



**George Souris M.P**  
Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Hospitality and Racing  
Minister for the Arts

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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Sunday, 17 April 2011

### **STATEMENT ON THE KENSINGTON AT NEWCASTLE**

George Souris, Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Hospitality, Racing and the Arts, has ordered a review of the State's catering laws after the operators of a venue used the licence category to serve alcohol at a function despite twice being refused a liquor licence.

The operators of the Kensington night spot in Newcastle used a caterer's liquor licence to host hundreds of patrons on Saturday night in a nightclub setting and had plans for other such functions.

"A caterer's licence should not be able to be used in this way to effectively operate a nightclub where a licence has been previously refused," Mr Souris said today.

"I have requested urgent advice regarding the powers available to the Casino, Liquor and Gaming Control Authority and the Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing (OLGR) under the liquor laws to curtail these activities.

"OLGR inspectors carried out a joint operation at the Kensington with NSW Police and Newcastle City Council last night.

"I have ordered my Department to prepare a full report on last night's operation and the conduct of the licensee and venue management.

"I have also asked OLGR to urgently review the rules governing caterer's licences with a view to ensuring that this category of licence cannot be abused.

"The liquor laws provide effective powers to manage alcohol-related violence and I will ensure that they are properly applied in this instance.

"The O'Farrell Government is determined that the sale and supply of liquor in this State is conducted with integrity and that patron and community safety is paramount."

Mr Souris said he had also spoken to the Member for Newcastle, Mr Tim Owen, who has also expressed his concern about the matter, saying that efforts to address the city's alcohol-related issues should not be undermined.

"The caterer's license is an important part of the existing licensing system and the NSW Government is determined to ensure that any review would clarify and strengthen its intended purposes in line with community expectations", Mr Souris concluded.