



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

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday, 17 November 2011

SCHOOLIES URGED TO CELEBRATE SAFELY

School leavers, aka Schoolies, are being advised to party smart to avoid trouble and ensure everybody enjoys safe end-of-school celebrations.

Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Hospitality, Racing and the Arts, George Souris, said thousands of school leavers will be flocking to popular tourist spots along the NSW coast including Kingscliff, Byron Bay, Coffs Harbour and Port Macquarie to celebrate finishing school.

“After 13 years at school, we all understand that the class of 2011 wants to celebrate this milestone in their lives,” Mr Souris said.

“And what better location than one of our fantastic beachside towns on the picturesque NSW North Coast.

“While Schoolies deserve to have a good time they must behave responsibly and be mindful of the impact their actions can have on the people around them. Nobody wants to see these celebrations ruined by alcohol-related incidents especially those resulting in injuries.

“Schoolies must realise that their rite of passage into licensed venues comes with responsibilities.

“It is against the law to be drunk on licensed premises. If you are asked to leave by a staff member you must comply or police will be called and you will be issued with a \$550 on-the-spot fine.

“Drinking responsibly means you can stay longer and enjoy a full night out with your mates. Drinking to excess only increases the risk of getting into trouble or worse getting hurt.”

Mr Souris warned minors not to attempt to get into pubs and clubs or buy alcohol from bottleshops.

He said the Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing and NSW Police are staging operations in and around licensed venues in several NSW locations.

“NSW licensed venues have strict ID checking procedures to detect fake or altered IDs and even those who borrow ID from an older friend or family member.

“My message to minors during Schoolies Week: don’t try to get into pubs and clubs or buy alcohol from bottleshops because you will be caught and there are significant penalties.

“If you’re underage and caught unlawfully inside licensed venues or buying alcohol

from a licensed venue you can cop a fine of up to \$2,200. And you could even risk spending an additional six months on your P-plates if you use fake ID.

“Licensees who allow underage drinkers on their premises face a maximum penalty of \$11,000 and 12 months in jail.

“And any adult supplying alcohol to a minor should also be on notice that you are in our sights. Supplying alcohol to a minor is a serious crime and can lead to fines of up to \$11,000 and 12 months imprisonment.”

Mr Souris said OLGR officers attended a Byron Bay Liquor Accord meeting last month to help local licensed venues prepare for the challenges of Schoolies Week including introducing strategies to reduce the risk of minors getting into their premises.

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