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How convicted criminals could be forced off the booze

A bold new plan could force criminals to wear hi-tech alcohol monitors as part of their sentences in a bid to stop them reoffending.



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Booze bracelets are widely used across the US and UK and New Zealand.

Criminals would be forced off the booze and monitored around the clock in a bold proposal set to be considered by the state government.

The Saturday Herald Sun can reveal the plan would see judges and magistrates given the power to force criminals to wear hi-tech alcohol detecting ankle bracelets as part of sentences they hand down.

The SCRAM – Secure Continuous Remote Alcohol Monitor – bracelets test for alcohol consumption using alcohol released through the skin as sweat.



Stuart Grimley will move a motion in parliament this week calling on the government to consider booze bracelets.

Picture: Peter Ristevski

The lightweight water resistant bands take samples every half-hour and are able to recognise the difference between ingested alcohol and that picked up through the environment such as via deodorant spray.

The units are fitted with temperature and infra-red sensors to detect if it is tampered with.

Justice Party MP Stuart Grimley will move in parliament this week to call on the government to consider implementing the option.

Senior sources say the government is tipped to support the motion and has already begun preliminary talks about how it could be implemented.

The alcohol monitoring devices are already used within the state's parole system.

Mr Grimley said the initiative would help address the problem with recidivism.

“Managing offenders effectively means there will be less victims of crime,” he said.

“SCRAM CAM is a really innovative technology. It has worked really well to get offenders sober in other jurisdictions; what works for some offenders won't work for others but we need to have a suite of options available for our courts.”

Mr Grimley said the measure would address the actual cause of offending.

“Repeat drink drivers are a danger on our roads and their behaviour needs to be addressed,” he said. “Rather than a fine we need to address the actual cause of their offending.”

“This approach can be used for a range of criminals where alcohol is a consistent factor in their offending.”

The booze bracelets are widely used across the US, UK and New Zealand. A UK pilot of 111 career criminals found 92 per cent didn't reoffend while wearing the bracelets.

A government spokeswoman confirmed the proposal would be considered.

“We're always looking to consider ways of reducing recidivism and making the community safer,” she said.