

Business licensing reform inquiry

Response ID:41 Data

1.

1. Your contact details

First name

Larry

Last name

Jorgensen

Organisation (if responding on behalf of an organisation)

Wines of WA

3. Please indicate who you represent:

Business or occupational licence holder

4. Which business or occupational licence(s) do you hold or are you affected by?

As a representational body, we hold a business licence under state jurisdiction. However, our members are required to a variety of licenses in order to operate lawfully. As most are primary producers, secondary processors and marketers of the final product, the level of compliance is significant.

In reviewing this we would recommend a case study approach for wine businesses at various levels of scale and business model and a concurrent review of the compliance regimes which exist in other national and possibly international jurisdictions.

5. How do these business or occupational licences affect you and what suggestions do you have to improve them?

I have copied a response provided by a wine producer who employs 5 people in the business. It presents a good overview for consideration.

We have the following state licences:

- Licence to sell alcohol
- Licence to draw water
- Licence to "take wildlife" ie shoot kangaroos
- We don't but could have a firearms licence
- Our vehicles includes cars, trucks, forklifts and tractors are registered
- Our staff are required to have licences to drive vehicles and operate industrial equipment and serve alcohol responsibly
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Nationally we have a licence to export wine and licence to purchase and store alcohol for fortifying

We are registered as a business and as an employer and to collect GST

Locally we have approval/permit/licence to operate winery, park trucks, prepare and sell food, burn off

I'm sure I will think of more!

There isn't much we can just do! Every licence costs money and takes time and never asks us as a business what do we need? Usually there is a one size fits all and we are treated as though we were the worst operator not an honest responsible and compliant operator.

Rarely do the licences/permits/registrations increase the efficiency, capacity or safety of our workforce and business

Often a micro-business or emerging business needs to commence and generate some capacity and some income before they have the resources to obtain all the permits/licences required.

I flatly reject the expectation of some agencies that a new/small business must engage consultants in order to obtain permits/licences. For example the ATO (Federal I know) will ask you to have your accountant "prepare information" or the Local Authority will expect you to use a planning consultant for a development application, or Liquor Licence expect you to hire a specialist lawyer to appeal a ruling. There should be no such expectation in simple small business cases and the agencies should be obliged to mediate the situations directly with the applicants in a "plain English" manner. The end result of not doing this is that small businesses are unable to be adequately represented and are effectively forced into accepting the agencies rulings reasonable or otherwise.

Overall I think the administrative burden is out of proportion to the scale of our business which has 5 full time staff and turns over less the \$1 million per annum

6. Are there aspects of the business and occupational licensing arrangements that affect you that are working well?

The recent amendments to the Liquor Control Act are welcome and have been received positively by industry.

7. Do you have any other comments?

As the consultation process has occurred at the busiest time of year for wine producers it has been difficult to obtain direct feedback by the due date.

The extension granted is appreciated and we look forward to working with the ERA in facilitating in-depth consultation with wine producers.