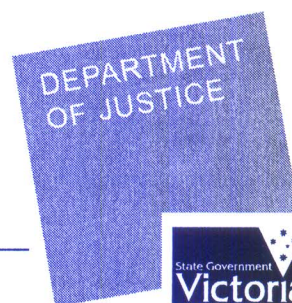


Liquor Licensing Fact Sheet

BYO permit for party buses

January 2011



Changes to liquor laws were introduced to ensure that those party bus operations that pose the greatest risk of alcohol-related harm are subject to regulatory control.

Some commercially operated party buses that take pre-bookings and allow passengers to bring and consume their own alcohol on board for things such as nightclub tours are now required to apply for a BYO permit.

Concern for community amenity

Party buses can create significant disruption to community amenity, including when operators drop off passengers at the end of the night in areas where there are no public toilets or public transport options available for patrons seeking to return home.

Road safety issues can also arise, especially if buses are modified and feature amplified music, flashing lights, special seating or dance floors (creating a 'party' atmosphere for passengers).

Does it apply to all party buses?

The BYO permit requirements will only apply to commercially operated party buses that take pre-bookings and that:

- operate at night between 8pm and 5am (regardless of the time of passenger pick-up)
- operate in a designated area or for the purpose of carrying passengers travelling to or from or visiting a designated area.

Areas currently declared as 'designated areas' include: Melbourne CBD; Fitzroy Street, St Kilda; around Brunswick Street and Smith Street, Fitzroy; around Chapel Street, Prahran; Frankston; Geelong CBD; Traralgon; Ballarat CBD; Bendigo; Warrnambool and Shepparton.

The sale of alcohol

Bus operators must be licensed to supply alcohol. Selling alcohol directly, or including alcohol supply in a ticket price, would require the bus operator to apply for and obtain a liquor licence. The application kit for this is available from www.justice.vic.gov.au/alcohol.

Offences apply

It is now an offence to allow passengers to bring and consume alcohol on board without a BYO permit, or to supply alcohol on board without a liquor licence.

The offence will incur a maximum penalty of 50 penalty units (\$5841.00). However, the offence will initially be enforceable by an infringement notice of two penalty units (\$233.64), as part of the short-term Trial Expansion of the Infringements System, which operates until 30 June 2011.

Only Victoria Police officers will have the power to issue infringement notices for this offence.

Applying for a BYO permit

Party bus operators that meet the outlined criteria need to apply for a BYO permit or a liquor licence as soon as possible. Applicants must also:

- submit a management plan aimed at reducing alcohol-related harms associated with party bus activities
- adhere to a code of conduct that complies with the standards of patron and operator behaviour expected by the Director of Liquor Licensing.

The application form, management plan, and an example code of conduct for party bus operators can be found at www.justice.vic.gov.au/alcohol.

The application process for granting a liquor licence or BYO permit contains a number of requirements, such as the completion of the required questionnaire.

The Director of Liquor Licensing has the power to impose any conditions he or she thinks fit on the grant of an application for a licence or BYO permit. The Director has the discretion to impose conditions relevant to the party bus environment, where necessary, to further mitigate any risks.

More information is available on the website.



This publication avoids the use of legal language. Information about the law may have been summarised or expressed in general statements. This information should not be relied upon as a substitute for professional legal advice or reference to the actual legislation. Authorised by the Victorian Government, 121 Exhibition Street, Melbourne, Victoria, 3000.