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ALCOHOL FREE ZONES - UPDATE OF MINISTERIAL GUIDELINES

As advised in Circular to Councils 08-76, in line with recent legislative changes brought about by the *Liquor Legislation Amendment Act 2008*, the Ministerial Guidelines on Alcohol-Free Zones have been updated. The Guidelines are issued under section 646(1) of the *Local Government Act 1993* and must be followed by councils.

The updated Guidelines are now available on the Department's website (www.dlg.nsw.gov.au) under 'Publications' and 'Directory of Policy Advice for Councils'.

The Local Government Act provides the legislative powers for local councils to establish alcohol free zones in NSW to promote the safe use of roads, footpaths and public car parks without interference from anti-social behaviour caused by public drinkers.

The object of alcohol free zones is as an early intervention measure to prevent the escalation of irresponsible street drinking to incidents involving serious crime.

The Commissioner of Police has the power to authorise council officers to enforce alcohol free zones.

Where councils identify benefits to their community for their officers to enforce alcohol free zones, the general manager will need to liaise with the Police Local Area Commander to ensure that council officers are suitable for this enforcement role.

Councils are reminded that only authorised employees of a council and not contractors, who may be otherwise engaged by a council to provide regulatory services, may be authorised for this purpose.

The Guidelines provide guidance to councils that are considering establishing or re-establishing an alcohol free zone, as well as providing advice about councils' responsibilities in line with the amended legislation.



Garry Payne AM
Director General