

The Honourable Simon Corbell MLA
Attorney General
ACT Legislative Assembly
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Re: Review of Liquor Fees in the ACT

Dear Attorney General

ADCA is the national peak body for the alcohol and other drugs sector, representing the interests of those in the non-government sector working to minimise the harm associated with alcohol and other drugs. In this capacity and in the absence of an ACT peak body at the time, ADCA was a keen contributor to the discussion around the proposed changes to the ACT liquor licensing reforms during the consultation process.

You may be aware that we raised a number of issues with The Greens that ultimately formed part of their position during that time. I have attached a copy of our discussion paper for your information. This discussion paper was partly informed by a submission previously made by ADCA during the early stages of the Review, and I have attached that submission for your information also.

While the Terms of Reference for the current Review are outside the scope of the organisation, ADCA would like to provide its support for the changes that have been made to the alcohol laws in the ACT. The stated objective of the Liquor Act 2010 to minimise the harm associated with the consumption of liquor aligns well with ADCA's own role with alcohol and other drugs and we have been pleased to see that both the number of alcohol related arrests and people in custody for intoxication declined in the first 3 months after the Act was introduced.

The culture of heavy drinking within our society has far reaching implications for individuals, family, friends, and our communities. ADCA's view is that there needs to be a change in attitudes towards drinking, licensed premises need to be safer, and a culture of enjoyment, not intoxication, should be promoted. The revised Act sends a message that the community is concerned about the antisocial and violent behaviour often associated with alcohol misuse and is an important step in achieving the government's objective of minimising the harm associated with consumption of alcohol. It recognises that everyone has a role to play in effecting change, whether a regulator, licensee, staff member or consumer.

ADCA supports measures that address issues such as access to alcohol, reduction in the concentration of providers, restrictions on the way alcohol is advertised and

served, and effective and well resourced policing. ADCA also supports increased funding for programs aimed at raising awareness of liquor licensing laws, the responsible service of alcohol, and patron responsibility, to allow them to have greater impact.

The new risk based licensing scheme and the change in standard trading hours provides an opportunity to limit the availability of alcohol and number of providers in a particular location, and impress upon licensees the responsibility they have in ensuring that the principles of responsible service of alcohol are achieved. These powers, in addition to the power to refuse entry, will make patrons more aware of their own responsibilities towards consumption and behaviour as they observe entry to premises being denied, service being declined, and fines being imposed. They will also contribute to making licensed premises a safer and more enjoyable place to visit.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the changes to the alcohol licensing laws in the ACT under the Liquor Act 2010 and to offer our support for the changes. If you would like to discuss anything in relation to this letter, please contact Meredythe Crane at meredythe.crane@adca.org.au or on 02 6215 9808.

Yours sincerely



David Templeman
Chief Executive Officer

25 May 2011