

Alcohol Free Zoning

Business owners and Nowra CBD shoppers will be relieved to hear the Department of Local Government last week increased the enforcement powers of police and the penalties for those found drinking in an Alcohol Free Zone.

The anti social behaviour resulting from alcohol consumption in the alcohol free zone of Junction Court is an ongoing issue in Nowra's CBD. "The impact this behaviour has on adjacent businesses and property owners are dire," says Sonya Cochrane of the Shoalhaven Business Chamber. "The Business Chamber has been very active in lobbying for a change in the guidelines of enforcement for alcohol free and prohibited zones in response to the complaints we receive. In Junction Court particularly, business owners and property investors are financially and socially affected by anti social behaviour that to date, the laws have been ineffectual in addressing."

The revised guidelines were issued to councils across NSW 5 February. The amended enforcement powers allow police and enforcement officers to confiscate alcohol and issue a fine of up to \$2200 for any person who does not cooperate.

These new laws will work hand in hand with the Crime Prevention Van planned for the Shoalhaven by SCC and the local area command. This initiative will provide daily tasking and a visible law enforcement presence in identified hotspots.

NAB Managing Partner Andrew Love has expressed his support of the changes also. 'We are one hundred percent behind any legislation which enhances business and community activity. We will be supporting the Business Chamber in lobbying council for clear signage defining Junction Court as an alcohol free zone.'

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