



**Media Release | 9 December 2021**

**Hon Nick Goiran MLC**  
Shadow Attorney General

### **Tough laws to tackle outlaws welcome but special defences for unions are not**

The Opposition has welcomed the passing of tough, new anti-consorting laws to help police crackdown on Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs (OMCG's), despite Labor ramming the bill through Parliament this week.

Shadow Attorney General Nick Goiran said like so much of the Labor Government's legislation, the Criminal Law (Unlawful Consorting and Prohibited Insignia) Bill 2021 looks good on the surface but contains provisions that are flawed or unjustified.

"The Opposition supports a tougher stance on unlawful bikie activity but does not accept that this needs to be accompanied with special defences for the likes of declared drug traffickers so they can continue to consort under the guise of fulfilling union activities," Mr Goiran said.

"The Attorney General's commendable desire to trial some novel laws against outlaw motorcycle gangs does not justify this latest example of special treatment for unionists.

While current laws permit more than 7000 police officers to issue an anti-consorting warning, under these new laws only around two dozen police officers will have the power to warn relevant offenders against consorting. Young offenders will be immune from being issued a consorting notice and unionists will be able to plead a special defence.

"If a unionist is declared a drug trafficker, then consequences flow from that. One of those should be a lost right to consort with any other drug trafficker, regardless of whether they are also a member of a union.

"Members of the community rightfully expected this bill would increase protection from unlawful activity, however what the McGowan Labor Government have done is snuck a clause in to create a special defence for union activity."

Mr Goiran said the arrogant refusal of the Government to consider any amendments to the Criminal Law (Unlawful Consorting and Prohibited Insignia) Bill 2021 will likely see OMCG's recruiting young offenders in earnest..

"If WA Police find in influx in apprentice bikies in the years ahead, they will have two people to thank for that latest headache: Premier McGowan and Attorney General Quigley. Their obsession with using their total control of the Parliament to ram legislation through smacks of a dictatorship mentality rather than that of a competent and responsible Government."

"This week the McGowan Government gave convicted unionists special defences against unlawful consorting, while next week they will be ramming a Bill through to give them unprecedented access to an individual's home. One wonders what other gifts the McGowan Government has in store for the unions."

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