

ALMR WELCOMES CAMRA REPORT

The Association of Licensed Multiple Retailers (*ALMR*) – the only national trade body representing small business interests in the pub and bar industry – has welcomed the publication of CAMRA’s super-complaint as a crucial step towards resolving problems in the UK pub market.

Commenting on the Report, Kate Nicholls, Head of Communications at the ALMR said:

“The relationship between the major, national pub companies and their tenants has come under tremendous strain over the past year. This is because the tied lease model has been insufficiently flexible to adapt quickly to the macro-economic downturn, resulting banking crisis and soaring operating costs. Today’s complaint is a reflection of that reality and an inevitable consumer response to the Business & Enterprise Committee report into the pubcos.

The *ALMR* has been instrumental in instigating a ground-breaking mediation process bringing together all sides of the pub trade to deliver an achievable and pragmatic solution to the current impasse. Two meetings have been held to date and legally binding mediation will be held in September.

Kate Nicholls went on:

“We agree with CAMRA that the status quo is not an option, but what the trade needs now is reform not revolution. Since the publication of the BEC Report, we have seen very real evidence that the national pubcos are willing to come to the table to discuss the very important issues of rent calculation models, dispute resolution and beer discounts. Mediation represents a unique opportunity to grapple – once and for all - with the issues which have dogged our industry since the Beer Orders”

The formal mediation process will conclude at the end of September and the resulting agreement will be presented to the competition authorities and political audiences ahead of the 17th October deadline by which Lord Mandelson must respond to the Business & Enterprise Committee Report.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

- *ALMR* is the only national trade body solely dedicated to representing the interests of pub and bar operators, and to providing them with business support and advice. It has almost 100 member companies, operating around 10,000 outlets. Over 80% of member companies have fewer than 50 pubs. *ALMR* does not represent pubco or landlord interests
- The Business and Enterprise Select Committee published its report into PubCos on 13th May. This recommended that the Business Secretary, Lord Mandelson, refer the beer tie to the competition authorities for scrutiny. The Government has until 17th October to respond to this request. A copy of the report is available from www.news.parliament.uk/2009/05/mps-publish-report-on-pub-companies/

- The *ALMR* instigated mediation talks designed to facilitate a negotiated settlement in response to the report's recommendations. An initial meeting was held on 18th June attended by British Beer and Pub Association, CAMRA, Fair Pint and Punch amongst others. The parties agreed to proceed to formal mediation at a second meeting on 9th July and initial discussions will be held over the summer, with formal mediation in September. Mediation is a process of facilitated negotiation and will result in a legally binding agreed solution.
- For more information, please contact: Kate Nicholls: 07958 796 238