

ALMR Press Notice

Association of Licensed Multiple Retailers

19 January 2010 - Immediate

Diluted impact of alcohol code

The ALMR is gratified that the details of the Alcohol Code announced today by the Home Office has recognised our lobbying for the more extreme conditions to be excluded. The remaining conditions to be introduced progressively during 2010 are targeted at the irresponsible end of the licensed retail sector and ban the 'all you can drink for £10' type of activity. The very controversial requirements for Council-dictated training requirements and the arbitrary clustering of so-called 'problem premises' have been rejected because they were demonstrably unfair, expensive and impractical.

The Home Office says that promotions will be defined by 'the activity' and speed drinking competitions and direct pouring of alcohol will not be allowed.

Nick Bish, ALMR's Chief Executive says: "Concerted and united lobbying activity by industry minimized the worst excesses of the government's original proposals and although no-one wants a national code this at least targets the irresponsible minority and not the responsible majority.

"Irresponsible promotions are often the result of financial desperation rather than good commercial practice or common sense; they don't help the businesses that run them and they don't help the image of our industry; we will be well rid of them."

But the Code goes on to prescribe 'free tap water' and smaller wine and spirit measures to be on offer. Nick Bish continues, " these matters are more to do with good marketing and common sense and we want to watch out for legislative creep; the legislation for the Code is open ended as it stands, a blank cheque. We can't afford more bites at the cherry especially as the two main political parties appear to be conducting a pre-Election auction of legislative hits on our beleaguered sector."

The Association also welcomes the promise that PASS [Proof of Age Standards Scheme] will be at the top of the list of proof-of-age credentials in the fight against under-age drinking.

ENDS

Notes for Editors

1. *The Home Office has confirmed that:-*

From 6 April

- *Irresponsible [defined by type of activity] promotions banned.*
- *Direct dispense of alcohol [eg. 'dentist's chair'] banned*

The Association of Licensed Multiple Retailers

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- *Tap water to be made available free.*

From 1 October

- *Ensuring a proof of age procedure is in place and working*
- *125 ml wine measures to be offered.*
- *No compulsory doubles of spirits [no decision yet on 25ml and 35ml measures].*

2. *Association of Licensed Multiple Retailers (ALMR) is the only national trade body dedicated to representing the interests of pub and bar operators and providing their companies with business support and advice. There are currently 80 companies in membership, between them operating 15,000 outlets – of which more than 4,000 are managed operations. The bulk of ALMR membership is drawn from small independent companies operating 50 outlets or fewer under their own branding*

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