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## Liquor Control Act Review - AHA Priority Issues



Australian Hotels Association  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The Australian Hotels Association (AHA) gave evidence to the WA Liquor Control Act Review Committee calling for laws that support licensee professionalism, more responsibility for drinkers and greater confidence for investors to maintain quality hospitality businesses. Our submission focuses on supporting a vibrant and diverse hospitality sector and reinforces the fact that WA has some of the best run and safest licensed premises in Australia.

The 1920's might be making a comeback in the cinemas with the "Great Gatsby" and we have directly confronted and negated the illogical views expressed by those in the public health lobby that want to shut down lawful and legitimate adult enjoyment of alcohol. Despite the claims by the WA Police, we do not recommend the removal of harm minimisation as an element of the Liquor Act but instead seek balance.

The AHA submission reinforces the responsibility of consumers to behave and drink responsibly and specifically:

- make it an offence for a person to be drunk on licenses premises; and
- strengthen Police barring powers to include people outside licensed premises.

However, the AHA also wants protection for the public against the Police and health lobbies' recommendation to change the definition of 'drunk' from 'impaired' to 'affected'. According to public health advocates a single sip of alcohol 'affects' a person, therefore the WA Police and health lobbies' position could result in unfair drunk convictions.

In addition, the industry has concerns about the push by Police to use children in undercover operations to purchase alcohol from licensed premises, to entrap licensees and staff. We support all efforts to ensure that the sale of alcohol is restricted to adults and this is supported by research showing that licensed premises account for just 1.6% of the primary sources of alcohol to 12 – 17 year olds.

Some of the initiatives we have advanced include recommendations that Western Australia drop the 1950's restriction of closing on Sundays at 10.00 pm and allow small bars, hotels and



### **Management of Licensed Premises MLP1 Approved Manager Training**

Online  
**Management of Licensed Premises MLP1 - \$229**

**Management of Licensed Premises MLP1 including RSA - \$269**

[Click to start online training](#)

Classroom  
**Management of Licensed Premises MLP1**

11 June - Perth

25 June - Perth

23 June - Broome

**All classroom courses are conducted at the AHA in West Perth**

[To book click here](#) or call

taverns to remain open until midnight, in line with Monday to Saturday trading.

The AHA has endorsed the implementation of red tape reduction measures already identified by the Government's committee and other measures to achieve a better balance between consumer needs and the limitations put in place by health agencies and the Police.

The AHA consulted in detail with our members and a comprehensive submission that addressed issues of concern for our industry was submitted. A successful hospitality industry in Western Australia requires liquor laws that are fair and flexible and this once in seven year review is an opportunity to try and effect changes in the industry's interest.

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## NEW AHA Licensed Premises Self-Audit Checklist



The AHA(WA) has produced the online Licensed Premises Self Audit Report to assist members in meeting a large number of Liquor and some other regulatory requirements governing their business. To assist in your requirements under the Liquor Control Act 1988 and other relevant legislation, this checklist should be reviewed on a regular basis by all levels of senior management.

All sections contain an excerpt of the relevant section of the Act / Regulations to guide you through the process of meeting the necessary requirements.

[Login to the AHA Members Area here.](#)

**If you have any concerns or queries during or after completing this report, please contact the AHA(WA) office on (08) 9321 7701.**

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9321 7701



## AHA Compliance Course

**Book now to attend the AHA's Liquor Licensing Compliance Workshops. Available FREE to AHA Members.**

**Next workshop:** June 2013  
**Special Guest Speaker:** Marcus Murray, Licensing Training Sergeant for WA Police

The AHA(WA) has introduced these 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.

Classroom Workshop spots are limited so contact us now to secure places for your staff on 08 9321 7701 or [book online by clicking here.](#)



## FREE Online Customer Service Training

WA Service with a Smile Customer Service Online Training covers the fundamental principles of delivering excellent customer service.

Utilising a range of e-learning systems and learning styles the course incorporates multimedia, written word, spoken language, active on screen

## Ad ban 'will cripple tourism'



WA's tourism sector is up in arms over a Government advertising freeze it says will lead to wide job losses and cripple an industry already reeling.

Tourism Minister Kim Hames also attracted Opposition fire yesterday for flying to Bali to present a sailing trophy three days after the Treasurer ordered a Government-wide ban on non-essential travel.

Tourism WA, whose role is to attract visitors to keep the industry's 90,000 employees in work, has been historically exempt from such advertising freezes.

But though the Water Corporation, Racing and Wagering WA and Treasurer Troy Buswell's Public Transport Authority were spared the ban, Tourism WA was told to cease its core function for six weeks.

The freeze on advertising to June 30 is likely to save the Government \$6.3 million.

Tourism Council chief executive Evan Hall said the measures would devastate the industry already reeling from the high Australian dollar.

"This is the worst possible time to do this," he said. "This will destroy the tourism industry in Broome if we are not going to market the peak period now.

Australian Hotels Association chief Bradley Woods said Dr Hames promised an extra \$6 million a year for TWA at the election and would face a backlash and heavy criticism if the decision was not reversed.

A spokeswoman said Dr Hames' trip to honour the winner of the second biennial Fremantle to Bali Yacht Race was planned before this week.

**Source: *The West Australian*, May 18, 2013**

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## TripAdvisor caught red-handed



Despite their "sophisticated algorithms" and their attentive "monitoring" of comments posted on the web, TripAdvisor has been duped by small pranksters who succeeded at getting a homeless shelter in the Top 100 of recommended establishments for the quality of its service in the United Kingdom, according to Georges Panayotis, president of MKG Consulting.

"If only it was the homeless who were sheltered for the night that judged on the comfort of the mattress, on the taste of the morning coffee and the kindness of social workers.... not even! Anyone could have posted comments from their cell phones while returning on the metro or sidewalks. These are surely imposters who amused themselves by flooding the site with wacky praise. This could bring one to smile if the affair wasn't an additional illustration of the lack of rigorous methodology and serious ethics to give a grade of sincere appreciation to a hotel.

thinking exercises and simple research links to deliver a multi-faceted accelerated learning platform.

Get started today [click here to register your business or a staff member.](#)

[www.wasmiles.com.au](http://www.wasmiles.com.au)



## Cocktail Course

**Learn how to make the perfect cocktail!**

The AHA, in conjunction with leading Mixologist Adam Keane, presents an intensive and personalised cocktail course designed to ensure your venue and staff are creating the best cocktails.

**Next Course: 13 June 2013**

[Visit the website for more](#)

"The ranking was quickly modified as the prank was easily discovered. But what proves that the rest of the ranking is more reliable? And what about the more classic hotels that are either victims of this conspiracy of defamation or lame ducks, raised in the rankings by agencies that specialize in good e-reputations?" says Mr Panayotis - a third generation hotelier.

"TripAdvisor and its consorts, show once again how an interesting idea was undermined by a lack of seriousness and by mixing genres. The absence of verifying actual stays before commenting on an establishment is the first unpardonable offense."

**Source:** <http://www.accomnews.com.au/industry/154-news-in-brief/2799-tripadvisor-caught-red-handed>

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## Take-home grog spend tops nation



WEST Australians spend almost \$65 at the bottle shop every month - more than drinkers in any other state.

An analysis of figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics has revealed adults in WA spend more on takeaway alcohol than they do on clothes. The monthly \$64.20 spend for every West Australian over 18 is almost double the outlay of South Australians, 54 per cent more than Victorians and \$13 more than the national average.

WA drinkers spent \$1.3 billion on take-home liquor in the 12 months to March this year - a 71 per cent rise from 10 years ago. In March alone they spent just under \$110 million.

Health advocates condemn the drinking spend, saying alcohol is the biggest contributor to medical problems. They called for tougher restrictions to limit the number of bottle shops.

Cancer Council WA director of education and research Terry Slevin labelled the figures "disturbing" and begged people to rethink how much alcohol they bought and consumed. "We're at the top of a league table WA doesn't want to be at," he said. "It's disturbing."

[information.](#)



## Beermasters Course

The AHA, in conjunction with The Swan Brewery, presents a one-day intensive course designed to give you the leading edge on serving tap beer.

**Next Course: 20 June 2013**

[Visit the website for more information.](#)

The simple fact is, if it's accessible, if there's a liquor outlet just around the corner and it's cheap, people are going to consume more. "And the more West Australians spend at the bottle shop, the more they increase their risk of cancer."

Mr Sleven blamed the booze spend on high disposable incomes and "extraordinary and relentless" alcohol promotion in an "unchecked and extremely aggressive campaign" by liquor chains. Australian Medical Association state president Richard Choong also said the high number of liquor stores was distributing.

The latest report on liquor retail by analysts from IBISWorld found WA had 15.2 per cent of the country's liquor stores despite accounting for just 10 per cent of the population.

There are 536 liquor stores across the state, on top of the 273 hotels that can also sell takeaway alcohol. "If you increase your access to alcohol you increase your alcohol consumption," Dr Choong said.

And with major chains planning more stores, he warned that greater competition would drive prices down and consumption up.

The new figures come as the Government reviews the state's liquor laws.

A submission to the review by Police Commissioner Karl O'Callaghan said the link between liquor store density and alcohol related harm was clear and must be considered before granting liquor store licences. Police figures show almost 50 per cent of WA drivers caught with a blood-alcohol level above the legal limit have consumed their last drink at a private location. Cancer Council WA has also made a submission for curbs on alcohol marketing and a "desperately needed" review of tax on alcohol.

While a study by the University of WA also found levels of harmful drinking increased with the density of liquor outlets, Woolworths Liquor spokesman Andrew Wilsmore said the theory was "questionable". He said that in Victoria, where there was a deregulated market, there were more Woolworths owned Dan Murphy's outlets a person (per head of population) yet alcohol consumption was lower than in WA.

Liquor Barons general manager Chris O'Brien said a rise in small bars meant consumers had become more discerning and were buying more expensive alcohol rather than bigger quantities.

*Source: Sunday Times, 12 May 2013*

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## Call to slash alcohol outlets



AUSTRALIA should reduce trading hours for clubs and pubs, consider changing the legal minimum age for buying alcohol and review the number of places that sell booze, a visiting professor says.

Centre for Alcohol Policy Research director Professor Robin Room, who is speaking at a national Cancer Council conference in Adelaide today, said he believed Australia needed to introduce sweeping alcohol law changes to curb alcohol consumption and associated health problems.

He said both state and federal governments needed to be doing more to address problems.

“When it comes to alcohol policy in Australia, what is politically feasible is often ineffective, while what is effective is often politically difficult,” he said.

“They (politicians) do symbolic things. . . it's not going to really have any effect but it looks like they're doing something.”

Prof Room, who is based in Melbourne, said raising taxes on alcohol, particularly on wine, was one option the Federal Government should be looking at.

“If I buy an expensive bottle of wine, I'm actually paying a lot of tax, but for cheap wine, I'm paying very little tax,” he said.

“Cheap wine is cheaper than bottled water - that is the first thing that needs fixing.”

Changing the opening hours of clubs and pubs and limiting the number of licensed venues across the country was another way Prof Room believed would curb the rising incidence of heavy drinking in Australia.

“The argument is always made (that) if you want to be a destination city and have tourists,

you've got to be open at all hours," he said.

``But for example, in California, no alcohol can be sold anywhere after 2am . . . they get by fine."

Prof Room said the flow-on effect from implementing some of these policy changes would include fewer incidents of street violence and lower alcohol-related hospital admissions.

He said it could also minimise alcohol-associated health problems, such as some cancers.

Cancer Council SA chief executive Professor Brenda Wilson yesterday confirmed the link between alcohol and cancer.

``Drinking alcohol increases the risk of several types of cancers, including mouth, throat, oesophagus, bowel and liver cancer," she said.

**Source: The Advertiser, Thu 9 May 2013**

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## The 10 Commandments



Professor Robin Room's five ideas Australia should take on to curb alcohol consumption

1. Restrict the hours or days of the sale of alcohol.
2. Reduce the number of places selling alcohol.
3. Raise the legal drinking age.
4. Raise taxes on alcohol.
5. Government monopoly of alcohol sales. They could run shops selling alcohol.

Five things Australia is doing well to curb alcohol consumption

1. Consistent random breath testing.
2. Introduced low-blood alcohol limits at 0.05.
3. Good administrative laws. You don't have to go to a judge to get your licence suspended.
4. It's illegal to drink on a learner's permit.
5. Alcohol intervention is good. Doctors and nurses offer good referrals.

**Source: The Advertiser, Thu 9 May 2013**

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## WA's Best Steak Sandwich Competition Winners



The WA's Best Steak Sandwich cook-offs took place at the AHA Hospitality Expo on Tuesday 14 & Wednesday 15 May. Co-MC's Don Hancey from Western Potatoes and Bradley Woods AHA CEO guided the crowds through the sizzling cook-off action where five finalists went head to head on each day to win the prestigious regional and metropolitan titles.

**Tuesday 14 May 2013 Regional Competition - Chef Noel McVeigh, Southerlys Harbour View Bar and Restaurant**

The Australian Hotels Association (WA) has announced the winner of WA's Best Regional Steak Sandwich for 2013 as Southerly Harbour View Bar & Restaurant, Port Denison.

AHA (WA) CEO, Bradley Woods, said all five finalists reflected the quality, taste and freshness of ingredients of steak sandwiches that are served in pubs, hotels and bars throughout WA.

### **Wednesday 15 May 2013 Metropolitan Competition - Chef Rob Ryan, The Merrywell**

The Australian Hotels Association (WA) has announced The Merrywell as the winner of Perth's Best Steak Sandwich for 2013.

Since The Merrywell at Crown Perth opened last year American chef Rob Ryan has won lots of fans with his relaxed menu of quality "dude food".

**Congratulations to all participants in this year's competition, we look forward to your participation next year!**

**[Find out more about WA's Best Steak Sandwich Competition here.](#)**



### **Hospitality Expo and Conference 2013**



**Hospitality Expo  
Tuesday 14 May & Wednesday 15 May 2013  
Crown Perth, 1pm - 6pm**

Hospitality Expo is WA's Leading Annual Liquor & Hospitality Conference & Expo.

Exclusive to the WA Hospitality Industry, and incorporating the WA Hospitality Supplier Awards, Hospitality Expo is renowned for showcasing premium hospitality products and services.

The 15th Annual Hospitality Expo attracted over 2500 delegates, featured over 100 exhibitors,

provided an alternative online space for Exhibitors to interact with other attendees and showcased premium hospitality products from apparel, coffee and furniture to hotel equipment & supplies, security and wine.

[View Hospitality Expo 2013 photos here.](#)



**Hospitality Conference 2013**  
**Tuesday 14 May & Wednesday 15 May 2013**  
**Crown Perth, 10am - 12.30pm**

The 15th Annual Hospitality Conference 2013 provided a condensed and comprehensive two day educational program designed to benefit all hospitality management levels.

Topics ranged from Food and Beverage Social Media Techniques, On Premise Wine Sales Tips, an Exclusive Briefing from AHA(WA) regarding the Liquor Control Act Review, WA Police's Explanation of the LCAR, Staff Recruitment and Retention plus many more!

Speakers this year included:

- Jim Migro, WA Police Detective Superintendent
- Bradley Woods, AHA(WA) CEO
- Peter Bell, Former Captain Fremantle Dockers, Hospitality Business Owner
- Maryanne Fernando, Managing Director Brand One
- Darren Campbell and Graeme Wood, Treasury Wine Estates Field Sales Director and State Manager WA
- AHA(WA) Industrial Relations Experts
- AHA(WA) Liquor Licensing and Police Compliance Experts
- AHA(WA) Recruitment and Retention Experts

[View Hospitality Conference 2013 photos here.](#)

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## WA's leading hospitality suppliers recognised



The Australian Hotels Association (WA) recognised leading suppliers of products or services to the WA hotel & hospitality industry on Monday 13 May 2013 at the Brand One WA Hospitality Supplier Awards.

Outstanding suppliers, promotions, products and services provided to the Western Australian hospitality sector were showcased at one of Perth's premium events, marking the advent of Hospitality Expo and Conference 2013.

Guests enjoyed a delicious three course meal accompanied by premium beverages and great entertainment at the DC Payments Gala Dinner.

Lion, one of Australia's major brewers, was a big winner with four category wins.

Coca-Cola Amatil and Sealanes also featured strongly, while industry icon Sam Paino from Sealanes was recognised with the Hospitality Industry Achievement Award, presented by AHA CEO Bradley Woods.

[View the full list of winners here.](#)

[View photos from the evening here.](#)

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## AHA TRAINING NEWS



### Free member service

The AHA(WA) is delivering a new collaborative initiative for members designed to improve the capacity and capability of the workforce.

Call 08 9321 7701 for more information

## Allergen Awareness Course



***Following Allergen Awareness Week, please ensure all your staff are aware when it comes to allergens in food.***

**It is estimated that up to 2% of Australians suffer from food allergies. In real numbers that is 1 in 100 adults and 1 in 10 children have food allergies and some of them are likely to experience a life-threatening allergic reaction known as anaphylaxis.**

**If you are in the business of preparing, selling, serving, making or producing food to be consumed by anyone other than yourself, it is vital that you are aware of food allergies and the serious impact these allergies have.**

It is important that you know how to educate yourself and your staff on food allergies and allergens in food.

This short course has been designed to provide you with the following:

- An introduction and overview of food allergies
- What is anaphylaxis?

- Food allergies: types and symptoms
- Food intolerances and Coeliac Disease
- Identifying the major allergens in the workplace and a pro-active plan to manage allergens
- Communication with your staff and customers
- Sources of cross-contamination and safe food preparation
- Useful links and resources to maintain your allergen awareness

For more information visit [www.ahawa.asn.au/training](http://www.ahawa.asn.au/training) or call Alecia Hojda on **08 9321 7701**.

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## RSA \$19 Special



**The AHA(WA) is offering this exclusive upgrade offer for your RSA.**

If you have previously completed the RSA e-Briefing with the AHA(WA), you are eligible to upgrade to the Nationally Accredited RSA certificate for only \$19.

The Nationally Recognised RSA certificate is the minimum training standard for Responsible of Alcohol as outlined by the Department of Racing, Gaming & Liquor (DRGL).

The RSA e-Briefing is no longer available for completion, the AHA(WA) strongly recommends anyone who holds an RSA e-Briefing certificate upgrades their skills and knowledge by completing the Nationally Accredited RSA course.

To receive your **Special Discount Code** please contact [trainingevents@ahawa.asn.au](mailto:trainingevents@ahawa.asn.au) or call the AHA Training Department on 9321 7701.

The discount code must be entered to receive the special \$19 rate.

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## WORKPLACE RELATIONS AND IR NEWS

### Immigration employer awareness seminar in Karratha

Immigration outreach officers will visit Karratha on May 29 2013 to conduct an information seminar on employer-sponsored skilled migration options and to explain new laws and penalties for employing or referring people who are not allowed to work.

A spokesman from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) said significant changes to the employer-sponsored skilled visa program were introduced on 1 July 2012.

“These seminars will provide an overview of these changes, including information about SkillSelect,” the spokesman said.

“SkillSelect is an online service that connects Australian employers with potential skilled migrants and streamlines the pathway to permanent residence for people already working in Australia on temporary skilled 457 visas.

“Our officers provide a range of information about temporary or permanent employer-sponsored visa options and the concessions available for regional applicants.”

The seminar will also educate businesses about their responsibility for checking to ensure that the workers they use are allowed to work in Australia.

This will include information about new laws recently passed by the Parliament, which introduce civil penalties and infringement notices for employers or labour suppliers of illegal workers.

The information seminar will take place at the following time:

**Location:**Karratha

**Date:** May 29 2013

**Time:** 6.30 – 8pm

**Address:** Frank Butler Community Centre, Hunt Way, Bulgarra

Bookings for the seminar are essential.

**Please ensure you email your RSVP to [roo.wa@immi.gov.au](mailto:roo.wa@immi.gov.au) or phone 08 9415 9705.**

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## **Australian Tax Office Crackdown**

Small business operators employing temporary visa staff are being warned to ensure they have all their tax obligations up to date following the announcement of an Australian Tax Office crackdown.

The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) has announced that it will carry out a data matching exercise targeting certain temporary visa holders, which includes both working holiday visas and the 457 visas.

At the same time the Federal Government has declared that it believes more than 10,000 foreign workers are rorting the 457 visa system.

The ATO has requested the Department of Immigration and Citizenship provide personal contact details of individuals who have been issued with a visa within various specified sub-class classifications during the period 1 January 2012 and 30 June 2014.

Employers are also obligated to make superannuation contributions for all employees, irrespective of the term of employment in Australia. The ATO is targeting all employers who fail to meet their obligations in this regard. Other tax obligations would include PAYG-W and Fringe Benefit Tax.

Australia requires individuals to lodge tax returns so visa holders need to ensure if they were living and working in Australia during the year ended 30 June 2012, that their tax return is lodged. If it is unclear whether a return is required seek tax advice.

As hospitality is a major employer of staff on these kinds of visas the industry can expect to be one of the groups that will be targeted in the ATO's crackdown.

Non-compliance by the industry could affect its future access to these kinds of visas.

**Please contact the Workplace Relations Department on 9321 7701 if you have any queries.**

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## **Reminder to Check Work Rights**

Immigration compliance officers have located 27 illegal workers and visa over stayers in a series of compliance operations in New South Wales.

A number of the operations were conducted in response to community information provided to the department's dob-in line, while information was also received through other sources. Investigations into the circumstances of the employment of the illegal workers are continuing.

Employers should always remember it is a criminal offence to knowingly or recklessly allow a person to work illegally or to refer an illegal worker for work.

The Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO) service is available to employers to check the relevant identification details of prospective employees, with their consent, to quickly confirm if they are eligible to work in Australia.

Employers convicted under Commonwealth legislation of employing illegal workers face fines of up to \$20,400 and two years' imprisonment while companies face fines of up to \$102,000 per illegal worker.

**To register for VEVO follow this link-** <http://www.immi.gov.au/e-visa/vevo.htm>

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## **Fair Work Commission Comes Down Hard on Dismissal Sent via Text**

The Fair Work Commission has castigated an employer for "one of the worst unfair dismissals on record" when it dismissed a long-serving employee with a 21-word text message.

In upholding the unfair dismissal claim of a retail assistant who worked part-time for 19 years of "unblemished" service, Deputy President Peter Sams said it would be "difficult to imagine a more grossly unfair dismissal".

"In my view, the severity and magnitude of the unfairness in this case is so manifest that it must fall within a category of one of the worst unfair dismissals on record", he said.

"Moreover, the means of communicating her dismissal, by a brief SMS message was brutal, gutless and outrageous".

Dismissal by text message deprived the employee of the opportunity to respond to the dismissal or raise any defence to "issues that may have contributed to the decision to dismiss".

The Commission gave the employer the opportunity to make submissions in response to the retail assistant's preference to be reinstated to her weekend work as a remedy for the unfair dismissal.

**TIP: BEFORE terminating an employee contact the Workplace Relations Department of the AHA.**

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## IN THE NEWS

### **26 April 2013 ANZAC Day Sick Leave**

It's estimated up to 170,000 Australians are enjoying an unofficial ANZAC Day long weekend. Employer groups say many of those workers called in sick which cost the economy tens of millions of dollars.

[View the full news report here.](#)

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**Kalgoorlie Miner  
Pub Chefs Battle it Out**

The steak sandwich is up there with the chicken parmigiana as a staple on country pub menus - and five regional chefs will compete in a cook-off to determine whose version is best.

Chef Jodie Brockman's chilli jam steak burger at the Broken Hill Hotel in Kalgoorlie-Boulder is a finalist in the Australian Hotels Association WA's best country pub steak sandwich awards.

She said her creation was an instant favourite.

"It is definitely an honour to be nominated in the State awards," she said.

"Every pub in the State does a steak sandwich so to have mine rated in the top 5 makes me very proud."

The other finalists are the Esplanade Hotel in Port Hedland, Murphy's Irish Pub in Mandurah, Southerly's Harbour View & Bar Restaurant in Port Denison and the Bridgetown Hotel.

Broken Hill hotel owner Arlene Mackay said the nomination was testament to the work she and her husband put into the pub.

The grand final cook-off will be held at the Hospitality Expo on May 14 at Crown Perth.

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**Busselton Dunsborough Times  
29 April 2013  
Airport key to hotel rates**

The Geographe Bay Tourism Association has named development of the Busselton Regional

Airport as the key factor in lifting hotel occupancy rates, which continue to lag below the State average.

Australian Bureau of Statistics figures released this month for the December 2012 quarter reveal hotels in the City of Busselton were 58.7 per cent filled.

This was a 0.6 per cent increase on 2011 figures but well under the State average at 68.9 per cent, which was lifted by busy Perth and Carnarvon.

Australian Hotels Association WA chief executive Bradley Woods said the South West had an average hotel occupancy rate of 56.3 per cent, showing the traditional tourism regions had opportunity for growth.

GBTA chief executive Simon Taylor said a major issue for the region was over-reliance on the intrastate market, with more than 80 per cent of visitors coming from within WA.

“Interstate and overseas visitors are more likely to travel during offpeak times, however, our ability to attract this market is somewhat hampered by the high accommodation prices in Perth, driven by demand from the mining industry,” Mr Taylor said.

“The single biggest factor in creating a more sustainable tourism industry will be the development of the Busselton Regional Airport, allowing the region to access east coast markets directly.

“This will go a long way to growing average annual occupancy rates and smoothing seasonal trends.”

Whalers Cove Villas co-manager Nicki Kozyrski said occupancy rates had risen about 16 per cent in the past year but there was always room for improvement.

She said Busselton had done well with events promotion and she thought Dunsborough could do more to reap the benefits.

“Rather than having Busselton separate from Dunsborough, if they all were to work together I think that would be helpful,” she said.

“I think it would be excellent to get the airport up and running as a bigger airport venue. I’m not

sure of the rebranding of the name because I'm not sure we need to trade off on the Margaret River name, I think it should be more of a South West airport."

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**WA has best beer in the country, May 3, 2013**

**WA Today**

**It's official: Western Australia has the best beer in the country.**

For the second time in as many years, Feral Brewery has been awarded the top nod in The Critic's Choice Australia's Best Beers for its Hop Hog, in addition to a raft of other awards including champion ale four years running at the Australian International Beer Awards.

While beer trends come and go, for the small brewery nestled in the Swan Valley, their secret is ignoring what everyone else is doing and just making beer "we like to drink ourselves".

"I do think people are accepting hop beer and more bitter beers more and I've noted in the last couple of years that darker beers are becoming a bit more generally accepted and easier to sell into the market," Feral's owner and brewer Brendan Varis said.

"But [our success] goes back to our name "Feral".

"It's all about making beers as a team of brewers we're personally attracted to and we like to drink and not worry about making sure they're inoffensive or designed to suit everyone or a mass market.

"For the niche of craft beer, which really should be about distinctive and interesting, and not toned down, our mission statement is to operate squarely there and we've hit the nail on the head."

Of the top 100 Australian beers listed, Feral had five entries, two of which were in the top five.

The brewery's unlikely fourth-place winner was the Watermelon Warhead, made with watermelons sourced locally to its Swan Valley home.

"We're always looking for different flavours in beer, we don't like to drink the same thing all the time," Mr Varis said.

“We look at ‘What else can we put in them?’”

Mr Varis said the placings were especially surprising and rewarding given the family brewery’s low level of distribution.

“We’re just a little brewery out in the Swan Valley so we don’t have a broad distribution so for us to get more votes is great,” he said.

“Especially with the Watermelon Warhead; we might have made 100 kegs ever of it, whereas others we might have 100 per week.”

Australia’s Best Beers editor Peter Mitcham said Feral had won out over other brewers in the eyes of the 39-strong judging panel because of its unique style.

“I’m a big fan of the belief that brewing is 50 per cent science and 50 per cent art and I think Feral have just nailed it,” he said.

“There are so many beers in the marketplace that to be heard above the noise, you need a catchy label or name and also back that up by being a well-crafted product.

“Beer drinkers will turn on you in a second if the beer doesn’t match the hype.”

Other WA breweries included in the 100-strong list are Little Creatures, Bootleg, Nail Brewing, The Monk and Cowaramup Brewing Co.

“There’s been about 50 in and 50 out over the three years,” Mr Mitcham said.

“Little Creatures has maybe received a little bit of blowback from the fact they’ve been recently bought by Lion Nathan, there may be a feeling among craft beer lovers that it’s no longer a small independent craft brewer, but the beer is still good enough to be in the top ten beers.

“There are brewers that come and go, but you just won’t find anyone who says Feral’s no good.”

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## **WA beers that made the top 100**

1. Feral Brewing Co. – Hop Hog (American IPA)
  4. Feral Brewing Co. – Watermelon Warhead (Sour – Berliner Weisse)
  7. Little Creatures Brewing Co. – Pale Ale (American Pale Ale)
  31. Bootleg – Raging Bull (Belgian Dark Ale)
  34. Nail Brewing – Clout Stout (Russian Imperial Stout)
  39. Nail Brewing – Nail Stout (Oatmeal Stout)
  57. Nail Brewing – Nail Ale (Australian Pale Ale)
  61. Little Creatures Brewing Co. – Rogers Beer (Amber Ale)
  63. Feral Brewing Co. – Karma Sitra (India Black Ale)
  67. The Monk Brewery & Kitchen – Chief (India Pale Ale)
  71. Little Creatures Brewing Co – Single Batch: The Quiet American (Hybrid Ale)
  72. Feral Brewing Co. – Barrel Aged Hop Hog (Imperial American Pale Ale)
  74. Feral Brewing Co. – White (Witbier)
  76. The Monk Brewery & Kitchen – The Bounty (Coconut Stout)
  84. Cowaramup Brewing Co. – Pilsner
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## **The West Australian**

**24 May 2013**

### **Teen cop plan for liquor stings**

Police want to use teenage cadets in undercover stings on bottle shops to crack down on liquor outlets supplying juveniles with alcohol.

WA Police Commissioner Karl O'Callaghan said police cadets were employed from age 16 and could be given limited powers to make test purchases.

"The problem with surveillance work at the moment is we have police officers sitting outside premises waiting for something to happen so that can be waiting for several hours," Mr O'Callaghan said.

With a test purchase, you simply take a police cadet to the premises, they go in, they attempt to

purchase and if they are successful, you fine the licensee. If licensees adhere to the "Under 25 show ID" principle, they should never have a problem."

Mr O'Callaghan said similar operation had been successful in other jurisdictions and it could be a way to reduce teenage alcohol abuse.

"When this was done in New Zealand, they reduced the failure rate from 28 per cent to 6 per cent in about three years," he said.

Australian Hotels Association WA chief executive officer Bradley Woods said such stings amounted to 'entrapment' and that research suggested only a small percentage of youths acquired alcohol directly from liquor stores.

Mr O'Callaghan said police would not support moves for licensed premises to be open later than 10pm on Sundays - as sought by the AHA in a review of the Liquor Control Act.

However, the Commissioner was very supportive of other AHA submissions, including issuing barring notices to people misbehaving in the vicinity of licensed venues. Barring notices allow police to ban people from licensed premises for up to 12 months.

Mr O'Callaghan said moves to issue barring notices to people who committed serious crimes while intoxicated while away from licensed venues could be difficult.

The Commissioner and the AHA are at odds over changing the definition of 'drunk' from 'impaired' to 'affected'.

The AHA argues 'impaired' is evidence-based while Mr O'Callaghan believed the word has a 'medical connection' which would be difficult to prove.

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## **Australian Financial Review**

**24 May 2013**

### **Call to freeze beer tax**

Ari Mervis, the SABMiller executive in charge of Carlton & United Breweries, wants a more "equitable" tax regime to help the nation's second-largest brewer combat high manufacturing costs.

Speaking after London-listed SABMiller reported a 22 per cent fall in net profit to \$US3.3 billion. Mr Mervis said Australia was a "high-cost environment".

Carlton & United Breweries which SABMiller bought as part of its \$12.6 billion acquisition of Foster's Group in 2011, has made a submission to Treasury to freeze bi-annual increases in excises applied to beer. The system has been in place since 1983.

Mr Mervis, who is SABMiller Asia Pacific managing director, said the brewer had yet to receive a formal response.

He said there were not increases applied to the wine sector through the wine equalisation tax, which applies to large producers like Treasury Wine Estates, a company owned by Foster's prior to SABMiller's takeover.

He said the excise was putting pressure on beer prices relative to other alcohol categories.

"I think what we would like to see is for it (taxes) to be equitable particularly for a local big manufacturing base in an environmental of cost pressures and the opportunity to keep local manufacturing sustainable," Mr Mervis said.

His comments came as Ford announced it would cease manufacturing cars in Australia from 2016, a decision Mr Mervis said was a sad day for Australia.

"(It) is very sad news that it is in such a position that it has had to take this decision," Mr Mervis said. He said Australia was a costly place to do business, although Foster's was weathered by much of the impact because high wages underpinned healthy spending on beer and other alcohol products.

But he said there would be cuts to red tape, which would help reduce costs.

SABMiller was impacted by one-off items boosting its result a year prior. Revenue rose to 10 per cent to \$US34.5 billion.

The result is the first to include a full-year contribution from Foster's, which helped boost earnings within its Asia Pacific region division by 166 per cent.

Beer volumes in Australia fell 5 per cent but Mr Mervis said the company was cutting costs and improving synergies more quickly than it had anticipated. It aimed to improve costs and operations by \$180 million by 2015.

Mr Mervis said beer sales were improving, driven by strong growth in the second half by Victoria Bitter. The beer, which used to account for one in every four beers sold in Australia, suffered declining sales for a decade.

However, following a relaunch of the brand in October, final-quarter sales jumped 7.5 per cent, taking its market share to 12.2 per cent and reclaiming the title as Australia's biggest selling beer from Lion's XXXX Gold.

"We have been delighted and overwhelmingly impressed by the performance of Victoria Bitter," he said. Mr Mervis would not comment on recent speculation about the merits of a tie-up between Coca-Cola Amatil and a larger brewer like Foster's. " We would never talk about any corporate activity," he said. " We don't comment on speculation or rumours."

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