

NORTHERN TERRITORY LIQUOR COMMISSION

Decision Notice

MATTER:	APPLICATION FOR TEMPORARY VARIATION OF THE CONDITIONS OF LICENCE
REFERENCE:	LC2018/158
LICENCE NUMBER:	81401508
LICENSEE:	Tracy Village Social and Sports Club Incorporated
PREMISES:	Tracy Village Social and Sports Club Tambling Terrace WANGURI NT 0810
APPLICANT:	Tracy Village Social and Sports Club
NOMINEE:	Mrs Robyn Kelleher
OBJECTOR/S:	Nil
LEGISLATION:	Section 32A, Part IV and V of the <i>Liquor Act</i> .
HEARD BEFORE:	Ms Jodi Truman (Deputy Chairperson) Dr Charles Douglas (Health Member) Ms Amy Corcoran (Community Member)
DATE OF HEARING:	19 December 2018
DATE OF DECISION:	19 December 2018

Decision

1. For the reasons set out below and in accordance with section 32A(7) of the Liquor Act ("the Act") the Commission has determined to temporarily vary the conditions of the liquor licence for the premises known as Tracy Village Social and Sports Club by:
 - a. Suspending operation of the condition that there be no trading on Christmas Day;
 - b. Permitting trade on 25 December 2018 from 1100 hours to 1500 hours; and

- c. Prohibiting the sale of liquor for consumption away from the premises to any persons during the trading hours of 1100 hours to 1500 hours on 25 December 2018.
2. For the avoidance of any doubt the applicant is **not** permitted to operate any or all of its gaming machines on 25 December 2018.
3. In accordance with section 32A(9) the variation of the condition of licence is to take effect as at 19 December 2018.

Reasons

Background

4. Tracy Village Social and Sports Club (“the applicant”) currently holds a “Club (Incorporated)” Liquor Licence authorising the sale of liquor for consumption on or at the licensed premises by a member of the club or by a visitor in the presence of such a member and for removal and consumption away from the licensed premises **only** to financial members of the Club. The licensee is the applicant with administrators appointed and the nominee under the liquor licence is Mrs Robyn Kelleher.
5. On 15 November 2018 the applicant made application pursuant to section 32A of the Act for a temporary variation to its current licence conditions for a single event being a “Christmas Luncheon” on a single date, namely Tuesday 25 December 2018. The application sought to be permitted to trade under their licence between the hours of 11.00 am and 3.00 pm.
6. The application was referred to the Commission on 4 December 2018. The Commission has been advised by the Deputy Director-General of Licensing NT (“the Deputy Director-General”) that “there are no adverse compliance issues recorded against this licensee”.
7. On the evidence before the Commission; the applicant has a proven and demonstrated capacity to operate the premises appropriately and in accordance with its licence conditions.

Disclosure of influential persons or potential beneficiaries

8. Section 32A(1A) of the Act requires applicants to make an affidavit disclosing whether certain persons may be able to influence the applicant, or expect a benefit from the applicant, if the licence variation is granted. The applicant has filed an affidavit. When the applicant is a body corporate the section requires that the person who makes the affidavit must either be:
 - a. The principal executive officer of the body corporate; or
 - b. If that officer does not have knowledge of the relevant facts - another person who has knowledge of the relevant facts and is authorised by the body corporate to make the affidavit.

9. Mrs Robyn Kelleher (“Mrs Kelleher”) is the nominee for the licence. She is not the principal executive officer, however she has sworn in her affidavit that “as the nominee” she has been “authorised by the licensee” to provide the affidavit. In the affidavit Mrs Kelleher swore that there is no other person (other than herself) who may be able to influence any decision made by the applicant in relation to the sale of liquor or the sale and consumption of liquor and further that there is no other person (other than herself) who by any lease, agreement or arrangement may expect any benefit from the applicant in relation to the sale of liquor or the sale and consumption of liquor.
10. The Act prescribes that upon the application being filed, together with the affidavit under section 26A, there must be investigations conducted by the Director-General of Licensing NT (“the Director-General”) in relation to the application. The Commission has received no information to indicate there have been any adverse matters discovered as a result of that investigation by the Director-General.

Advertising and Objections

11. Section 32A(2) of the Act provides that where an application for variation of conditions of licence are made; “(i)f the Director-General considers it to be in the public interest, the Director-General may require the applicant to publish notice of the application in the way, and within the period, specified by the Director-General”.
12. In this application, the Deputy Director-General exercised her discretion and did not require the applicant to advertise the application “given it was for a limited period of time and given the nature of the matter”.
13. It is noted that section 32A(5) of the Act requires that the Director-General must inform:
 - a. the Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”) of the Department of Health (“DOH”);
 - b. the Commissioner of Police; and
 - c. if the application relates to premises within the area of a shire council or a regional council - the Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”) of the council.
14. The Commission notes that the Director-General also forwarded a copy of the application to the Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services (“NTFRS”) for comment.
15. With respect to this application; the DOH, NT Police and NTFRS did not have any adverse comment or objection. The Darwin City Council (“DCC”) advised that it “supports variations for extensions of trading hours (2 hours earlier or later) for New Year’s Eve, St Patrick’s Day and telecasts for special international sporting and cultural events”. It is rather unfortunate that such a generic response has been received, rather than one that actually considers this application; however the Commission has assumed by this response that there is no objection made.

Public Hearing

16. Pursuant to section 50 of the Act, the Director-General must refer *inter alia* applications under section 32A of the Act to the Commission. Therefore this application must be heard and determined by this Commission.
17. Mrs Kelleher appeared on behalf of the applicant by way of audio link. Mr Phil Timney as representative for the Director-General was present to provide information and assistance to the Commission during the course of the hearing.
18. Pursuant to section 53 of the Act; the Commission is not bound by the rules of evidence and may inform itself in the manner it considers appropriate and conduct the hearing, or part of the hearing, by use of telephone or online facilities. A hearing must also be conducted in public unless the Commission considers that a public hearing is likely to cause undue hardship to a person. No such submission has been made to this Commission and there is no evidence to suggest any such hardship.

Assessment of the Application

19. As noted earlier, there were no objections to this application. Despite there being no objections made to the application lodged by the Applicant, section 6B of the Act makes clear that it is the Applicant who bears the onus of satisfying the Commission that the approval of the application meets the public interest and community impact test.
20. As is clear from section 6(1) of the Act; when considering or determining an application under the Act in respect of licensed premises, this Commission **must** apply the public interest and community impact test as relevant to the application. Section 6(2) of the Act provides that:

“For subsection (1), the public interest and community impact test requires consideration of the following objectives:

- a. harm or ill-health caused to people, or a group of people, by the consumption of liquor is to be minimised;
- b. liquor is to be sold, or sold and consumed, on licensed premises in a responsible manner;
- c. public order and safety must not be jeopardised, particularly where circumstances or events are expected to attract large numbers of persons to licensed premises or an area adjacent to those premises;
- d. the safety, health and welfare of persons who use licensed premises must not be put at risk;
- e. noise emanations from licensed premises must not be excessive;
- f. business conducted at licensed premises must not cause undue offence, annoyance, disturbance or inconvenience to persons who reside or work in the neighbourhood of the premises or who are

making their way to or from, or using the services of, a place of public worship, hospital or school;

- g. a licensee must comply with provisions of this Act and any other law in force in the Territory which regulate in any manner the sale or consumption of liquor or the location, construction or facilities of licensed premises, including:
 - i. by-laws made under the Local Government Act; and
 - ii. provisions of or under the Planning Act;
- h. each person involved in the business conducted at licensed premises must receive suitable training relevant to the person's role in the conduct of the business;
- i. the use of credit in the sale of liquor must be controlled;
- j. practices which encourage irresponsible drinking must be prohibited;
- k. it may be necessary or desirable to limit any of the following:
 - i. the kinds of liquor that may be sold;
 - ii. the manner in which liquor may be sold;
 - iii. the containers, or number or types of containers, in which liquor may be sold;
 - iv. the days on which and the times at which liquor may be sold;
- l. it may be necessary or desirable to prohibit persons or limit the number of persons who may be on licensed premises, on any particular part of licensed premises or in an adjacent area subject to the control of the licensee;
- m. it may be necessary or desirable to prohibit or limit the entertainment, or the kind of entertainment, which may be provided on licensed premises or in an adjacent area under the control of the licensee;
- n. it may be necessary or desirable to prohibit or limit promotional activities in which drinks are offered free or at reduced prices;
- o. any sale of additional liquor due to the grant of a licence or the relaxation of restrictive conditions will not increase anti-social behaviour.”

21. In addition, pursuant to section 6(3), the Commission must:

- a. consider the potential impact on the community in the area that would be affected by the outcome of the decision to grant or refuse an application or the changing of conditions of a licence and, in doing so, must have regard to:
 - i. the harm that might be caused (whether to the community as a whole or a group within the community) due to the excessive or inappropriate consumption of liquor; and
 - ii. the cultural, recreational, employment or tourism impacts; and
 - iii. the social impact in, and the impact on the amenity of, the locality of the premises or proposed premises; and
 - iv. the density of existing liquor licences within the community area; and
 - v. the volume of alcohol sales within the community area, and any increase in volume within the community area arising from the licence the subject of the application; and
 - vi. any other prescribed matter; and
- b. apply the community impact assessment guidelines.”

22. On 6 March 2018, pursuant to section 6A of the Act, the Minister by Gazette notice published community impact assessment guidelines for determining whether or not an application being considered or determined under section 6(1) satisfies the public interest and community impact test. Relevantly those guidelines are stated to

“... set out those matters that will be considered by the Commission when assessing the community impact of the application against the criteria set out in section 6A(1) of the Liquor Act”.

23. Those matters are identified as follows:

Criteria	Matters to be considered
<p>The potential harm or health impact that may be caused to people, or any group of people within the local community area, due to the availability and accessibility of an additional liquor outlet.</p>	<p>Are there any ‘at-risk’ groups or sub-communities within the locality? This may include –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • children and young people; • Aboriginal people normally resident within the locality and those Aboriginal people that might be likely to travel to the locality from a dry community;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • migrant groups from non-English speaking countries; • people in low socio-economic areas; and/or • communities that experience high tourist/visitor numbers. <hr/> <p>Are there any community building, facilities and areas within the locality? Such facilities would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • schools and educational institutions; • hospitals, drug and alcohol treatment centres; • accommodation or refuges for young or disadvantaged people; • child care centres; • recreational areas; • dry areas; and • any other area where young people may congregate or be attracted to. <hr/> <p>What policies and procedures will the applicant implement to minimise any potential harm or health impacts to these 'at-risk' groups or sub-communities</p>
<p>Information about the location and area in which the premises is proposed to be so as to assess any social impact on the community. This includes information about the density of licensed premises within the community area.</p>	<p>This may include crimes statistics, social profile information and the location of existing licensed premises.</p> <p>This could also include traffic and pedestrian impact and any plans developed to address these potential issues.</p>

Volume	<p>This may include projected sales volumes and marketing analysis, liquor type and customer demographic (where applicable this should be provided for both on and off premises sales).</p> <p>The Commission will consider information available to it about the current alcohol consumption rates for the community area.</p>
Any cultural, recreational, employment or tourism benefits for the local community area.	Will the proposed licensed premises provide economic benefits, cultural, recreational or tourism benefits or any additional employment opportunities and to what level?
Why the grant of a relevant application is in the public interest and how the additional liquor outlet will benefit the local and broader community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What additional services will be provided other than simply an additional outlet for the sale of liquor – this may include accommodation or dining? • Will the proposed licensed premises provide additional choices of service or products that are no available in the area? • Will the proposed premises provide liquor in a manner known to be safe and to minimise adverse impacts? • Will it use existing premises improve or add to existing premises or is it a new premises?

24. As can be seen from the above, there are a large number of matters that this Commission must consider and that the Applicant must address (and satisfy the Commission of). The guidelines make clear however that:

“... the Commission has the authority to consider a broad range of issues specific to each application and flexibility exists to assess each individual application on its merits”.

25. With respect to this application, the Commission considers it relevant to note that this is not an application for a new licence. It is therefore noted that some of the matters which would be highly relevant to an application with respect to new premises (or what might otherwise be termed an “additional liquor outlet”) are not

as significant with respect to an application such as this for a variation. It is also important to recall that this is an application to:

- a. *temporarily* vary conditions of an existing licence;
 - b. for a single event being a “Christmas Luncheon”;
 - c. on a single date, namely Tuesday 25 December 2018; and
 - d. with respect to a licence for which there has been no negative compliance history.
26. In relation to the public interest and community impact test and also the community impact assessment guidelines; the applicant provided written submissions, which the Commission has considered. The event is intended to be a ticketed event with a buffet lunch and gifts and entertainment for members and their children. The event is for four (4) hours duration with staff employed on that day having RSA training and no amplified music to be played externally to impact on the surrounding neighbours. It is estimated that approximately 350 persons will attend the event. The applicant has also confirmed that it does not propose there to be any changes to the takeaway restriction of **no** takeaway on Christmas Day. It is noteworthy that the applicant has held this luncheon on a number of prior occasions in accordance with variations granted to the licence and there have been no issues.
27. The Commission has carefully considered all submissions made by the applicant. It is clear that this event is a “family friendly” event. The Commission is satisfied that the public interest and community impact test and guidelines, as far as they are relevant with respect to this variation application, have been satisfied and in all of the circumstances, the Commission is, on balance, satisfied that it is appropriate to vary the conditions of the licence as sought.
28. To avoid any doubt, the Commission notes that the variation of the trading hours for this event on Christmas Day does **NOT** permit the applicant to sell liquor for removal and consumption away from the licensed premises to **ANY** persons (financial members or otherwise). The applicant is further not permitted by this variation to operate its gaming machines on this day. The Commission reminds the applicant that pursuant to s.88(c) of the *Gaming Machine Act* and regulation 10(a) of the *Gaming Machine Regulations* the applicant is not able to operate their gaming machines on this day.
29. For the reasons outlined and having regard to the objects of the Act the Commission has decided to vary the conditions of the licence as outlined at the start of this Decision Notice.

Notice of Rights:

30. Section 120ZA of the Act provides that a reviewable decision is a Commission decision that is specified in the Schedule to the Act. A decision to vary the conditions of a liquor licence pursuant to section 32A of the Act is specified in the Schedule and is a reviewable decision.

31. Section 120ZC of the Act provides that a person affected by this decision may seek a review before the Northern Territory Civil and Administrative Tribunal. Any application for review of this decision must be lodged within 28 days of the date of this decision.
32. For the purpose of this decision, and in accordance with section 120ZB(1)(b) and (c) of the Act, the affected person is the applicant.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jodi Truman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

JODI TRUMAN
Presiding Member
Deputy Chairperson

20 December 2018