

ALMR Press Notice

Association of Licensed Multiple Retailers

Thursday 25 January 2007

Increase in licensing fees “disappointing”

The Association of Licensed Multiple Retailers (*ALMR*), the national trade body representing pub, club and bar operators, reacting today to the publication by Government of the Independent Fees Review Panel Report, expressed disappointment in the recommended a 7% increase in licensing fees over the next 3 years. They said that the increase, whilst not unexpected, was yet another slap in the face for licensees up and down the country.

Chief Executive, Nick Bish, said:

“Whilst we welcome the publication of the Independent Fees Review panel report, we are disappointed that it recommends a substantial increase in fee levels. This comes on top of a 29% increase in SIA fees, a proposed five fold increase in fees for AWP permit applications and yet another 7% increase in the National Minimum Wage. These increased costs do not reflect any change in circumstances, they simply add to the financial burden of doing business. Licensees are running to stand still.

The report itself acknowledges that it is still too early to say what the real ongoing costs of administering the new regime will be and it seems perverse to increase the fees based purely on estimates and assumptions from local authorities themselves”

He went on to warn local authorities and central government against viewing the trade as a cash cow and urged against regular and automatic increases in costs.

The report certainly contains a number of very helpful and practical recommendations which could be used to strip out unnecessary cost from the licensing applications process and *ALMR* urges the Government to take these forward as a matter of urgency, and separately from the full consultation required on the fee proposals themselves.

-ENDS-

Notes for Editors

- 1. The 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 just fewer than 100 companies in membership, between them operating 30,000 outlets – or half the UK pub estate. However, the bulk of our membership is derived from small independent companies operating 50 outlets or fewer under their own branding*

The Association of Licensed Multiple Retailers

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