

LIQUOR LICENSING LAWS, REVIEW

391. Hon BARRY HOUSE to the Minister for Racing and Gaming:

I refer to the review of the State's liquor licensing laws promised by the Government following the minister's withdrawal of last year's proposal to radically change these laws.

- (1) What are the terms of reference for this review?
- (2) Who will conduct the review?
- (3) What process will be adopted to ensure adequate consultation with all major stakeholders in the industry?
- (4) What is the time frame for this review?

Hon NICK GRIFFITHS replied:

- (1)-(4) I will not engage in a discussion about so-called radical proposals, because what the Government was proposing was in line with what the previous Government had before it. I caused the industry and the general public to be aware of that in early 2001, as part of a very lengthy consultation process. I can assure the honourable member that lengthy consultation processes in this matter continue. In fact, after the Government recognised the numbers in the Legislative Council, taking on board the views publicly expressed by members opposite, and those seated on my right on this side of the Chamber, I engaged in further consultation with appropriate stakeholders in the industry. That is consultation on consultation on consultation. That consultation was about the terms of reference for the proposed review. I invited those significant stakeholders to provide me with their observations by 30 April this year. I received input from appropriate stakeholders and other persons. I am not saying that anybody who sent me a submission about the terms of reference was inappropriate in any way. I am considering and developing terms of reference that I will in due course put before my colleagues and, at an appropriate time, those terms of reference will be announced.

The matters raised in the balance of the question are still to be determined, but the honourable member and anybody else who has played any part in these processes will be aware that the Government has been extremely consultative on all these matters. I trust the inquiry will be very thorough because there are many issues on liquor licensing that are very important to the persons or bodies referred to by the honourable member as major stakeholders, but they are also important to the general community. As this develops, I trust it will be a matter of looking not just at the interests of major stakeholders but, importantly, at the public interest, which sometimes seems to get lost in the lobbying.