



HOSPITALITY | PUBS | Issue No. 9 | *Proposed changes to liquor licensing – what these mean for your venue*

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As most licensees would be aware, on 12 November 2015 the Attorney-General introduced the Tackling Alcohol-Fuelled Violence Legislation Amendment Bill. If enacted, this Bill will have significant effects on licensed premises in Queensland.

The target date for implementation of the Bill is 1 July 2016. The current government has announced that its reasons for implementing the Bill are to support more effective regulation of the liquor industry and to reduce and tackle alcohol-fuelled violence.

The key amendments under the proposed Bill are:

- Amendment of the *Liquor Act 1992* to stop the sale and supply of alcohol at 2.00am state wide, with no lockout except in certain prescribed safe night precincts.
- For those venues which currently operate within recognised safe night precincts, amendments will provide for those venues to be prescribed by regulation to allow 3.00am liquor trading with a 1.00am lockout. If local liquor boards do not wish their precinct to be subject to the lockout, they may opt to remain a 2.00am precinct. If a 3.00am safe night precinct is declared, licensees who currently have approval for liquor trading until 3.00am or later will automatically be approved to sell and supply liquor until 3.00am from 1 July 2016. However, venues without extended liquor trading hours approval will still be required to apply individually for approval for liquor trading up to 3.00am through the usual late-night liquor trading application processes.
- Venues may continue to stay open beyond the hours of liquor service to provide other services, such as food, non-alcoholic beverages and entertainment.
- The proposed amendments will remove the linkage of gaming hours to liquor consumption hours. Gaming applications will be able to be approved for a period of

up to two hours after the cessation of the service of liquor at the licensed premises. This will allow gaming services up to 5.00am in prescribed safe night precincts and 4.00am outside of prescribed safe night precincts, upon approval.

- Amendments will prohibit new approvals for the sale of takeaway liquor after 10.00pm. No new applications will be accepted for sale or supply at takeaway liquor stores after 10.00pm, however, these amendments do not apply to existing extended trading approvals for takeaway liquor.
- The Bill amends the *Liquor Act* to allow a regulation to be declared to ban the service of high alcohol content drinks and alcoholic beverages designed to be consumed rapidly after midnight, for example shots. However, there will be an exemption for the operation of small bars specialising in the sale of premium spirits (definition of premium spirits is yet to be determined).
- These heightened controls that exist at licensed premises will not apply to airports, casinos and industrial canteens.
- In order to minimise the risk of minors obtaining liquor, amendments will clarify the types of documentation that may be accepted as proof of age for the purposes of purchasing alcohol.
- Amendments will prohibit persons from taking liquor into or away from activities, such as sporting carnivals and music festivals, conducted under a community liquor permit or commercial public events permit.
- Amendments will provide that licensees whose car park is designated as part of the licensed premises must seek the approval of the Commissioner before holding an event where alcohol is supplied or consumed in the car park. This requirement would override existing approvals or conditions on a licence.

- Amendments will place craft beer producers on an equal footing with wine producers by allowing the sale of craft beer at promotional events, such as food and wine festivals.
- Amendments will support community clubs by allowing these licensees to sell takeaway liquor to club guests and visitors.

As mentioned above, the Bill is yet to be enacted and is still in the initial stages of legislation. However, it is important that licensees start to consider how these amendments will affect them and their venues and any processes or changes they may need to put in place in order to comply with these legislative changes.

Licensees may wish to consider the potential benefit of making any applications for extended liquor or gaming trading hours prior to 1 July 2016.



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