



Thursday 8 August 2019

### **NSW Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority inquiry into Barangaroo restricted gaming facility licensee and its close associates**

The NSW Independent Liquor & Gaming Authority announces that it will be conducting an inquiry under section 143 of the *Casino Control Act 1992* (NSW) (the **Act**) into the proposed sale of shares in Crown Resorts from James Packer's CPH Crown Holdings Pty Limited to Lawrence Ho's Melco Resorts & Entertainment Limited, a Hong Kong-based casino operator, through a subsidiary. The sale was announced in a Crown Resorts Limited/ASX Media Release dated 31 May 2019 and has apparently yet to be finalised.

The Authority is inquiring into this transaction under section 35 of the Act together with various matters raised in recent media reports published by the Nine Network, the Sydney Morning Herald and the Melbourne Age relating to Crown Resorts.

The Authority has issued notices to relevant Crown parties and other parties compulsorily seeking documents and information which will assist it in its investigations and be used in the inquiry.

The Authority is to have regard to the primary objects of the Act in exercising its functions. This includes ensuring that the management and operation of a casino remain free from criminal influence or exploitation, that gaming in a casino is conducted honestly and controlling the potential of a casino to cause harm to the public interest and to individuals and families.

The Authority will appoint the Honourable Patricia Bergin SC to conduct the inquiry. Ms Naomi Sharp SC and Mr Scott Aspinall will be appointed as counsel assisting the inquiry.

Patricia Bergin SC was a judge of the Supreme Court of New South Wales from 1999 to 2017, serving as Commercial List Judge and thereafter as Chief Judge in Equity from 2009 to January 2017. Since her retirement from the Court in 2017, Ms Bergin served an International Judge on the Singapore International Commercial Court.

The inquiry will take evidence in public, with the capacity to conduct private hearings to receive confidential information from law enforcement or other sensitive information. Section 143A of the Act will give Ms Bergin similar powers, authorities, protections and immunities to those conferred upon a commissioner under the *Royal Commissions Act 1923* (NSW).

The Terms of Reference and a timetable for public submissions will be published by the Authority shortly and announcements will be made later regarding the processes of the inquiry, including how submissions can be made.

#### **Media contact**

The Authority has engaged Norton Rose Fulbright solicitors to assist with its conduct of the inquiry. Please direct all media enquiries in writing to [ilga.secretariat@liquorandgaming.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ilga.secretariat@liquorandgaming.nsw.gov.au) or contact Rochelle Hurst, Manager, Reviews and Secretariat Unit on 0436 277 929.