

4 March 2010

Liquor, Sport and Juveniles

A recent matter that came before the licensing authority involving alterations to the trading conditions of ME Bank Stadium has highlighted the important role of the Department of Health to some liquor licensing determinations.

The Department intervened and argued there were proven 'links between sport and high risk drinking behaviours... particularly amongst spectators' and there would be an 'increased risk of alcohol-related harm occurring to young people'.

Further the Department asserted that allowing liquor to be freely available at sporting events would:

- 'normalise and foster (particularly for young people) the high risk drinking culture that exists in the sporting environment';
- 'compromise the potential health benefits that young people can gain from being involved in sport, and, on the contrary, supports a culture where drinking is considered a normal and necessary part of attending a sporting event'; and
- 'create an environment which is less conducive to the minimisation of alcohol-related harm/ill-health, which is a concern considering the culture of risky drinking behaviour amongst sporting spectators in Australia'.

This intervention exemplifies the increasing emphasis being placed on minimising any potential harm that may be caused to young people who witness patrons drinking alcohol. This will be likely to have a wide reaching impact for all premises that allow young people to be present when alcohol is consumed.

If you would like more information on the licensing authority's policy on harm and ill-health please contact Dan Mossenson, Partner, on 9288 6769 / dan.mossenson@lavanlegal.com.au or Jessica Patterson, Senior Associate, on 9288 6946 / jessica.patterson@lavanlegal.com.au.