



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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Wednesday 27 January 2016

### **NEW ENGLAND HOTEL CONVICTED OF INTOXICATION AND SECURITY GUARD LICENCE BREACH**

The licensee of the New England Hotel in Armidale has been convicted of selling alcohol to an intoxicated person and breaching a licence condition requiring security guards to continually patrol a 50-metre boundary around the venue after 1.30am.

On 25 July 2015, inspectors from the Office of Liquor, Gaming & Racing (OLGR) conducted a covert inspection of the hotel. About 11.55pm, inspectors observed an intoxicated male patron swaying near the bar. The intoxicated male ordered three vodka drinks and had to be assisted in counting his money to pay, and then required further assistance of his friends to guide him back to his table. The intoxicated male then fell sideways into a friend's lap and was later observed skolling his drink.

Only when OLGR inspectors identified themselves to a bar staff member and asked him to assess the intoxicated man did hotel staff intervene and require him to leave.

The intoxicated man advised police he consumed 12 to 14 beers during the night.

From about 2am, OLGR officers observed security guards standing around the hotel doorways but failing to conduct mobile patrols outside. A condition of the hotel's licence states that from 1.30am two licensed uniformed security personnel are to continually patrol an area 50 metres from the boundary of the licensed premises. This is to ensure there is no disturbance to the neighbourhood from patrons leaving the hotel.

At the time security guards should have been patrolling, inspectors observed large groups of patrons loitering at the western end of the mall and at the taxi rank and making a considerable amount of noise.

As a result of the breaches, two penalty notices were served on the licensee of the New England Hotel, Ingham-Myers Hotels Pty Ltd, for selling alcohol to an intoxicated person and failing to comply with a licence condition. The bar worker who served the intoxicated man was also issued with a penalty notice for selling alcohol to an intoxicated person.

The hotel challenged the penalty notices but pleas of guilty were later lodged on all three offences and on 25 January 2016 the matter was dealt with in Armidale Magistrates Court.

In sentencing, Magistrate Michael Holmes said a liquor licence was a privilege not a right, alcohol-related violence was a significant community issue, and a lack of proper security patrols can lead to problems if incidents occur.

**ENDS**