



THE RESEARCH DIRECTOR
 LAW, JUSTICE & SAFETY COMMITTEE
 PARLIAMENT HOUSE - BRISBANE

Dear Director,

I make this submission as an individual, however the ideas & observations contained herein have been discussed with & supported by others in my community.

I reside in close proximity to one Hotel (Royal Exchange) & a short distance from another (Regatta) & frequently observe anti-social & violent behaviour in the area between 10 PM & 3 AM by young adults. It is not unreasonable to conclude that excessive consumption of alcohol at the nearby licensed premises is the major contributor to these problems. Media reports indicate that similar problems in other areas licensed venues cater for a younger age group.

The cost to the community both financially & emotionally would be enormous if all statistics were available.

Collection of accurate statistics from the following sources may help identify some of the issues & may assist the Committee in their deliberations. Documentation of some of this data may already exist.

INSPECTIONS BY LIQUOR LICENSING

- Name of Venue - Time of Inspection From To
- Reason why Venue Chosen (Random, Complaint, etc)
- Was any breach detected
- Action taken (Warning, Fine, etc)
- Comments

AMBULANCE CASES

- Name of Venue - Time of Attendance From To
- Treatment at Scene
- Taken to Medical Centre
- Comments

MEDICAL CENTRE ATTENDANCES

- Was Alcohol a Factor Yes/No
- Venue where Patient had been drinking.
- Was Patient Treated & Released / Admitted for further Treatment.
- Number of Hours required for treatment by Health Professionals...
- Comments.

POLICE ACTION

- Was the Police action necessary because of an incident at or nearby to a licensed Venue Time of Attendance
- Number of Hours required
- Were Charges involved

COURT APPEARANCES

- Was Alcohol a Factor
- Was a Vehicle involved
- Estimated cost of Court Appearance

REGISTER

Some valuable information could be obtained if a register of incidents involving Security Staff / Police intervention was required to be maintained at all Licensed Venues.

GLASSING. - The proposal to introduce tempered glasses is a positive move. If violence still persists, "plastic glasses" could be considered for the offending establishments.

ADVERTISING - Banning advertising that associates sporting achievements & a successful lifestyle with the consumption of alcohol is long overdue. Phasing out of advertising of alcoholic products could follow along similar lines as occurred in the anti-smoking campaign.

DRINKING AGE - Support exists for returning the legal drinking age back to 21. The Medical Profession no doubt will put forward proposals in this matter.

CULTURE CHANGE

Not so long back people could catch up with friends over a quiet drink after work. Loud music introduced in recent years has had a tendency to remove the opportunity for conversation which had resulted in a slower rate of drinking than that which exists to-day.

Loud amplified music at hotels in residential areas late at night can also present a significant problem for nearby residents. Queensland Health has asserted that playing loud & frantic music might incite violence among drunk patrons.

TRADING HOURS

A recent on-line survey conducted by the Courier Mail did not support an extension of Trading Hours. Support does exist however for a closing time no later than midnight to be reinstated for Venues in residential areas.

Noisy patrons often disturb local communities for up to 1 hour after closing time. Unfortunately this occurs on a regular basis, mainly at Week-ends in the Toowong area.

OFFENCE + PENALTY FRAMEWORK

The current inspection, fines & penalty framework appears to have little effect on curbing excess consumption of alcohol. Fines seem to be treated only as a cost of doing business & regarded as "small biscuits" in the overall scheme of things where large profits are made by the Industry.

Harsher penalties may be the only way to show that the Government is serious in its endeavours to reduce this problem. Reducing trading hours or closure of one or two Venues for a few days would cause the Industry to sit up & take notice & adopt a more responsible approach to serving patrons. Perhaps a 3-STRIKE system could be considered.

SPECIAL INTEREST VENUES

Specific locations near licensed Venues where loud street noise & vandalism regularly occurs would identify where

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resources could be best deployed. An increased Police presence & inspection of Venues initially may stretch the limited resources available, however long term gain could be expected.

Some current measures could be regarded as shutting the gate after the horse has bolted. Daily media reports identify the huge amount of resources needed to clean-up the destructive flow or effect of excessive alcohol consumption.

I am firmly convinced that the key to changing attitudes for the better is to attack the problem at its primary source - LICENCED VENUES.

I wish the Committee well in their endeavours & hope that the views expressed in this submission may be of some benefit.

Yours Sincerely

