

ClubsNSW



CLUBSNSW VENUE SAFETY GUIDELINE

This document is designed to assist registered clubs make the transition away from mandatory liquor license conditions imposed under Schedule 4 of the Liquor Act 2007. To develop a venue management plan to address the likelihood of, and management of, alcohol related incidents. The guideline has the endorsement of Communities NSW.

Whilst the suggested measures contained within the guide are by no means an exhaustive list of potential safety measures for licensed venues, it will assist registered clubs to identify the types of effective measures that can reduce the potential for incidents on, or in the vicinity of the premise.

A detailed safety plan that uses the suggested categories will also demonstrate to the relevant authorities, club members and guests that a club has definite policies governing liquor, security and venue transport to address any safety concerns that may have been an issue in the past.

From 1 December 2009, registered clubs deemed to have recorded a high level of violent incidents on premise in a calendar year will have mandatory licence conditions imposed on their liquor license by regulation.

Clubs on this list that later proceed to register a reduction in incidents, to less than 12 on premise, in a 12 month period will have the opportunity to demonstrate to the Office of Liquor Gaming and Racing (OLGR) and the police that their venue no longer requires special license conditions.

To do so these clubs will need to develop a venue plan to detail their club's commitment to implement measures aimed at reducing the number of incidents on premise and to hopefully ensure that the club remains free of special license conditions into the future. This plan, whilst containing voluntary measures, should be submitted to the OLGR for approval.

This guide includes suggested responsible service of alcohol practice, security and patron safety measures for clubs. It is important to note, that this guide is not intended to act as a generic template for all clubs as individual venues will have differing safety priorities depending on their level of patronage, layout and locality.

As your club has already successfully reduced the number of assaults on premise it is in an ideal position to outline how the venue will continue to address any ongoing concerns.

Clubs seeking to develop a venue safety plan should always:

1. **Comply with all applicable Acts and Regulations for licensed premises.**
2. **Promote responsible service of alcohol practices that conform to community standards and expectations.**
3. **Inform and train staff on legislative requirements, risk management issues, and take appropriate steps to promote patron and employee care.**
4. **Maintain a pleasant and safe patron environment.**

A plan presents the opportunity to explain how current measures implemented by the club are working and to detail future actions to reduce the level of incidents. The plan should as a minimum address the following categories of risk management to address the demographic and operational issues that clubs may encounter.

Alcohol service and promotion

Continued vigilance in the responsible promotion and service of alcohol is a priority for clubs that have experienced ongoing incidents with intoxicated or aggressive patrons on premise. The OLGRL Liquor Promotions Guideline is attached to this document for clubs to consult when deciding on appropriate liquor promotions.

Clubs should demonstrate their responsibility by detailing measures taken that are already working. Such as:

- a ban on alcohol promotions encouraging the rapid or excessive consumption that has reduced the risk of having intoxicated people on premise;
- the use of responsible service of alcohol (RSA) marshals, resulting in a drop in the number of patrons ejected for inappropriate behaviour;
- an historical record of strong compliance with special license conditions and the Liquor Act 2008; and
- existing participation in any relevant local liquor accord;

The club should then proceed to outline future action to be taken. For example:

- the venue will promote the consumption of lower strength alcohol beverages;
- detail of the times and days that certain areas of the club will not permit the use of glassware; and
- any other measures implemented by the club voluntarily which goes beyond requirements.

Security

An appropriate level of venue security can act as a deterrent to unruly behaviour and potential incidents of violence. In demonstrating your venue has adequate security your safety plan should cover existing measures such as:

- detail of regular contact, (i.e. every month) with your local area police and the consideration of their advice in addressing any shared security concerns;
- how your relationship with neighbours has allowed the venue to identify and reduce noise and anti-social behaviour as patrons exit the premise;
- how on premise CCTV complies with relevant legislation and records sufficient recognition standards;
- the retention of specific measures that have delivered a decline in violent assaults on premise; and

- detail regarding the sufficient number of appropriately trained security on site at a particular time;

Then identify future action such as:

- training programs to be undertaken by security staff in managing conflict, denying entry to intoxicated people and escorting those who cause trouble off premise; and
- the development of a specific crowd management plan for club functions such as weddings and birthdays.

Transport

Club courtesy buses and taxi ranks are important services that allow club patrons to arrive and depart from a venue in an orderly and safe manner. Clubs seeking to demonstrate the provision of safe transport options for patrons may look to:

- detail the provision of a well lit and secure taxi rank for patrons;
- use of a secure taxi cab voucher system for patrons leaving the venue;
- outline the availability of a conveniently located car park for patrons driving home; and
- include information about a free or subsidised bus service provided by the club.

Writing your Safety Plan

Below is a brief example of a safety plan, to provide an insight as to how it may take shape for your particular club. The plan should only be a one to two page document with a copy on premise so that the local police or OLGR inspectors can view it if need be.

As stated previously a plan should only look to incorporate measures that will have an impact on patron safety. So if your club has never experienced a glassing incident, the continued use of plastic glassware may be unnecessary, unless imposed as a license condition. It will also be useful to determine which part of the club has experienced security issues to demonstrate how your plan has identified and targeted specific trouble spots.

Once a plan has been developed, it should be communicated to all employees, managers and contractors so that they are aware of their responsibilities.

Club Safety Plan – Example Only

Introduction

The (insert name) club has developed this plan to maintain the highest standards of responsible alcohol service and patron welfare. In making this commitment the club will continue to participate in our local liquor accord and will regularly consult with the local community and Police regarding the safety of the club premise.

In moving forward from the imposed mandatory license conditions, club management will detail below the new and existing safety measures that will assist the venue's transition, from the date of implementation.

Existing measures – alcohol

The club intends to retain a number of existing measures that have reduced incidents on premise. In particular, the club will continue:

- a ban on games of chance like 'toss the boss' as the level of excessive consumption by members and guests on premise has been reduced in the

- absence of such promotions; and
- the cessation of bar service one hour before closing time as this measure has lowered the level of patrons being ejected for unruly behaviour.

New steps

To promote responsible alcohol consumption the club will:

- provide refresher training to staff who serve alcohol to ensure they are fully aware of their legal and social obligations to serve alcohol responsibly;
- due to the risk of glassing incidence in our night club we will enforce a ban on glassware in the night club area during hours of operation; and
- abstain from selling shots of spirits or ready to drink mixed spirits (RTD's) with an alcohol content of 5% or more after midnight in line with our policy to promote lower strength alcohol options.

Existing measures – security

Club (insert name) takes its security obligations to club staff and patrons seriously. In order to keep the occurrence of violent incidents on premise to a minimum the club will:

- inform all contracted security staff of their legal and social responsibilities in managing patron safety; and
- maintain the provision of our club courtesy bus service to ensure patrons can leave the venue safely.

New Steps

- consult with our local taxi service provider about ways to increase patron access to taxi services;
- consult local police on a regular basis to monitor and discuss incidents that may occur; and
- promote the club's patron bus service in an effort to encourage patrons to leave their vehicles at home.

To ensure continued effectiveness of the club's safety plan, management will initially review the plan after three months and then every six months. Management will consult broadly with the club board and relevant stakeholders should any changes be deemed necessary.