



Australian Hotels Association
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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Hon Peter Katsambanis MLA
Chair
Community Development and Justice Standing Committee
Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
4 Harvest Terrace
WEST PERTH WA 6005

Dear Chair

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE INQUIRY PROTECTION OF CROWDED PLACES IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA FROM TERRORIST ACTS

Further to your request to provide evidence, the Australian Hotels Association WA (AHA) provides the following submission to the Legislative Assembly Standing Committee Inquiry into the Protection of Crowded Places in Western Australia from Terrorist Acts.

AHA WA

The AHA is the peak employer organisation of employers in the tourism, hotel and hospitality industry in WA. The AHA has a diverse membership that encompasses hotel accommodation, resorts, serviced apartments, pubs, taverns, small bars, restaurants, wineries and boutique breweries located across metropolitan and regional Western Australia.

National Strategy for Places Of Mass Gatherings

Recent domestic and international terrorism attacks have emphasised the attractiveness of crowded places as targets for terrorists. We recognise that hospitality, retail and entertainment precincts may be targets and our members may be on the front line.

We understand the importance of issues around the safety and security of patrons and have a good relationship with WA Police.

The AHA has welcomed the development of a national strategy to respond to threats with the release of the *"Australia's Strategy for Protecting Crowded Places from Terrorism"* released by the Prime Minister in 2017.

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Under the strategy, hotels, pubs, taverns, clubs and restaurants are specifically and appropriately defined as “crowded places” (formerly “places of mass gatherings”).

At a national level, the AHA has participated in the National Business Advisory Group (BAG) which provides advice to the national Mass Gatherings Advisory Group (MGAG) to the ANZCTC (Australia-New Zealand Counter Terrorism Committee). BAG operates as a forum for national and major venue owners and operators to exchange information, and engage with law enforcement authorities to discuss Australia-wide issues relevant to the protection of places of mass gathering.

At a state level, the AHA is a member of the Crowded Places Security Collective which is convened by the Protective Security Unit within WA Police.

Our Approach

The AHA strongly supports and endorses a national approach endorsed through COAG for a National Framework and Strategy.

Our role, as a peak body is to disseminate and promote information in consultation with the BAG to support the nationally consistent approach to the protection of places of mass gathering from terrorism.

The National Strategy for Protecting Crowded Places from Terrorism gives detailed advice to owners and operators of places that attract crowds on how to reduce the risk of car and truck attacks, homemade bombs, knife and gun assaults and chemical attacks. A number of key documents have been released and the AHA (WA) has shared these with our members. These include the following:

- Australia's Strategy for Protecting Crowded Places from Terrorism
- Crowded Places Security Audit
- Crowded Places Self-Assessment Tool
- Active Armed Offender Guidelines for Crowded Places
- Improvised Explosive Device Guidelines for Crowded Places
- Chemical Weapon Guidelines for Crowded Places
- Hostile Vehicle Guidelines for Crowded Places

AHA members have received information through the publication of articles in our magazine, e-newsletters, presentations to regular meetings with hotel general managers, venue manager, owners and operators across our membership divisions with tools and guidance materials made readily available through our online member portal.

In addition, we know that some of our members will have been engaged individually to participate in the state-based Crowded Places Security Collective and or receive information through other relevant sources.

Responsibility for implementing measures to mitigate risk are the responsibility of individual venues. We are aware that several of our members, particularly large entertainment and accommodation venues have considered and incorporated strategy guidance into their emergency management plans. However, we do not have any data to determine if adoption is consistent across our membership.

Terms of Reference

The AHA has considered the terms of reference for the WA Parliamentary inquiry and the letter from the Chair and will respond to issues relating to WA Police, Security Licensing, Registration and Assurance Processes and Education.

WA Police

The AHA has a working relationship with WA Police. As previously stated, the AHA are members of the WA Police's Crowded Places Security Collective which has provided a forum for members to receive a range of briefings on relevant and technical issues that include:

- The effectiveness of metal detectors
- Updates from the Federal Police
- Cybersecurity threats

At a local community policing level, the main vehicle for information sharing is through the permanent WA Police representative on local Liquor Accords.

Security Licensing, Registration and Assurance Processes

The security licensing and registration process in WA is prescribed in the Security and Related Activities (Control) Act 1996 and associated Regulations.

This licensing and registration process is a multi-tiered process that is both overseen by and enforced the WA Police.

The Police oversight and enforcement role includes providing a current list of approved of training providers, background checks and police testing for all licence applicants, along with registration of licence holders and random compliance checks once they are approved.

The WA Police provide a list of approved training providers to ensure the quality and consistency of training provided to both Registered Security Agents and individual security employees such as crowd controllers.

All applicants are vetted by police with individuals being subject to a Fit and Proper Person test prior to issue of a licence, once issue licence holders are subject to random

compliance checks. In addition to random compliance checks any person convicted on an offence can have their licence cancelled by Police.

There is also a renewal process to help ensure the licence holders continued suitability to hold the relevant licence.

The security industry is also subject to a mandated code of conduct which is enforceable through regulation. This code of practice provides a secondary level of compliance with all Registered Agents required to conduct licence checks on their personnel.

As with any regulatory procedure, this process is only as strong as the weakest link. The adequacy and relevance of this process relies on the provision of quality training, maintaining currency of relevant training content, adherence to compliance, and reliable enforcement.

Education

The AHA endorses the overarching objectives of the Strategy to promote education through building stronger relationships, enable better information sharing and guidance.

We recognize that our capacity to encourage adoption of the strategies, to mitigate risks of attacks, is limited.

We would welcome the consideration of strategies to promote broader awareness and understanding of steps that can be taken to protect crowded places. In this we believe there is a role for WA Police to provide resources to support greater accessibility to briefings across the hotel and hospitality industry on this important issue.

Further Information

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to this inquiry. Should you wish to contact me for more information regarding this submission, please contact my Executive Assistant,

Regards

Bradley Woods

CEO, Australian Hotels Association WA

**National Executive Director Government and Parliamentary Affairs, Tourism
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