



## Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation

### Liquor Licensing Fact Sheet

# Liquor licence options for clubs sharing facilities

The Victorian Government recognises the importance of sporting, recreational and social clubs to local communities. Many clubs share facilities such as clubrooms, function areas and sporting fields.

Many clubs are run by dedicated volunteers and the social and economic changes over the last few decades have made it increasingly difficult for small clubs to survive.

Traditionally, a single club structure has offered organisations the greatest amount of autonomy in managing their own affairs. This type of structure has allowed clubs to attract new members, fundraise, manage finances, maintain facilities, fulfil legal responsibilities and meet increased community expectations. It also allows clubs to share premises on a seasonal basis such as a football club in winter with a cricket club in summer.

The *Liquor Control Reform Act 1998* requires a single licensee or nominee to be responsible for a liquor licence. When two or more clubs share the same premises over a 12 month period, they often hold their own liquor licence and are each paying the costs of an annual liquor licence.

In Victoria, there has been growth in amalgamated community clubs as a way to maintain the viability of small clubs. For clubs, amalgamation can provide financial savings and it can assist with time consuming administrative and governance tasks. An outcome greatly appreciated by the many volunteers who give up their time to support their local clubs.

Clubs that are interested in reducing the cost of holding a liquor licence may like to consider the following options.

#### Option 1

Amalgamate the clubs that jointly use the facilities. A number of clubs are now taking this step to more efficiently manage a range of activities

and responsibilities, including those relating to the supply of liquor.

#### Option 2

Amalgamate club social committees to establish a separate 'social club' that controls the use of club facilities, including the holding of a single liquor licence. The combined social club would receive all monies associated with the supply of alcohol and would then have to create their own rules as to how the funds were dispersed to the associated sporting clubs.

#### Option 3

One club takes responsibility for a single liquor licence for the facility. That club would then be responsible for the supply of liquor and all related requirements under the licence, regardless of which club is using the facility at the time. They would also be responsible for the behaviour of the other clubs' members and guests and any amenity issues. Serious penalties apply for offences related to these issues.

All of these options should be carefully considered, particularly in terms of organisational structures, profit sharing and legal arrangements, such as leases with local councils.

**Please note** It is up to the individual club to decide how to structure their organisation. The Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation (VCGLR) cannot advise you as to the most appropriate administrative arrangement for your club, but VCGLR staff are happy to discuss the options available to your club.

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