



## MEDIA RELEASE

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14 DECEMBER 2013

Members of the CBD Townsville Liquor Accord were shocked to learn of the alleged incident that left a 33 year old Townsville Police Officer in hospital suffering from a stab wound to his neck in the early hours of this morning.

Accord Secretary Greg Powell stated, "I am disgusted that a Police Officer that was simply doing his job and keeping the community safe was allegedly stabbed in a totally unprovoked attack".

The Accord consists of representatives from 29 separate licensed premises and other key stakeholder groups within the CBD, Palmer Street & Strand precincts and has been in place since 8 August 2012. It was established by those operators and other key stakeholders that remain committed to addressing issues such as intoxication and violence in and around licensed premises.

Mr Powell said, "We work extremely closely with Police and OLGR to ensure that those patrons that come to our venues are provided with a safe and enjoyable environment. At our last meeting, held just last week, we received considerable praise and support from senior Police for the way that Accord venues have been operating and the ongoing assistance we provide them".

This latest incident occurred within Santa Fe Gold which trades as part of the Bullwinkle's Cabaret liquor licence.

Mr Powell stated, "I want to make it extremely clear that Bullwinkle's Cabaret and Santa Fe Gold are NOT part of the CBD Townsville Liquor Accord and never have been. In fact, the owner and operator of Bullwinkle's Cabaret personally made the decision not to join the Accord when initial discussions were being held in relation to the very strict principles that we wanted to operate under".



Mr Powell further stated, "It should be noted that the last major incident involving significant injury to a patron on a licensed premises within the CBD, Palmer Street & Strand precincts was also at Bullwinkle's Cabaret on the 15<sup>th</sup> of October 2012".

The liquor licence held by Bullwinkle's Cabaret (including Santa Fe Gold) is the subject of a High Risk classification issued under section 97 of the *Liquor Act 1992*. This classification commenced on 1 December 2011 and remains in place.

Mr Powell stated, "Members of the Accord will continue to work closely with Police and the OLGR to provide safe venues for patrons to enjoy themselves. We are extremely proud of the efforts that our members have made that have directly led to a significant reduction in incidents resulting in public recognition from Police and the OLGR".

Mr Powell would not comment on what action, if any, should be taken against the operators of Bullwinkle's Cabaret (including Santa Fe Gold). "Those decisions are rightly made by Police and the OLGR. The Accord just wants to see that patrons of all venues can enjoy themselves in a safe environment".

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# Metal scans for all patrons

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METAL detectors will be used at the entrances to Bullwinkles and Santa Fe Gold with owner Greg Pellegrini calling on other nightclubs to follow suit in the wake of the alleged knife attack against a police officer.

The CBD Townsville Liquor Accord, however, has slammed Mr Pellegrini for not joining their group, pointing to previous incidents which have taken place on his premises.

Mayor Jenny Hill said she hoped the Office of Liquor Gaming and Racing would look closely at the incident given it took place at a venue classified as high risk.

Mr Pellegrini said the portable metal detector wands had been used on a random basis for some time but would now be used on every patron to enter the clubs in a bid to prevent a repeat of the brutal incident which took place outside on the Santa Fe stairwell.

"We have immediately (installed) two metal detectors on our doors and we invite the Townsville Liquor Accord to

do the same," he said.

"We have previously run random scans with metal detectors and we have been the only venue on the street in the past which has used them."

Mr Pellegrini confirmed the alleged offender had previously worked as a bouncer for Bullwinkles but had been dismissed in April for breaching the club's code of conduct.

He said the only reason he had not joined the Accord was because they insisted he stop promoting his business with the Bullwinkles Moose mascot on the strip.

Mr Pellegrini said his was not the only high-risk venue and the classification had come from an isolated alleged glassing incident which he was unable to appeal.

"We do abide by all other regulations, more so than some other members of the Accord," he said.

"We have a great relationship with the particular police

officers attending that night and our management are very much in shock over it.

"We all wish to pass on to (the injured officer) and his family our most heartfelt support and we 100 per cent don't condone any violence against police or emergency services.

"The full force of the law will be, and should be, implemented against anyone who brings violence against police."

Accord secretary Greg Powell said Mr Pellegrini had chosen not to join the group and abide by the very strict principles addressing issues of violence and intoxication in the precinct.

"Members of the Accord will continue to work closely with police and the OLGR to provide safe venues for patrons to enjoy themselves," he said.

"We are extremely proud of the efforts that our members have made that have directly led to a significant reduction in incidents resulting in public recognition from police and the OLGR".

Mr Powell would not comment on what action, if any, should be taken against the operators of Bullwinkles and Santa Fe Gold.

"Those decisions are rightly made by police and the OLGR. The Accord just wants to see that patrons of all venues can enjoy themselves in a safe environment," he said.

Cr Hill said the OLGR should take a hard look at the premises where violent incidents occurred.

"The OLGR are paid substantial sums through licensing fees to ensure all proprietors maintain a set standard. They have the ultimate power to deal with this and they can easily set an example if they choose to," she said.

"This sort of behaviour should not be tolerated. The government is going to crack down on law and order, now they've got an opportunity to show what their state departments can do."