



QUEENSLAND COUNCIL FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES

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Watching Them While They're Watching You

7 January 2019

MEDIA RELEASE BY TERRY O'GORMAN VICE-PRESIDENT, QUEENSLAND COUNCIL FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES

A threat by Queensland Police Union President Ian Leavers that pill testers "will be charged too" if a sanctioned pill testing site is established in Queensland was today slammed by the Civil Liberties Council.

Civil Liberties Council Vice-President Terry O'Gorman said that pill testing rightly is on the public agenda about drug harm minimisation after a serious spike in the number of young people who have died at music festivals on Australia's east coast in the last number of months.

"However, it is the Police Minister in conjunction with the Police Commissioner who sets policy in this contentious area, not the head of the Queensland Police Union", Mr O'Gorman said.

Mr O'Gorman said that Mr Leavers appears to be engaging in something of a veiled threat that his members will charge pill testers if a sanctioned pill testing site currently under consideration by the Palaszczuk Government "okays" music festival pill testing and then someone dies.

Mr Leavers needs to recognise that pill testers who have operated at interstate music festivals such as Groovin the Moo Music Festival in Canberra last year do not 'give the okay' to any pill presented for testing.

"The legal document signed by those seeking pill testing and the advertised policy of the pill testers is to advise what the make-up of the pill is and to urge festivalgoers not to actually ingest a pill that has been tested", Mr O'Gorman said.

Mr O'Gorman said that there have been instances where festivalgoers have 'binned' pills after testing and this shows that testing has some practical 'on the ground' value.

"While Mr Leavers is entitled to express his opinion on pill testing, it is the Minister and the Police Commissioner who can make a policy decision to allow music festival pill testing as Police Ministers and Commissioners interstate have done", Mr O'Gorman said.

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Mr Leavers' apparent threat that his members will charge pill testers, especially if someone dies after pill testing, should be immediately dealt with and slapped down by both the Police Minister and the Police Commissioner.

**Mr O'Gorman can be contacted during business hours on 07 3034 0000
or after hours on 0418 787182**