

29 January 2016

The Hon John Rau MP
Attorney-General
Attorney-General's Department
GPO Box 464
ADELAIDE SA 5001

Dear Minister

Review of Liquor Licensing Laws in South Australia

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on the Liquor licensing discussion paper.

We have based our submission on the City of Onkaparinga's key strategic document, Community Plan 2035, and the objectives within it including:

- active diverse destinations
- healthy active lifestyles
- dynamic and safe communities
- a new economy
- the South as a destination
- dynamic resilient businesses
- a responsive and performance driven council.

The City of Onkaparinga has an interest in ensuring liquor licensing laws remain in line with current and future business and lifestyle trends. We have expressed this in 2015 in correspondences to both Mr Chris Picton MP and Ms Katrine Hildyard MP regarding small venue licensing in our council area.

Our submission focusses on how we can support growth and investment in our city whilst having minimal impact on public health, safety and amenity. Our areas of interest are documented below and linked to the Attorney-General's three key themes:

Vibrancy

An essential element to our city's vibrancy is the local food, wine, festivals and events. We want to ensure that liquor licensing laws are adaptive and enable our producers and local businesses to innovate and achieve success. Our cellar doors, events and festivals play an important role in attracting visitors to our region and we want to ensure this continues.



We have seen a significant movement in food and wine business models and it is essential that liquor licensing laws and other regulatory matters do not hinder this innovation.

For example, in relation to cellar doors, we are seeing a trend in the way cellar doors conduct their business as they transition from a tasting, purchase and off-site consumption model, to a full experience of on-site consumption of food and wine with entertainment in a family friendly environment. In our council area, 29 cellar doors offer food as part of the wine tasting experience. There are 11 cellar doors with restaurants and 18 cellar doors offering platters or ancillary food with tastings.

Cellar doors are also trending as locations for one off events such as weddings – resulting in the requirement for a different liquor license or repeated use of limited licenses which results in an increase in administration and processing.

Cellar doors are moving away from their ‘homes’ to be part of events such as the Beachside Food and Wine Festival and the Sea and Vines Festival where wineries have their produce available for tasting and purchase. We are also seeing wine producers collaborating with main streets to bring their produce to the retail centres.

We recognise and welcome the trend of micro business, co-ops and business clustering models in response to an increased demand for boutique wines, craft beers and local fresh produce. These businesses provide a new offering to residents and visitors whilst being cost effective for the business owner. The business start-up phase should be supported with licenses that are reasonable to obtain.

As such, we would welcome the introduction of the Small Venue License category into our council area. This license option will provide our local businesses and potential new businesses with a new, flexible option that has clearly been successful both in the CBD and interstate. Our highly frequented towns and coastal nodes such as Port Noarlunga, Christies Beach, Aldinga, Willunga and McLaren Vale would benefit greatly from this new offering that appeals to patrons seeking a more boutique offering to that of a hotel or restaurant.

Safer Drinking Culture

The health and safety of our communities is a priority for Onkaparinga. We support the promotion of a safe drinking culture and support any changes to the liquor licensing framework that encourages this.

In accordance with our current work program, we will continue to encourage and support alcohol related programs such as the Good Sports Program in our numerous sporting clubs and our community development activities. We will also continue to identify and enforce dry areas where required.

We note that research¹ reports that the economic availability and increased access to alcohol results in increased consumption resulting in increased harm as a result of intoxication.

¹ *Restrictions on the Sale and Supply of Alcohol: Evidence and Outcomes, National Drug Research Institute, 2007*

Within our community, 26.4% of respondents to the SAMMS² report reported high risk and risky short-term alcohol consumption and 4.2% high risk and risky long-term consumption. We also recognise that the State Strategic Plan has a target for a reduction in the proportion of South Australians who drink at risky levels by 30% by 2020³.

Red Tape Reduction

We support red tape reduction in favour of the applicant. However, this must not be to the detriment of the conditions set by Council/Landlord or the ability for community members to have a reasonable voice in the process.

We note that the current system relies heavily on the applicant understanding the requirements of the system. This may be a deterrent to small or new business. We see a benefit in a more automated system similar to the Electronic Development Application Lodgement and Assessment (EDALA) program used by the Development Assessment Commission. In addition, the proposed Planning and Development Bill makes reference to an online portal. Either of these are an option to investigate further for the purpose of streamlining liquor license applications.

Should a system be automated, the onus will then be on both the Liquor Licensing Commission and Council to progress the application (as opposed to the applicant). Increased fees may be required to facilitate the development of an automated system.

With regard to Council owned facilities, Council (as landlord) should continue to be consulted when a third party has applied for a liquor licence. Council consent is the mechanism used to impose control measures to mitigate risk of damage to its facility, reduce alcohol related harm to the public's health and safety and to minimise complaints by local residents if the activity is close to residential properties by ensuring times are appropriate for the location.

Lastly, where consultation, appeals or objections can be heard together then we support this. However, it is worth noting that the issues are often very different and currently, they are heard under differing jurisdictions.

The City of Onkaparinga invites further discussion of this matter. If you have any queries in relation to this submission, please contact Belinda Marsh, Development Policy Planner on

Yours sincerely



Lorraine Rosenberg
Mayor

cc Local Government Association SA

² South Australian Monitoring and Surveillance System 2012-13

³ SA Strategic Plan