

KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE REPORT

Implementation of Protected Entertainment Precincts

The Ombudsman's first report on the Protected Entertainment Precincts (PEP) scheme examines how the scheme operated during its first three years, from December 2022 to December 2025.

Wider implications for Government

Joined-up government requires agencies to proactively resolve issues that cross organisational boundaries. In this instance, known risks and information-sharing protocols were not addressed in a timely manner, impacting the PEP scheme's implementation.

Why our report matters

The Ombudsman is responsible for monitoring how the scheme operates.

This review examined whether:

- the scheme is being administered fairly,
- the systems supporting it are working effectively,
- the scheme has impacted particular communities, and
- there is evidence that it is contributing to community safety.

What we found

The scheme has not always been applied as intended

The review found significant issues in how some exclusion orders were being issued.

The Western Australia Police Force (**WA Police**) routinely issued the same type of short-term exclusion order without properly considering individual circumstances or legitimate reasons why a person may need to enter a PEP area.

This was not consistent with the way Parliament intended the scheme to operate.

The review also found police guidelines were not always applied consistently and that the process for seeking a review of an exclusion order was difficult to access.

WA Police have agreed to review its processes, and the Ombudsman will continue to monitor changes in future reviews.

Administrative systems are increasing the risk of errors

The review found weaknesses in how some automatic excluded offenders are identified and notified by the office of the Director of Liquor Licensing.

As a result, some people who should have been excluded were not, while others were incorrectly excluded. There were also delays and errors in notifying people about exclusion decisions.

These issues raise important fairness concerns, particularly because some people affected by these bans do not have a right to seek a review.

Some communities are more affected than others

The review found that Aboriginal people, people experiencing homelessness and people living with mental health conditions or cognitive impairments are disproportionately affected by short-term exclusion orders issued by WA Police.

These impacts can include greater social exclusion, reduced access to services and increased involvement with the justice system.

Consultation with Aboriginal communities highlighted concerns about trauma, reduced trust in institutions and feelings of reduced safety associated with exclusion orders.

It is too early to know whether the scheme is improving safety

A survey of 1,000 people conducted in November 2025 found that perceptions of safety in PEP areas have either improved or remained stable since the scheme began.

Around one in four respondents said they felt safer, while most reported no change. Many people also considered the precincts more welcoming than they were three years ago.

However, the evidence does not show that these changes can be attributed solely to the PEP scheme. Other factors, such as police presence, lighting, CCTV and community activity, also influence how safe people feel.

The available crime data was inconclusive and firm conclusions about the scheme's impact on safety could not be made.

What happens next?

The Ombudsman made seven recommendations aimed at improving the scheme's fairness, transparency and effectiveness.

The recommendations focus on three key areas:

Improving fairness

- Ensuring exclusion decisions properly consider individual circumstances.
- Making review processes easier to access and understand.

Improving accuracy and accountability

- Strengthening information sharing and administrative systems.
- Reducing errors and improving decision-making processes.

Improving communication and support

- Using plain English in exclusion notices and information provided to affected people.
- Strengthening safeguards and support for Aboriginal people affected by the scheme.

The Ombudsman will continue to monitor the scheme.

What is the PEP scheme?

The PEP scheme was introduced to help improve safety in some of the busiest nightlife areas.

It allows for people who have engaged in certain unlawful behaviour to be banned from entering one or more of WA's five Protected Entertainment Precincts for a set period of time. It operates in:

- Perth–Northbridge,
- Fremantle,
- Scarborough,
- Hillarys, and
- Mandurah.

People who breach a ban can face criminal penalties.

Because the scheme restricts where people can go and affects their access to public spaces, it is important that it is administered fairly, consistently and in line with the law.