

LIQUOR LICENSING UPDATE

Regular News and Updates from the Liquor Licensing Division

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Safer venues awards

Congratulations to the winners of the 2007 Toowoomba and Region Safer Venues Awards.

The awards recognise the efforts of licensees involved in the Safer Venues project in the Toowoomba and Darling Downs region. The joint project between Queensland Health, Department of Tourism, Fair Trading and Wine Industry Development, Queensland Police Service, Department of Emergency Services, Toowoomba City Council and the local liquor industry has been operating for the past four years. It aims to reduce injury, violence and street crime in and around licensed venues.

A total of 26 licensed venues in Toowoomba and the Darling Downs entered the 2007 Safer Venues Awards. Participating venues are audited to determine how well they implement patron safety strategies.

The audit covers a range of areas, including responsible service of alcohol, fire safety, workplace health and safety, tobacco legislation and security. General requirements, such as lighting and access, are also examined.

Editorial supplied by Paula Smith, Senior Health Promotion Officer (ATOD)

Responsible drinking

We all realise we are fighting an uphill battle when we attempt to convince patrons to take some responsibility for their behaviour and actions on licensed premises. However, when the media promote drunken behaviour as a grand "Aussie tradition" - "Licensed to kill goodwill" (Weekend Gold Coast Bulletin, Saturday 27 January 2007) – it is more than disappointing.

The journalist expressed a surprising attitude as he glorified the abuse and misuse of alcohol, writing of the Australianism, fun and glory of getting drunk, hanging from rafters and abusing people.

The opinion expressed in his article could only encourage and defend excessive consumption of alcohol which would seem to contradict the torrid reports of his media colleagues when reporting on serious injuries or deaths that have occurred as a result of alcohol-fuelled violence over the past two years.

This attitude is not acceptable to the Division and I am sure it is not acceptable to Queensland licensees who are committed to responsible service of alcohol.

Most Queenslanders want to enjoy a good night out, safely and responsibly, and to avoid these types of outcomes. The Government wants them to enjoy themselves – in a responsible way. Licensees do not want the anxiety caused by patrons who drink excessive amounts, and cause harm to themselves, other people or property.

This year the Liquor Licensing Division will continue to work with licensees and police to promote a more responsible approach to alcohol consumption by patrons.

Marshalled taxi ranks a success in Toowoomba

by Paula Smith, Senior Health Promotion Officer (ATOD)

The Toowoomba Liquor Industry Action Group, Garden City Yellow Cabs, and Black and White Cabs joined forces to make the festive season a safer time for hotel patrons. In a move that is a first for Toowoomba, select taxi ranks were manned by security guards over the Christmas/New Year period.

Licensees reported the marshalled taxi ranks at Fitzy's Fibber Magee, Tattersalls Hotel, and Rumours were well received by the public. Garden City Yellow Cabs and Black and White Cabs provided free 'taxi marshal' training to security personnel from each of the three venues in mid-December.

At the end of a night out, large numbers of patrons quite often experience the frustration of waiting for long periods to get a taxi home. This, combined with alcohol and large numbers of patrons vying for limited taxis, has the potential to result in fights and other street disturbances. Marshalled taxi ranks have proven very effective at combating rank-rage and cutting taxi waiting times.

At a marshalled taxi rank, patrons can expect:

- to queue in an environment that is free from unruly and inappropriate behaviour
- an organised supply of taxis to the rank to meet demand
- management of the flow of passengers and organisation of share rides as required
- liaison between passengers and drivers.

Aurukun

The Liquor Licensing Division has been working with the local community in Aurukun to monitor and review the operations of the Three Rivers Tavern which was reopened earlier this month with tough new licensing conditions following a riot at Aurukun on 9 January 2007.

The new conditions are aimed at aiding a peaceful return to community life and were formulated during community and Government consultations.

The new conditions include the prohibition of spirit sales, which limits the sale of alcohol to low and mid-strength beer, and a reduction to trading hours, including the closure of the Tavern on Saturdays.

A large number of community members were involved in the riot on January 9 which damaged the tavern and a number of Government buildings. A large quantity of alcohol was also stolen from the tavern.

Know your limits – patron education pilot campaign



28 licensed premises in Brisbane and on the Gold Coast are taking part in a pilot patron education campaign – *Know your limits*.

The Division hopes to assist licensees in educating patrons about responsible alcohol consumption behaviour, which will in turn assist licensees to meet their RSA obligations.

This campaign is a joint initiative of the Liquor Licensing Division and the Queensland Police Service and is based on a successful British campaign running for the past three years.

The pilot campaign consists of posters and coasters.

The materials feature hard-hitting images of young people clearly in frightening situations after consuming too much alcohol.

For posters or further information, email liquorcomms@dtftwid.qld.gov.au.

Liquor Act Review

On 13 February, Liquor Licensing Minister Margaret Keech convened a meeting of industry and government representatives to discuss issues raised in submissions to the Liquor Act Review discussion paper.

The forum provided an opportunity to explore a range of strategies including harm minimisation, patron behaviour, formalising the Code of Practice, formalising a complaints handling procedure and a power to ban undesirable liquor products.

If you would like to find out more about the Liquor Act Review, please contact Ivan Catlin by email to Ivan.Catlin@dtftwid.qld.gov.au or phone on (07) 3239 3049.

Feedback

To provide feedback or comments on the Liquor Licensing Update or to change your contact details please email liquorcomms@dtftwid.qld.gov.au.

Media – for Statewide/Brisbane interviews with the Minister for Liquor Licensing contact:

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Liquor Licensing Division

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