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# NORTHERN TERRITORY LICENSING COMMISSION

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## MEDIA RELEASE

18 December 2008

### **Commission decision - Responsible Service of Alcohol**

Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA) certificates for staff involved in the service of alcohol are to become compulsory in the Northern Territory – bringing the NT in line with the rest of Australia.

The Northern Territory Licensing Commission has determined to put the condition on all liquor licenses that do not already contain it.

“This is not a decision we’ve taken lightly – the Commission has discussed the issue for some time. We’ve concluded this is a step in the right direction for helping create a better drinking environment for all,” Licensing Commission chairman Richard O’Sullivan said.

“As well, this will assist licensees in having more qualified and assured staff. It is extremely important that staff serving alcohol are aware of the laws for serving minors and intoxicated people and have the skills and knowledge to identify them and deal with such situations. Like all measures, this alone is not a panacea for alcohol issues. But we believe it can help.”

Currently there’s a requirement for the licensed premises’ nominee or their manager to prove competency in understanding the Liquor Act and hold an RSA certificate. In Alice Springs RSA certification for all staff serving or selling alcohol has been compulsorily required since 2006. This was introduced without any significant disruption to trading.

“This decision will not only make it a standard across the NT and therefore provide a consistent approach, it will be also consistent with other jurisdictions which have compulsory RSA training,” Mr O’Sullivan said. “It is a requirement supported nationally by liquor industry organisations.”

The decision means licensees will need to ultimately implement the following conditions:

- a) All staff involved in the service of alcohol required to hold a RSA Certificate.
- b) All new staff involved in the service of alcohol required to hold or obtain a RSA Certificate within one month from commencement of employment.

Mr O’Sullivan said the decision will not come into effect immediately with a transition period to be determined to allow licensees time to adjust to the requirement. Licensees will be also given time to respond to the decision.

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New staff will be required to be RSA trained within a month of employment while there will be a timeframe determined with industry for existing staff to become RSA trained.

“The Commission recognises all RSA certificates issued by accredited training providers interstate and will continue to do so,” Mr O’Sullivan said.

“We know this is a big step for many licensees so we’re going to give the industry some time to comply and get used to the idea. We know some will be resistant but we hope they eventually understand that this will improve the reputation and conduct of the industry overall.

“Licensing and Regulation division staff will be helping licensees with the transition and suitable courses are being identified for NT licensees to use.”

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