

Wellington District Licensing Committee Annual Report

For the year 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021

Our responses to the questions posed by the Alcohol Regulatory Licensing Authority are as follows:

1. Please provide the name of your District Licensing Committee.

Wellington District Licensing Committee

2. Please provide the name, email, and contact phone number of your Committee's Secretary.

Gwen Mans Gwen.mans@wcc.govt.nz Tel: 021 418636

3. Please name each of your licensing inspectors and provide their email and contact phone number.

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Lewis Howells	Lewis.howells@wcc.govt.nz	021 227 8304
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4. The following questions relate to the number of licences and managers' certificates your Committee issued and refused in the 2020-2021 financial year.

Note: the 2020-2021 financial year runs from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021.

Licences 2020-2021

In the 2020-2021 year, how many 'on licences' did your Committee issue? **62**

In the 2020-2021 year, how many applications for 'on licences' did your Committee refuse? **0**

In the 2020-2021 year, how many 'off licences' did your Committee issue? **15**

In the 2020-2021 year, how many applications for 'off licences' did your Committee refuse? **0**

In the 2020-2021 year, how many club licences did your Committee issue? **0**

In the 2020-2021 year, how many applications for club licences did your Committee refuse? **0**

Managers' certificates 2020-2021

In the 2020-2021 year, how many managers' certificates did your Committee issue? **632**

In the 2020-2021 year, how many applications for managers' certificates did your Committee refuse? **1**

In the 2020-2021 year, how many applications for managers' certificates were withdrawn? **0**

Licence renewals 2020-2021

In the 2020-2021 year, how many licence renewals did your Committee issue? **224**

In the 2020-2021 year, how many licence renewals did your Committee refuse? **0**

Manager certificate renewals 2020-21

In the 2020-2021 year, how many manager certificate renewals did you issue? **623**

In the 2020-2021 year, how many manager certificate renewals did you decline? **1**

As at 30 June 2021 what is the total number of licences (new and existing in your licensing district?)

On-licences

Off-licences

Club licences

508

127

54

5. Please comment on any changes or trends in the Committee's workload in 2020-2021.

Covid-19 has reduced the Committee's workload overall but not as much as was first envisaged. In the last few months, the number of unopposed applications has declined. The number of applications opposed by the reporting agencies appears also to have declined, but there has been an increase in objector opposition to applications. Overall, there has been a reduction in the number of hearings over the 2020 -2021 period.

There appears to have been an increase in remote sales operations, noticeably increasing after the Covid-19 lockdown.

6. Please comment on any new initiatives the Committee has developed/adopted in 2020-2021.

The Committee has recently been looking at getting parties to attend prehearing conferences with the aim of resolving matters between themselves, particularly when there is no agency opposition, just public objections. This is in the development stage and is mainly considered in cases where there are only a few objectors.

The Committee has produced an Objector's Paper setting out the objector process.

7. Has your Committee developed a Local Alcohol Policy?

No

7A. If the answer is yes, what stage is your Local Alcohol Policy at? N/A

8. If the answer to 7 is Yes, what effect do you consider your Local Alcohol Policy is having?

N/A

9. If the answer to 7A is 'in force', is your Local Alcohol Policy due for review?

N/A

10. If the answer to 9 is Yes, has such a review been undertaken; and, if so with what result?

N/A

11. Please comment on the manner in which Covid-19 has impacted on DLC operations.

During lockdown all hearings were put on hold, and matters were adjourned until Wellington was back in Level 1. During this time all internal meetings were held on Zoom and Microsoft Teams and this subsequently has continued to some degree. An example would be during one hearing, a Committee member attended the hearing on Zoom. Covid-19 has made the Committee more aware of the ability to accommodate different circumstances and the possibility of conducting remote hearings.

One of the main disruptions was the ability of applicants to meet their notification requirements under section 101 and this resulted in delays in processing applications and a subsequent backlog. As noted above, Covid-19 has overall reduced the workload.

Covid -19 has affected the ability of the Medical Officer of Health to report on applications. This has impacted on special licence applications, as the MOOH only tends to report on large special events. It has also delayed reports on opposed matters and so hearings cannot be set down, - resulting in delays.

12. Please comment on the ways in which you believe the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012 is, or is not, achieving its object. Note: the object of the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012 is that:

- a) the sale, supply, and consumption of alcohol should be undertaken safely and responsibly; and***
- b) the harm caused by the excessive or inappropriate consumption of alcohol should be minimised.***

Generally, we consider the Act is working. However, some consideration should be given to remote sale operations and the impact, if any, these operations will have on achieving the object of the Act. The Committee notes the increasing number of remote sale operators in residential areas operating out of people's homes.

13. To what extent, if any, do you consider that achievement of the object of the Act may have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic?

It is to some degree anecdotal, though there is some council/police evidence. However, it appears that vulnerable people have been placed into motels/backpackers in the central CBD and this may have increased alcohol related harm in that area. This seems to be related to Covid-19 but may also relate to issues around homelessness.

Covid -19 has affected the ability to employ staff from overseas on working visa. This may impact on the ability of licensees to find suitable qualified experienced staff.

14. What changes or trends in licensing have you seen since the Act came into force?

Public objectors seem to be more aware that they can object.

There has been an increase in remote sale applications following Covid-19.

15. What changes to practices and procedures under the Act would you find beneficial?

Introducing a mediation/facilitation stage would be useful, where the parties are expected to engage in a meaningful way.