

Exposure Draft

Liquor Bill 2010

March 2010

The Liquor Bill:

The Liquor Bill will replace the *Liquor Act 1975* and has introduced many new initiatives to make a difference to the culture of binge drinking and minimise violent and anti-social behaviour.

How the Bill will progress:

The Liquor Bill will be revised and refined in response to comments from the various stakeholders and is planned to be introduced into the Assembly in the June 2010 sittings.

Draft regulations, which will contain procedural and administrative matters such as standard trading hours and a new late night authorisation process new risk fees, will be prepared and released for public comment before being finalised.

Why is legislative reform necessary?

The ACT government is concerned about reports of drunken, anti-social behaviour at night in public places around Canberra, most recently in Manuka, Civic and at events and the impact of this behaviour on shop owners and the wider community. It is recognised that these activities are strongly linked to the effectiveness of liquor licensing and there is also clear empirical evidence that the abuse of alcohol has significant adverse economic, social and health related consequences on our community and in some estimates, totals nearly \$11 Billion a year across Australia. Thus the development of sound policy, as a result of the review, can provide assurance for greater community safety and wellbeing. While the review has concentrated on the regulation of liquor sales and consumption, it is nonetheless anticipated that it will generate innovation and new ideas, which will be useful in the wider community safety context.

Now is the time for action not just by Government but also by the community and the liquor industry to address these worrying trends.

The main objectives of the Bill fall under three core areas:

- strengthening the licensing regime to better reflect harm minimisation and community safety principles;
- stronger enforcement of ACT liquor laws to better ensure compliance; and
- streamlining the licensing regime to promote more efficient regulatory action.

All of the proposed measures are designed to improve the regulatory liquor regime in the context of ongoing national initiatives to reduce excessive consumption of alcohol and to continue gathering data regarding the impact of both alcohol consumption and regulatory responses across Australia.

Consultation

The public consultation period will run from 25 March to 6 May 2010. Comments citing specific provisions should be sent by the end date to:

The Liquor Act Review
Department of Justice and Community Safety
GPO Box 158
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Email: to liquor.review@act.gov.au

Fax: (02) 6205 0937