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WA Venues Big Winners at National Awards for Excellence

Four West Australian hotels and hospitality venues received national recognition at the 2012 Australian Hotels Association National Awards for Excellence held in Hobart on 5 September.

The Breakwater, Pinctada Cable Beach Resort and Spa, Parmelia Hilton Perth, and the Hyde Park Hotel all won major awards for excellence.

AHA(WA) CEO, Bradley Woods, said the venues representing WA further reinforced that the State has some of the best hotels, bars, taverns and service professionals in Australia.

"West Australian hotel and hospitality venues operate to consistently high standards and have continued to develop the offer provided to guests and customers," Mr Woods said. [Click here to read more.](#)
[Click here to view photos of the evening.](#)

AHA Membership - enhancing your benefits



The AHA is continually looking for ways to enhance your membership benefits and provide value added services.

Australian Hotels Association
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

We would appreciate you taking the time to complete this quick 1 minute multiple choice survey, by completing this survey you are providing the AHA with detailed information which will assist us in providing enhanced membership benefits.

[Click here to take the one minute survey](#). Thank you for your participation.

Prostitutes and Licensed Premises

Journal Article written by Peter Whennan of Dwyer Durack

In 2012 the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (“QCAT”) found in favour of a prostitute who made a discrimination claim against a Moranbah motelier on the basis of lawful sexual activity. The respondent relied on the provisions of the *Liquor Act 1992* (Qld) that prohibits the provision of goods or services without prior consent of the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation. QCAT held that the motelier’s conduct amounted to discrimination as it is an offence against the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (Qld) to discriminate against a person on the basis of engaging in lawful sexual activity.

Under current Western Australian law it is not possible for a licensee to be exposed to a similar ruling for refusing a prostitute entry to their premises. To the contrary a licensee may be exposed to a substantial penalty for not proactively removing a known prostitute from their premises.

To understand the Western Australian position in respect to the legality of prostitutes on licenses premises the *Liquor Control Act 1988* (WA), *Prostitution Act 2000* (WA) and *Equal Opportunity Act 1984* (WA) must be examined.

Liquor Control Act 1988

Section 115(1)(b) of the LCA states that it an offence for a licensee to permit any reputed thief, prostitute or supplier of unlawful drugs to remain on the licensed premises.

To date the provisions of 115(1)(b) of the LCA, insofar as they relate to prostitute s have not been examined by the Courts. In the absence of any guidance from the Courts licensees ought to take a strict interpretation of section 115(1)(b) and evict any person from the premises that is a known or can be reasonably presumed to be a prostitute .

Licensees can be fined \$10,000.00 per offence and an employee or agent can be fined \$4000.00 for permitting a prostitute to remain on licensed premises.

Prostitution Act 2000

The only section of the Prostitution Act that deals specifically with licensed



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premises is Section 21Q which states that it is an offence to operate a sexual service business at or from licensed premises. The penalty for contravening section 21Q is a fine of \$50,000.00.

Section 5 of the *Prostitution Act* makes it a criminal offence to seek a prostitute in or in view or within hearing of a public place. Section 6 of the *Prostitution Act* makes it a criminal offence for a prostitute to seek a client in or in view or within hearing of a public place. Public place is defined in section 3 of the *Prostitution Act* to mean any place to which the public, or any section of the public, have or are permitted to have access whether on payment or otherwise. A licensed premise clearly falls under the definition of public place.

In a practical sense the *Prostitution Act* exposes the prostitute and the client to criminal prosecution if they are caught engaging in prostitution related activities on licensed premises.

Equal Opportunity Act 1984

The Equal Opportunity Act 1984 does not contain a provision that protects prostitutes from discrimination on the basis of lawful sexual activity.

Key Differences between Queensland and Western Australia

1. The *Liquor Control Act 1988* (WA) contains a specific offence provision in respect to a licensee allowing prostitutes on licensed premises. The *Liquor Act 1992* (QLD) does not have an analogous offence provision.
2. Section 7(l) of the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (Qld) provides for an offence for discriminating against a person engaging in lawful sexual activity where there is no analogous provision in the *Equality Opportunity Act 1984* (WA).

Summary

Licensees in Western Australia should be aware that allowing prostitutes and prostitution activity to occur on licensed premises may expose them to a fine under the *Liquor Control Act 1988* (WA) and put their license in jeopardy. Licensees should also be aware that allowing prostitution activity to occur on their licensed premises may also expose their patrons to criminal prosecution.

Upcoming AHA Divisional Meeting

The next AHA divisional meeting is for the North Metropolitan Division - a meeting notice to RSVP attendance will be distributed to these members in the next week.

The meeting will be held in conjunction with a lunch hosted by Divisional President Sean Reid.

Date: Wednesday 31 October

Time: 1pm

Venue: The Breakwater, Hillarys

The South Metropolitan Divisional meeting following a similar format will be held in November with venue and date to be advised.

call 9321 7701



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AHA TRAINING NEWS

NEW Free AHA Liquor Licensing Compliance Workshops



The AHA(WA) has introduced free liquor licensing compliance workshops for members as a value added membership benefit.

Between legislation, regulation, and policy changes keeping up to date with the shifting sands of compliance in WA is a constant task, and with the prohibitive cost of non-compliance a constant

threat to the profitability of your business it is more important than ever to make sure everybody knows the rules and keeps up to date with any changes.

To assist you and your staff in avoiding costly infringements, we have developed this new compliance workshop for managers and operational staff.

The AHA Compliance Workshops cover common breaches and key legislative changes that can affect your business. The Workshops are available to all AHA members free of charge. The first workshop is scheduled for the beginning of October. Classroom Workshop spots are limited so contact us now to secure places for your staff or [book online on the AHA website by clicking here.](#)

Upgrade offer for Approved Managers

With the now superseded Liquor Licensing Course replaced by the Course in Management of Licensed Premises (MLP1) the AHA would like to offer all existing Approved Managers the opportunity to complete the most current course. The new Course in Management of Licensed Premises (MLP1) contains the most up-to-date information and relevant industry legislation. If you are interested in updating your knowledge and improving your skills as an Approved Manager you can complete the course either online or in the classroom for a drastically reduced price.

Only \$149* for online MLP1

Only \$179 for classroom MLP1 (very limited places available for classroom)

Please call us on 9321 7701 for further clarification and how you can take advantage of this special offer

Please note: There is no requirement to take up this offer

WORKPLACE RELATIONS AND IR NEWS

Travel and Work WA - Dublin



travelandworkwa.com

The WA hospitality industry is in desperate need of semiskilled labour, and the AHA has lead the initiative to help meet this need by organising a series of seminars in Ireland to attract working holidaymakers to the WA hospitality industry.

The AHA's Travel and Work WA seminars will take place on October 2 and 3 in Dublin. The seminars have already attracted significant interest from Irish media and local universities and colleges in Dublin.

AHA(WA) CEO Bradley Woods says "What we are saying to young people in Ireland is 'if you are an enthusiastic and experienced hospitality worker willing to travel to Western Australia then there may be a position waiting for you,' so far the response to that message has been fantastic.

"We have had over 600 people register to attend the Travel and Work WA Dublin seminars." To view the [Travel and Work WA website click here](#).

Fair Work Ombudsman National Accommodation & Food Services Campaign



From 2012-2015, Fair Work Ombudsman will be targeting the Accommodation & Food Services sector to promote and assess compliance with the *Fair Work Act 2009*, *Fair Work Regulations 2009* and applicable Modern Awards.

The 'Accommodation and Food Services' sector includes:

- Accommodation;
- Pubs, taverns and bars;
- Catering;
- Takeaway food.

Approximately 4,000 employers will be chosen nationally to participate in the campaign to ensure they are complying with their minimum wage and entitlement obligations.

The Australian Hotels Association (AHA) is currently liaising with the Fair Work Ombudsman to ensure effective communication with members in the lead up to the campaign.

The Campaign will take place over the next three years as follows:

	Communication Strategy	Audit Phase
Accommodation, pubs/taverns and bars	August 2012	January-March 2013
Café restaurant	Nov/Dec 2012	August-September

and catering		2013
Takeaway foods	May/June 2013	January-March 2014
Follow up	N/A	November-December 2014

The Fair Work Ombudsman has developed a dedicated webpage for the hospitality industry at www.fairwork.gov.au/hospitality. Topics covered include classifications and categories, pay, leave, hours of work, rosters and breaks, apprenticeships, traineeships, termination and redundancy.

In addition, on Tuesday 25 September, Fair Work Ombudsman will be running a free webinar for accommodation, pub, tavern and bar employers.

This webinar will provide employers with:

- An overview of the campaign and what to expect if your business is selected for review;
- An overview of the applicable Modern Awards to help you understand your obligations;
- A walk through the resources and tools available on the Fair Work Ombudsman's website to help you comply.

AHA(WA) members are encouraged to take this opportunity to ensure compliance with Australian workplace laws.

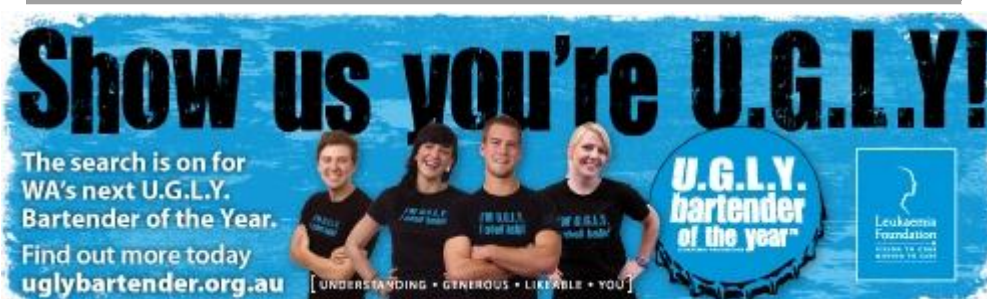
For further information or assistance, please contact the AHA(WA) Employment Relations department by calling (08) 9321 7701 or email iradmin@ahawa.asn.au.

Upcoming Queen's Birthday Public Holiday

Please be advised that the upcoming Queen's Birthday public holiday is **Monday, 1 October 2012**.

Non-metropolitan local authorities may celebrate the Queen's Birthday Public Holiday on and alternative dates.

AHA(WA) are in the process of updating public holiday memorandums which will be made available in the members' section of our website shortly.



IN THE NEWS

10 September 2012

From The Shout

Why are Australians drinking less?

Diageo Australia managing director Tim Salt believes per capita alcohol consumption is falling only because of short-term economic factors, but Australian Liquor Stores Association (**ALSA**) life member Mal Higgs believes healthier lifestyles are playing a part.

Released in June, the latest ABS figures once again showed per capita alcohol consumption had dropped, this time by 2.6 per cent on the previous year.

At last week's ALSA conference, Salt said the decline in consumption over the last 18 months could be attributed solely to a lack of consumer confidence.

"If you look back, before the global financial crisis, for every dollar that somebody earned of disposable income they were spending \$1.04, so they were actually borrowing against mortgages to spend and consume," he said.

"Now you're seeing that figure has dropped to something like 90 cents in the dollar."

"People are making conscious decisions on where they are spending their money, or not spending it."

But Higgs said that while he couldn't back it up with statistics, he senses falling consumption is partly down to "people realising that they are going to be living longer, due to the innovation in the healthcare industry".

"Therefore, they want to have a healthier lifestyle, and drinking less alcohol is part of that," he said.

Salt responded: "Mal may have a point, but there's nothing in the data at the moment that suggests to me that there's been a structural shift in the industry, as opposed to a short-term blip that's caused by economic challenges."

10 September 2012

From accom news

Hope for a review of penalty rates

The federal tourism minister Martin Ferguson has emphasised that weekend and public holiday 'penalty on penalty' issues represented a major obstacle for the tourism industry in the current economic climate and hopes a review by Fair Work Australia will lessen wage pressures.

Speaking at a national hospitality conference in Hobart, Mr Ferguson said, "I hope the bench of Fair Work Australia has given proper regard to the input of the tourism industry in this context because I understand that is the key issue to industry at this point in time."

The minister was confident that new penalty provisions would be considered in Fair Work Australia's review, which he expects to be completed by the end of the year.

9 September 2012
From the Sunday Times

Problem-drinker database Boozers' blacklist

WA's peak hospitality body has called for a register of problem drinkers to curb alcohol abuse. The Australian Hotels Association says a database of known alcoholics and booze abusers would better target problem drinkers without punishing entire country towns with blanket restrictions.

Director of Liquor Licensing Barry Sargeant is considering drink restrictions for the hard-drinking towns of Kalgoorlie, Boulder, Coolgardie and Kambalda and across the Pilbara. Under the Goldfields plan, liquor outlets would be banned from selling takeaway alcohol on Sundays and restricted to sales times of noon to 8pm, Monday to Saturday.

Packaged liquor, including cask wine, in containers greater than one litre with an alcohol content of 6 per cent or more, would be banned along with beer in bottles of 400ml or more.

"Our preference would be to target the individuals who are suffering alcohol abuse and provide the appropriate level of intervention, rehabilitation and support," Mr Woods said. AHA WA chief executive Bradley Woods said the move would punish the masses.

"The problem with that is that there is a substantial lack of infrastructure in regional WA as far as alcohol and drug rehabilitation centres. Instead of putting in place the right resources, they are just trying to cut off supply.

"We understand that there are some problems around early morning consumption by some chronic alcoholics who are getting access to cask wine early in the morning and that's where this problem has emanated from."

Mr Woods said the association had been lobbying for years for a database similar to one imposed in the Northern Territory mid-last year. Under the scheme, banned drinkers were listed on an online database linked to takeaway liquor outlets and refused service if on the blacklist. The register was recently scrapped by the Northern Territory's new Country Liberal Party government.

WA Police Commissioner Karl O'Callaghan said a banned drinker register would take considerable IT infrastructure to set up and would not address secondary supply issues of people buying alcohol for others.

7 September 2012
From WA Today

First city waterfront hotel will 'put Perth on the map'

The first waterfront hotel in the Perth CBD will likely be an architectural feat that could put the new Elizabeth Quay development on the tourism map, according to the Australian Hotels Association. The state government made a call for expressions of interest to build the "world-class" hotel with at least 400 beds yesterday, but AHA WA chief executive officer Bradley Woods said international chains already had shown interest in the premier site. The strong competition meant prospective developers would need to be creative in their applications and put forward "an identifiable hotel".

"This is a perfect opportunity to come up with a benchmark, stand-out, significant hotel for Perth and the Perth waterfront," Mr Woods said. "We would think that as part of the consideration of the tenders that come through for the project, the criteria should examine not just the financial bottom line but also what does it delivers [in terms of] the culture ... and architectural and interior design in the Perth tourism market. There's a really good opportunity here, if it's handled well and the state government has the right principles in place, to put that hotel and the precinct on the tourism map."

Mr Woods said while the hotel would likely be a unique construction it was possible to create something that was less controversial than the Perth Arena's hexagonally-shaped dome.

"You can still have a rectangular-shaped building that is very unique and identifiable architecturally but also very complimentary to the outside environment and the waterfront without it being simply a square box," he said. "There's been some very, very successful [hotels] that have been built around the world; they become tourist attractions in their own right."

Mr Woods said he expected the hotel to be of 4.5-5-star quality and to target tourists rather than the corporate sector.

"There's enough corporate style accommodation in the Perth market and this is a perfect opportunity for the hotel to lend itself towards the leisure market," he said.

Urban Development Institute of Australia WA chief executive officer Debra Goostrey said while the hotel would inevitably be at the premium end, it would not necessarily be the most expensive in the city. "To have a world-class hotel doesn't mean to say it has to have a premium price tag; it can actually cater for a range of requirements," she said. "People will want to go to a restaurant on the waterfront, so it's logical that it will have that. But it can have a range of rooms, from rooms that are more affordable - probably they won't be overlooking the water - through to suites that cater for those people looking for the premium experience."

Perth is in desperate need of short-term accommodation, with the highest occupancy rate of any Australian capital city, particular during the week when business travellers flood the market. The AHA WA and Tourism WA estimate the city needs 1900 new hotel beds by 2020 to meet demand. Crown Perth last month announced it was building a six-star hotel with 500 beds next to the casino at Burswood and a further 700 beds are in the pipeline in various developments across the city. Ms Goostrey said the location of the site was "very attractive" to international and local developers. She expected the project to end up a joint venture between Australian and overseas investors.

6 September 2012

From John Day Minister for Planning; Culture and the Arts; Science and Innovation

Hotel Developers sought for Elizabeth Quay

The State Government today called for expressions of interest for the first land release at Elizabeth Quay.

Planning Minister John Day said two sites adjacent to Barrack Square would be the first to go to market and would meet the State Government's key objective of delivering a new premium hotel in the project area.

"Elizabeth Quay is a premier waterfront development that is set to make a major contribution to the future expansion and diversity of Perth's city centre," Mr Day said.

"These two sites will establish the eastern peninsula of the quay and offer a land area of more than 6,800sqm for a mix of retail, residential and short stay accommodation."

With frontages to Barrack Street and a number of internal roads and laneways, the sites offer views across the inlet and will be subject to high volumes of foot traffic from the neighbouring precincts of Supreme Court Gardens and Barrack Square.

The Minister said strong public transport links at Elizabeth Quay and its close proximity to the city's main retail, commercial and tourism precincts underpinned the value for investors, occupants, visitors and the community.

"Elizabeth Quay is the centrepiece of a plan to renew Perth and presents a rare opportunity for an innovative developer to capitalise on Western Australia's strong growth," he said.

"Located in the city with the highest occupancy rates for hotel rooms in the nation, these two sites have the potential to deliver a world-class hotel for Perth and 400 new hotel rooms in the heart of the CBD.

"This first sales release comes as final design guidelines for the project are unveiled. When complete, Elizabeth Quay will deliver 800 residential dwellings, 200,000sqm of commercial space and 25,000sqm of retail space enclosing a stunning 2.7ha inlet."

6 September 2012
From accom news

Global Hotel Prices Rise in Every world Region – first time since 2007

For the first time in five years, hotel prices have risen across all of the regions surveyed in the Hotels.com Hotel Price Index, despite continued political and economic instability across Europe and the US.

According to the latest HPI, which surveyed hotel prices for the first half of 2012, the average price for a hotel room, regardless of currency, rose 4% when compared to the same period in 2011. The Hotels.com HPI is based on bookings made on Hotels.com sites around the world and tracks the real prices paid per hotel room (rather than advertised rates) for around 140,000 properties across the globe.

Prices in the Pacific rose 6%, fuelled by Australia's strong economy and sturdy corporate travel sector. Prices in Asia recovered, growing 4%, following the natural disasters, which affected the region in 2011. Prices in North America and the Caribbean rose 5% and average rates in Europe and the Middle East as well as Latin America, rose by 1%.

Johan Svanstrom, Vice President, Hotels.com Asia Pacific, said: "The latest HPI figures prove the hotel industry's recovery has begun. Hotel rates are on the rise in APAC as business travel remains buoyant and leisure travel becomes more affordable and accessible with the expansion of low cost carriers throughout the region. We expect this upward movement across APAC to continue in 2013."

Global highlights

Australian travellers experienced steep price rises in more than two thirds of the international destinations surveyed in the HPI, although price increases are not deterring Australians from travelling as they head overseas in record numbers.

Australian travellers visiting the US, a 'darling' destination, were met with price rises in 13 of the 15 destinations surveyed in the HPI, as the Australian dollar lost 4% in value against the US dollar in the first half of 2012. Prices rose 15% in Miami and Orlando to \$208 and \$118 respectively. Prices were also up 11% in Honolulu, averaging \$227. New York rates, already among the highest in the world, rose 3% to \$268.

In contrast, prices in many of Europe's top destinations fell as the impact of the Eurozone crisis weakened domestic demand. Rome and Vienna were among the world's cities to experience price falls, with rates dropping 12% to \$189 and 11% to \$150 respectively. Prices in Venice, one of the HPI's most expensive destinations, suffered a 7% fall to \$233. In stark contrast to other cities that recently hosted major sporting events, London hotel prices were flat in the lead-up to the Olympics, as hoteliers were forced to cut rates to fill rooms.

The world's most expensive city for Australian travellers was Rio de Janeiro. The 2016 Olympic host city experienced a 25% increase to \$294 due to its strong economy. Mexico City recorded a 50% rise to \$134, while the Caribbean resort of Cancun saw prices climb by 6% to \$205.

Closer to home, results were mixed. In business hubs such as Hong Kong and Singapore, prices climbed in line with demand. Rates in Hong Kong were up 13% to \$195 and Singapore, the world's eighth most expensive city, saw a relatively modest rise of 4% to \$222. Popular holiday destinations in Thailand and Vietnam experienced tourist-friendly decreases. Average rates in Christchurch were up 58% to \$150, as a result of a significant lack of inventory following the tragic earthquake of 2011.

6 September 2012
From *ehotelier.com*

The 5 worst customer services mistakes

More than any other department in a business, customer service is subject to a slew of competing priorities and pressures. Control costs and making customers happy. Uphold policy while being a customer advocate. Try to upsell but stick to your average handle time. The list goes on and on. Unfortunately, attempts to shore up performance on one end of the scale can often lead to disaster in another area. Here are a few of the most common examples of where things can go horribly wrong.

1. **Treating process as the outcome.** If you always do A, then B, then C, the customer will be happy, right? Maybe sometimes, but people are unique, situations are different and emotions often come into play. Research consistently shows that an emotional tie is the key to a strong relationship. Trying to script out every aspect of the relationship is about as effective as going on a first date and spending the whole night reading pre-written sentences off of a stack of notecards. It's okay to have a toolbox of processes and approaches, but representatives should be given some level of empowerment to adapt to the specifics of the situation.
2. **Cramming too much into the service interaction.** There is

nothing wrong with upselling if it is appropriate given the particular circumstances of the interaction. If a customer has a clear need that could be met by the company and appears to have a few extra minutes, offering to describe an additional service can be a true win-win opportunity. But it has to be done in the right context. Offering a balance transfer to someone whose interest rate was just raised, talking about a new account to someone who just had a bad experience with an existing account, or trying to describe a new product to someone who is clearly in a hurry is never a good idea. Whatever gets incented will win, which can often mean the service part of the interaction (the reason for the call) may get glossed over so the rep can offer three or four different add-on products, if that's how they get extra compensation.

3. **Automating the customer experience.** People are hopefully smart enough to know when something is real, and when it is not. My son and I recently hit a fast-food drive-through. A pleasant female voice asked if we wanted to try the new special, and when I said no thanks, a gruff teenage male voice came on the speaker and continued to take the rest of the order, making it pretty obvious the initial welcome speech was a recording. My son started laughing so hard that the cashier was clearly offended. There is a time and a place for automation, but companies need to remember that machines don't really smile. Only people do.
4. **Ignoring the need to defend the brand.** Service representatives need to act as customer advocates, but they also sometimes need to say no. A critical part of their job is to solve customer problems, but also to defend the brand. Unfortunately, many performance management systems put representatives in the no-win situation of having to choose between a good score on a survey or upholding policy. Instead, representatives need to treat their customers with dignity, regardless of if they say yes or no.
5. **Becoming a slave to a small number surveys.** Companies don't make their money from survey respondents. They make their money from customers. Once the survey enters into the dialog, sometimes that all changes. I was very loyal to a particular coffee shop until I heard an employee tell a customer, "You have been selected to take a survey. Make sure you give us great ratings or we all get in trouble." Since then I have started going somewhere else. I would have given perfect ratings—until that moment.

If used properly, surveys can be a very effective tool for looking at patterns or trends, and getting a representative view of how the service experience can be improved. However, over-reacting to a small number of surveys (or even just one survey) leads to attempts at manipulation, a constant game of whack-a-mole, and an overall degradation of service. Beyond that, small sample sizes can be dangerous. A score of 50 percent on a sample size of 10 has an error range of plus or minus 31 percent! In other words, the "real" score is anywhere between 81 percent and 19 percent. A manager cannot say with certainty where in that range the true score lies. Incentives would be based on random sampling variation, not on performance.

The key to avoiding these mistakes is to keep common sense in the equation and not try to over-react or over-legislate the service interaction. If you have hired smart, dedicated and friendly people, create the right environment and let them thrive. Your customers will notice.

Lion gets Corona's sister brands

Lion today confirmed its partnership with Grupo Modelo will be expanded to include the distribution of the Pacifico and Negra Modelo beers in the Australian market.

The deal was **tipped by TheShout in May**, after the Coopers-owned Premium Beverages ruled itself out of contention for the brands.

Managing director of Lion Beer, Spirits & Wine Australia, James Brindley said: "Pacifico and Negra Modelo are highly differentiated Mexican brews that will complement Lion's portfolio and continue to add great product diversity in niche on and off premise channels and Mexican specialty venues."

Garry Hastings, general manager, Modelo Oceania Region said: "Pacifico and Negra are both great brands that give Lion the opportunity to leverage the wave of interest in all things authentically Mexican.

"Both brands are 100 per cent brewed and bottled in Mexico and will appeal to consumers who are seeking easy drinking, yet distinctive flavour profiles," he said.

Lion expects to receive stock available for order from December 2012.

5 September 2012

From Minister for Tourism, Martin Ferguson AM MP, media release

KIWI's Keep Coming as Asia Dominates Growth

New Zealanders continue to dominate Australia's international visitor arrivals while Asian visitors remain Australia's strongest growth market according to the latest *International Visitors in Australia* survey by Tourism Research Australia.

Of the almost 1.2 million international visitor arrivals in the June 2012 quarter, almost one quarter (274,000) were from New Zealand (an increase of two per cent on the June quarter 2011). China boasted the second highest number (112,000) of visitors (an increase of 23 per cent on June quarter 2011) and total visitor numbers were up three per cent overall.

Every state and territory has New Zealand as one of its top three visitor markets. China is in the top three for Victoria, Queensland, New South Wales, and the ACT and has grown at an average annual rate of 14.2 percent nationally over the past decade compared with New Zealand's growth of six per cent over the same period.

More visitors came for business (up six per cent) and holidays (up two per cent) and trip expenditure was up one per cent.

For the 12 months to June, overall visitor arrivals increased one per cent to over 5.5 million, nights increased four per cent and expenditure up two per cent to \$18.3 billion.

Growth in travel continues to remain strong from Asian markets with Chinese visitor numbers growing by 16 per cent in the year ending June 2012. Overall, Asian visitors to Australia grew four from the previous corresponding period.

Minister for Tourism, Martin Ferguson AM MP, said the results confirmed Asia's importance to the tourism market in Australia.

“The latest survey confirms that Australia remains popular with our New Zealand neighbours. Our proximity to New Zealand will always make us a popular destination for business and leisure,” Minister Ferguson said.

“The strong growth though, continues from our Asian neighbours which is helping to offset the decrease from Europe and North America.

“This uncertainty is expected to continue in the short term due to the Australian dollar being at an all time high against the Euro and persistent economic problems in Europe.

“However, it is encouraging to see signs of recovery in some traditional markets with arrivals from the United States increasing by five per cent to the highest number recorded for a June quarter since the GFC, and a 12 per cent increase from Japan for the June quarter.

“The roll out of Tourism Australia’s updated *There’s nothing like Australiacampaign* and the \$48.5 million *Asian Marketing Fund* will provide further support to the promotion of Australia around the world in coming months, particularly in fast growing Asian markets.”
Victoria, Western Australia, and the ACT recorded the strongest growth in international visitors in the 12 months to June 2012 with arrivals up four per cent, three per cent, and two per cent, respectively.

4 September 2012
From CUB media release

We heard you... we’re fixing it Victoria Bitter will return to its best
Carlton & United Breweries (CUB) confirms that Australia’s most iconic beer, **Victoria Bitter** will return to its original full strength and full flavour from October. Changes to the packaging, marketing and recipe, with a resultant change in alcohol strength of Victoria Bitter are amongst a raft of changes intended to restore Australia’s most iconic beer “back to its best”. CUB’s Chief Marketing Officer Andy Gibson says that today’s announcement is a victory for the beer drinkers of Australia.

“The Vic Bitter drinkers have spoken and told us that we should not have tinkered with their beer”, Gibson said. “So we have listened and during the course of October Victoria Bitter will be returning to its best, in fact we reckon it will be better than ever.”

In a first for the brewer, CUB Chief Executive Ari Mervis has penned a full page “We heard you...we’re fixing it” letter to the beer drinkers of Australia, stating that we “had got it wrong” with changes to the brew over the past few years. The new Victoria Bitter will begin to roll out to pubs, bars and bottle shops nationally over the course of October. The wholesale price of Vic Bitter will not change.

Victoria Bitter will be:

- Returning to full flavour, full strength at 4.9%;
- Bringing back the unmistakable packaging, including reinstating the “Victoria Bitter” name on labels and cans; and
- Restoring the tagline “For a hard earned thirst”.

4 September 2012
From Dr Kim Hames, Deputy Premier; Health; Tourism

Mr Brendon Grylls, minister for Regional Development; Lands; minister Assisting the Minister for State Development

Innovative arts festival brings world to Pilbara

A three-week celebration of arts and culture in Western Australia's Pilbara will entertain crowds with world-class acts from across Australia.

Tourism Minister Kim Hames said the Red Earth Arts Festival, now in its third year, would feature more than 50 events in Karratha, Dampier, Roebourne, Wickham and Point Samson.

"The Shire of Roebourne is well-known for its thriving resources industry but it also boasts beautiful beaches and stunning natural landscapes which will provide an extraordinary backdrop for an arts and cultural festival, the only event of its kind in the Pilbara," Dr Hames said.

"The festival will offer a range of free and ticketed entertainment including sand sculptures, film nights, street art workshops, comedy shows, jazz music, theatre and dance performances and a photography exhibition."

The Minister said the State Government was a proud sponsor of the Red Earth Arts Festival through Eventscorp's Regional Events Scheme, which is jointly funded by Royalties for Regions.

"Local events like this festival make a significant contribution to our State because they attract visitors, engage local arts and cultural groups and provide a showcase for regional talent," Dr Hames said.

Regional Development Minister Brendon Grylls said thanks to Royalties for Regions funding, there were more events on the State Government's events calendar than ever before.

"With \$40million in Royalties for Regions funding being dedicated to events, communities are excited and engaged and people have yet another reason to visit our regional towns," Mr Grylls said.

"The State Government is committed to the development of sustainable and liveable regional communities, and investing in social amenities such as events is central to achieving this."

3 September 2012

From The Shout

Solotel battles Kings Cross restrictions

Kings Cross pub operator Solotel has won an injunction against laws proposed to dramatically restrict licence conditions of venues in the precinct.

Following the death of teenager Thomas Kelly the OLGR put forward severe restrictions on service of alcohol, citing 'secret data' that validates the move.

Solitel Hospitality Group (**SHG**), operators of the Kings Cross Hotel, has challenged the OLGR and won the right to see the supporting evidence. The regulator has seven days to respond to the decision.

The NSW Supreme Court agreed that in the interest of fairness the documents, described in court as secret data, should be made available.

Previous attempts to gain access to the apparently damning statistics were

thwarted by the OLGR.

"If OLGR's decisions are to be based on facts, why wouldn't they release this important information?" said Andrew Gibbs, SHG CEO. "We believe that regulatory decisions about the Kings Cross area should be based on all the available evidence, such as the fact that assaults in Kings Cross have dropped a dramatic 37 per cent over the past few years."

The 58 licensed venues affected by the new restrictions show no signs of accepting the impact on their businesses, with further developments inevitable over coming weeks.

The proposed restrictions would include: bans on shots, doubles and RTDs; glassware regulations and four drinks at a time purchase limit after midnight; two RSA officers after 11pm; cessation of alcohol sales one hour before doors close.

3 September 2012

From The Shout

Coopers to launch more craft beers

Coopers Brewery will expand its Thomas Cooper's Selection label to include seasonal beers, chairman Glenn Cooper (pictured) has revealed.

Cooper told TheShout that Thomas Cooper's Selection is set to become a permanent fixture as the brewer's "craft beer division", following the launch of the Celebration Ale earlier this year.

"It's that division that we can bring in some special beers, like a winter warmer, and they would be under the Thomas Cooper's Selection banner," Cooper said.

"If I was a betting man, I think you'll find the second product released under Thomas Cooper's Selection not before summer, but soon after."

Cooper said the new label will enable Coopers to experiment with craft beers without running the risk of confusing people by messing with its mainstay range of Pale Ale, Sparkling Ale and Stout.

"People say to me now, 'Cooper's is not craft anymore, because you're too big'," he said.

"That's why this range of Thomas Cooper's has come along. It gives us a chance to differentiate between the real Coopers big sellers and a craft department."

"It's totally different in design and presentation to our normal beers, so it's easily distinguishable as the craft division of Coopers," he said.

Cooper said early indications are that the Celebration Ale may be a permanent fixture in the range, which will otherwise consist of beers that are "more relevant to a season".

"I would like to really support the on-premise, so we may test some new products in the on-premise first," he said.

3 September 2012

ABC News

Political parties in a scrap over Banned Drinker Register

The Northern Territory Opposition says the new Government is giving thousands of problem drinkers access to alcohol.

People in the Darwin and Palmerston regions no longer need to have their personal ID scanned to buy takeaway alcohol.

It is the first step in the Country Liberals' plan to scrap Labor's Banned Drinker Register.

Opposition Leader Delia Lawrie says the register should be kept in place until alternative measures are set up.

"We now have 2,500 drunks walking into our bottle shops back on the grog and pouring out into our parks and onto our streets," she said.

"Anti-social behaviour is on the rise and I'm really concerned that assault crimes will be on the rise as well."

The Chief Minister Terry Mills says the register failed to deter problem drinkers.

"The Opposition Leader is basing her comments on the assumption, the false assumption, that these people could not access alcohol," he said.

"They could - they could buy alcohol from a front bar, they could have it supplied to them if they've got a problem with alcohol and they'll certainly find a way of getting it.

"And the crime stats showed that it was not fixing the problem."

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