



11 April 2014

Mr Ian Berry MP
Chair
Legal Affairs & Community
Safety Committee
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE Q. 4000.

lacsc@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr Berry

**Construction & Tourism (Red Tape Reduction) & Other
Legislation Amendment Bill 2014**

Thank you for giving our Association the opportunity to make a submission regarding the above matter.

The RSL & Services Clubs Association ("Association") provides a link between its club members, the government and the community, while fostering the spirit and heritage of the ANZAC traditions. Our Association is a not for profit incorporated association which is completely separate and independent from the State Branch of the RSL.

Our membership comes from approximately 90 RSL, Services & Memorial clubs located in city, rural and regional areas. They are not for profit, community organisations that support the RSL movement as well as community and charitable organisations. These clubs range in size from small clubs with no gaming machines and a few hundred members to very large clubs with up to 280 gaming machines and tens of thousands of members, with the largest club having over 95,000 members.

This Association, commends the Newman Government for reducing red tape applying to the club industry. For years, clubs have had to endure ever-increasing red tape imposts, both at a State and Commonwealth level and initiatives to lessen this burden is welcomed by RSL & Services Clubs.

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Amalgamation of Community Benefit Funds

The RSL & Services Clubs Association can see obvious benefits in amalgamating the Jupiter's Casino Community Benefit Fund, Breakwater Island Casino Community Benefit Fund and the Reef Hotel Casino Community Benefit Fund into the Gambling Community Benefit Fund. It is obvious that efficiencies will result with the introduction of this measure and will also provide a "one-stop shop" for applicants, with one set of criteria. As the club industry is a significant contributor to the current Gambling Community Benefit Fund, we trust that this change will not interfere with club representation on the Gambling Community Committee which administers this fund.

Changes to the Gaming Machine Act affecting clubs

Removal of "Near" Rule

The removal of the "near" rule will mean that Category 2 gaming licensees (clubs) will allow larger clubs to be able to establish new premises in Greenfield sites or take over existing (struggling) clubs outside a close vicinity to the existing club, subject to the approval of the Commissioner for Liquor & Gaming.

Removal of Entitlement boundaries

This initiative will be welcomed by clubs wishing to dispose of entitlements and those wishing to obtain additional entitlements. There have been clubs that have been eager to dispose of their entitlements, but have no club wishing to purchase their entitlements within their entitlement boundary and conversely, other clubs that have been eager to purchase entitlements, but none have been available. The current boundaries provide an artificial barrier, which is detrimental to all parties. The RSL & Services Clubs Association welcomes this change.

Change to maximum number of gaming machines for clubs

Although there have been increases in the numbers of machines allowable to hotels in recent years, the maximum of 280 machines has been in force for many years, despite significant population growth in Queensland in that period. Furthermore, hotel chains are able to acquire more and more hotels under their structure, each (potentially) with a maximum of 45 gaming machine authorities, with no overall maximum number applying. Clubs have been restricted to a maximum of 280 in all the venues that they may operate. The proposed change is welcomed by the industry and we recognise that any one club may now have up to 300 entitlements and that additional entitlements will be available based on the number of venues operating under the licence with a maximum number applicable overall. This will result in clubs being able to establish new clubs in Greenfield sites, as well as being able to take on existing clubs that may be struggling and will benefit enormously from the administrative efficiencies that a larger club will be able to bring to that smaller struggling club.

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Overall, the RSL & Services Clubs Association commends the proposed changes under the Construction & Tourism (Red Tape Reduction) & Other Legislation Amendment Bill and appreciates the opportunity to make this submission.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Penny Wilson', written in a cursive style.

Penny Wilson
CEO