the goat yoga craze to create her own "goat wellness

program". "Goat yoga just blew up (in the US) because goats are so silly and playful," Ms Hoyt, 44, said. "I just thought it would be so fun to combine my love of yoga and my love of animals together at the motel."

The initiative, which will launch on Wednesday, will allow motel guests to get up close and personal with Ms Hoyt's goats and do yoga with them, practise mindfulness or just enjoy their company.

"We're all a bit burnt out and stressed ... and playtime with goats is just the reminder that we all just need to take time and pause," Ms Hoyt said.

"We want people to know that it is playful and lighthearted." The trained yoga teacher bought the Nuriootpa motel in 2024 and has spent the past few years renovating the venue.

Barossa Palms Motel owner Elizabeth Hoyt with Sage; and (inset) with son Grayson and Basil, Storm and Sage. Pictures: Brenton Edwards

CFS crews exposed to cracker of a scene

Charlie Dadds

A seaside shack on the state's Yorke Peninsula has erupted in flames – with onlookers left in awe after a bunch of fireworks were set alight in the blaze.

Emergency crews responded to the fire at Hardwicke Bay along the western coast of Yorke Peninsula at 12.20pm on Saturday.

There were 35 CFS firefighters working to contain the

blaze, with the house "fully involved" when emergency crews arrived.

Cameron Luke Thyer, who filmed the frenzy, said a battery was left on charge, which caused the house fire.

Mr Thyer said he was a couple of kilometres away when he noticed the smoke.

"I thought somebody was just having a bonfire but as I got closer, I realised it had to be a house due to the colour of the

smoke and how big it was," Mr Thyer said.

"There were a couple of local lads who went down and switched the gas bottles off just in time. A few other guys jumped in and started moving boats and tractors and getting them out of the way.

"All of a sudden, the Fourth of July crackers went off a week too early. It was a bit of a surprise – I think a couple blokes down on the ground would

have crapped their dacks too. They were there starting to get hoses out and everything, and all of a sudden the explosions started happening."

The house was destroyed, with a tractor and boat also damaged in the fire.

No one was home at the time and there were no injuries.

The CFS estimates losses at approximately \$800,000, with a second house sustaining damage to a side wall.



Fireworks were ignited in a shack fire caused by a charging battery in Hardwicke Bay on Saturday. Picture: Cameron Luke Thyer/ Facebook