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R&CA – Takeaway Alcohol Proposal in SA



R&CA is the national industry association representing the interests of more than 55,000 restaurants, cafés and catering businesses across Australia. The café, restaurant and catering sector is vitally important to the national economy, generating over \$37 billion in retail turnover each year as well as employing 350,000 people. Over 93 per cent of businesses in the café, restaurant and catering sector are small businesses, employing 19 people or less.

R&CA is highly supportive of the SA government adopting making the sale of takeaway alcohol (with conditions) permanent to:

1. Better reflect the changing nature of consumer wants and needs post-pandemic.
2. Support small businesses who have had to adapt to an extremely volatile and ever-changing business environment and require substantial policy reform to make these changes.

R&CA strongly supports a moderate position be adopted which mirrors existing conditions introduced in other state jurisdictions. For example, in Victoria and NSW, the current arrangements for the temporary takeaway liquor rules are limited to 2.25 liters of beer, cider or pre-mixed spirits or a single 750ml bottle of wine in conjunction with a substantial meal.

R&CA would like to stress that this would be alcohol sold in seal packaging designed to be consumed with a meal at a home.

The R&CA submits that the takeaway liquor being sold ancillary to the purchase of a meal provides a comprehensive dining experience for the patrons of our industry to not only enjoy a meal, but to purchase their chosen beverage in conjunction with this meal.

The limits of 2.25 litres are appropriate as it highlights the complementary intent of these purchases such as a bottle of wine, pre-mixed cocktails or 6 pack of beer or equivalent.

Restaurants are not looking to become “backdoor” bottle shops from these changes, nor are they seeking to compete with other liquor-related establishments.

Put simply, the COVID pandemic has drastically increased the role that takeaway plays in on-premise licensed businesses across the country, and we submit that it is important that corresponding liquor licenses keep up with the changing customer demand, while ensuring that the intent and focus of the underpinning licensing regime is not put at risk. It is for this reason that R&CA has, nationally, supported legislative amendments for a permanent model to allow on-premise licensed venues to sell limited quantities of packaged liquor, as outlined below:

1. A drastic increase in the reliance on takeaway and delivery as a trend that will be permanent for the restaurant, café and catering sector, moving from 9% of all orders pre-pandemic to nearly 30% today;
2. Takeaway liquor now becoming an important additional source of revenue for operators;
3. Recognition of the ‘channel shift’ that has occurred for on-premise businesses, where customers who now patronize the same businesses are now blocked from purchasing alcohol, that would have otherwise been allowed when dining on-premise;
4. The current licensing structure does not adequately allow for restaurants and cafes to continue with the sale of takeaway liquor and current license classes do not properly reflect changing market demands;
5. Delivery models are an important and an innovative way in which industry operators can remain sustainable and pivot their businesses in the current COVID-19 climate. So much is true as reflected by 7% of working-age Australians performing “platform work” within the last 12

months and the near doubling of online food delivery services from 15.4% in 2017 to 31.2% in 2018;

6. The provision of alcohol in this manner poses a low risk from a responsible service of alcohol perspective, and ensuring that existing rules governing on-premise license today continue to be adhered to under a takeaway model (such as liquor being sold ancillary to a meal);
7. Consumers have indicated considerable support for the temporary regulations and have indicated an intention for them to be extended post-COVID-19; and
8. The permanent takeaway model has already been successfully implemented in Victoria and NSW.

The R&CA would like to submit two examples, as case studies, that highlight practical use-cases that would be brought about by the adoption of permanent takeaway alcohol in its current form:

1. In the restaurant industry, there are members of R&CA who are on higher end of a specialised and customised user experience with an extensive and unique wine list that have been crafted by an experienced sommelier or manager. These businesses who have invested in these skills want to maximise that intellectual property of their expertly customised wine list, including wines that are not available readily to consumers at bottle shops. These changes would allow for these specialised skills to be utilised and incentivised across the industry as the opportunity for takeaway liquor will result in greater demand for these services not only in person, but for takeaway options. Further, when patrons enjoy a hand selected recommendation from the specialised skills of the business, patrons will be able to demonstrate their support for this by purchasing a takeaway liquor from the business who provided this selection. This example incentivises industry and reward the specialised skills from businesses who innovate and serve their customers with this service.
2. A pizza restaurant has seen that more and more customers have switched to takeaway has lost a significant amount of revenue. This is because the revenue that they would usually make on selling beer or a

bottle of wine for dine-in diners has vanished due to the fact that they can not sell takeaway packaged alcohol. Changes to the law would enable them to make up the shortfall caused by and increase in takeaway orders over dine-in.



Restaurant
& Catering