

Question on Notice

No. 85

Asked on Tuesday, 4 March 2014

MR MOLHOEK asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (Mr JARROD BLEIJIE) –

QUESTION:

Will the Attorney-General update the House on the measures being taken by the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation to increase compliance with RSA laws at licensed venues on the Gold Coast?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Southport for his question.

The Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation (OLGR) and the Queensland Police Service (QPS) are co-regulators under the *Liquor Act 1992* (the Act). OLGR's primary focus is on the assessment of legislative compliance by licensed premises, while QPS maintains peace and good order within the community.

Under the Act, licensees have a range of obligations in relation to the responsible service of alcohol, including: maintaining a safe environment for patrons and staff and ensuring liquor is served, supplied and promoted in a way that is compatible with minimising harm.

Responsible service of alcohol is a major focus of both pro-active and re-active compliance work undertaken by OLGR.

Pro-active inspections of licensed premises include:

- observation of responsible service practices;
- assessments of intoxication levels;
- assessments of patron behaviour; and
- the provision of a safe environment for patrons and staff.

OLGR also conducts pro-active inspections to confirm that staff, involved in the service of liquor, are fully trained in the responsible service of alcohol. OLGR conducts the majority of these inspections at peak trading times (late evening / early morning), with a focus on weekend trading.

As part of its re-active compliance program, the OLGR undertakes a range of investigations in response to complaints received from the general public, incidents reported by QPS and referrals from other agencies. Matters that are investigated under this program include:

- violent incidents that the licensee's venue management practices may not have prevented or handled appropriately;
- incidents where crowd controllers may have acted inappropriately; and
- irresponsible liquor service practices and/or promotions.

On 23 March 2014, the Queensland Government released, for public consultation, the Safe Night Out Strategy (the Strategy). The Strategy aims to stop alcohol and drug-related violence in Queensland. Accordingly the Strategy includes proposed changes to a number of provisions within the Act.

The Strategy also enhances the role of the OLGR to:

- undertake more covert and overt compliance monitoring programs, including additional late night and weekend activities, targeting identified premises and geographical areas of concern;
- be able to place a greater emphasis on enforcement action for serious non-compliance with the Act; and
- enhance cooperative working arrangements with QPS and other key agencies.

The Strategy also provides for the development of educational and promotional material about licensee responsibilities, including induction material for new licensees to enhance licensee awareness of responsible service of alcohol practices and obligations.