

7. LIQUOR LICENSING AUTHORITY – ANNUAL REPORT

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The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of the Report of the Liquor Licensing Authority for the 12 months ended 30 June 2002. This report has been presented to the House of Representatives.

A copy of the report is attached. The report is prepared by the two members of the Authority – Judge E W Unwin and Member J C Crookston.

The report outlines the Authority's proceedings and operation during the year. It makes comments on the working of the Act, provides overview of District Licensing Agencies, discusses matters in relation to casino bars, discusses the desirability or otherwise of amending the Act, discusses restructuring of the Tribunals Division, and details the number of applications and hearings it determined during the year.

In brief the report states:

- The period has been a year of consolidation for the Authority and despite sitting a greater number of days a backlog continues to grow. The Authority plans to sit 100 days during the next year.
- That since, particularly the amendments made in the Sale of Liquor Amendment Act 1999, the Act is working satisfactorily. It tempers this by commenting on the restructuring of the Tribunals Division where assurances given were unlikely to be fulfilled in relation to service to District Licensing Agencies.
- Since devolving the bulk of decision making and licence issuing to District Licensing Agencies some errors/inconsistencies had occurred but that this 'error' rate had substantially lowered. (This Agency's error rate was nil.)
- There was increasing community concern that on licences were being sought solely to obtain a site licence under the Gaming and Lotteries Act 1977, to permit up to 18 gaming machines.

The Authority was pleased that the Department of Internal Affairs had tightened up its conditions to ensure site approvals would only be issued where gaming machines were not the primary activity on the site (from 1 October 2002).

- Recommendation for a number of amendments to the Act, and these relate to definition of certain types of licensed premises, and extending the hours of trading for hotels and taverns to 3am on Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Christmas Day and Anzac Day.

(This latter recommendation if passed into law would remove the need for a number of hearings the Christchurch City Council District Licensing Agency would have to determine each year.)

The comments regarding casino bars and extending trading hours on Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Christmas Day and Anzac Day morning may have some significance in the consideration of this Council's policy document preparation in the gaming and sale of liquor areas.

Chairman's

Recommendation: That the information be received.