



Speech by

Hon. R. GIBBS

MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA

Hansard 15 September 1999

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Liquor Industry

Hon. R. J. GIBBS (Bundamba—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing) (9.45 a.m.), by leave: I have recently had presented to me a report titled The National Competition Policy Review of the Queensland Liquor Act 1992.

On 30 November 1998, my Government appointed an independent panel of three, consisting of Mr Trevor Clelland as chair, Dr Margaret O'Donnell and Mr Vernon Wills, to carry out the review. Today, I place on record my thanks to the panel, which has completed an exhaustive task and one which was always going to be controversial and difficult. I also place on record that I had every confidence in the panel to act independently and to bring to the Government a report outlining the future of Queensland's liquor industry in terms of its economic and social ramifications.

The panel's report dated 5 August 1999 outlines a number of recommendations with respect to the future of Queensland's liquor industry. Principally, the main recommendations are as follows. Premiums for the purchase of general or special facility licences should be abolished at a date to be determined. There should be no extension of the retail packaged liquor market to entities other than general licences and clubs, for members, and some restricted sales under limited licences. The panel took into consideration in this matter an extensive economic analysis of Queensland and also considered various social ramifications if the retail liquor market was to be extended to other retail outlets.

In relation to clubs, it has recommended that the current 18 litre limit of takeaway liquor sales to club members per day be abolished. Furthermore, the present restriction limiting eligibility for the general public to visit a club to people who live at least 40 kilometres from the club should be reduced to 15 kilometres. It is further recommended that the number of detached bottle shops per general licence should remain at three. However, it is proposed that the present size restriction be increased slightly to 150 square metres with no regulatory provision to govern the ratio of retail to storage room. The panel has also recommended that the allowable distance between the main premises and the detached bottle shop be increased from five to 10 kilometres and that a minimum sunset period of three years be placed on this provision so that the Government may further examine the effects of the increased distance at that time.

In relation to on-premises licences, the panel has recommended that the 20% non-dining rule be abolished in favour of allowing casual drinking without meals, provided the overall primary purpose of the various on-premises licences is being met. The panel has again recommended that a sunset clause of three years be put in place in order to examine the effects of this deregulation.

I am today releasing the report for community consultation and seek any submissions from any members of the public by 15 October 1999. I commend the report to the House and table it accordingly.
