

# NORTHERN TERRITORY LICENSING COMMISSION

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Licensing Commission announces harsher approach to Licensees

The Northern Territory Licensing Commission has today announced a harsher approach to licensees who disregard their obligations under the *Liquor Act* and do not comply with the conditions of their liquor licences.

The Licensing Commission recognises that the majority of licensees are vigilant in complying with legal requirements aimed at ensuring the responsible provision of alcohol in the community. It wants the few who are not so compliant to change their ways and a tougher regime of penalties is to be applied.

*“Many licensed premises work hard to ensure they meet all the conditions set by legislation and the Commission, and they are commended. But there are also those who deliberately flaunt the conditions of their licence or continually stretch the boundaries of what is acceptable. Tougher penalties are being introduced to make those licensees think again about how they are behaving”* says John Flynn, Chairman of the Licensing Commission.

*“Licensees who serve minors or drunks or who are found to be blatantly breaching their licence conditions must accept the consequences of their actions.”* Mr Flynn stated today. *“We fully support a vibrant and progressive business and entertainment industry in the Territory but we will not tolerate irresponsible service of alcohol or a casual approach by licensees to their obligations under the Act or their licence conditions. Our primary responsibilities as a Licensing Commission emphasise harm minimisation and the protection and enhancement of community amenity. Requiring all licensees to act responsibly and imposing meaningful penalties on those that don’t is one way we can fulfil these aims.”*

The Licensing Commission has endorsed a general policy that it will impose tougher penalties for licence and *Liquor Act* breaches. Tougher penalties will include longer periods of suspension of a liquor licence and the imposition of more restrictive licence conditions. This will help bring non-compliant licensees into line. It should also reduce the time spent by the Commission on dealing with complaints and transgressions. This will allow the Commission to instead devote its attention to other more innovative and positive approaches to alcohol issues.

**The Licensing Commission** is an independent statutory authority with extensive powers to regulate and enforce the Territory’s racing, gaming and licensing legislation. The Commission operates as an independent tribunal with responsibility for licensing and related matters covering liquor control, kava management, private security, escort agencies and gaming machines.

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