

**DTI LIQUOR REGULATION CONVENTION**  
**“Towards a balanced and effective liquor regulation  
framework”**

GALLAGHER ESTATE

THE EFFECTS OF THE LOCATION OF OUTLETS, DENSITY AND TRADING HOURS ON  
COMMUNITIES

PREPARED BY: ZANDILE MDHLADHLA [CEO: Moral Regeneration Movement]

MARCH 08 2012

**Programme Director:**  
**Honourable Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry: Ms. Elizabeth  
Thabethe**  
**Chairperson of Contralesa: Advocate Holomisa**  
**DDG: Ms. Zodwa Ntuli**  
**All Protocol observed,**

It is a privilege and an honour to be at this Liquor Regulation Convention, whilst celebrating International Women’s Day, in our pursuit to build a just, caring and moral South African society and to highlight the societal challenges that are brought about by the location of liquor outlets, their density and trading hours on our communities.

I would like to begin by saying that drinking establishments have been around since trading ships first began visiting the Cape, and pre-1994 pubs and restaurants in urban areas where places where people met to socialise and date. In townships bars and taverns were places where mostly working class urban males could unwind, socialise, and escape the oppression of life in a segregated society. These establishments played a unifying role in the community, providing a sense of identity, and belonging, where patrons could express themselves culturally, and meet and discuss political and social issues and dance and sing.

Thus when dealing with this topic we must realise that it has been one of the most forms of recreation. As government plans it must consider replacing outlets with other forms of recreational facilities.

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The landscape of our communities post-1994 changed drastically, with the newly acquired freedom, came unforetold responsibilities some of which overwhelmed our communities leading to the fragmentation of the family unit and a dependence on substances to alleviate the stress brought about by these changes.

Over the past ten years the Moral Regeneration Movement has had robust social dialogues in all the nine provinces, encouraging communities to voice out their challenges and to come up with community action plans that would address these challenges. Common in all provincial challenges is the location, density and the trading hours of the liquor outlets, commonly referred to as taverns and shebeens.

Communities are complaining that most of these taverns are around the schools, churches and main roads. On the schools' front; the liquor outlets impact greatly on the discipline in schools and encourages scholars to bunk classes to go and consume alcohol. These outlets lure the youngsters with loud music and big screen TVs connected to DSTV, comparing this with boring lessons given by sometimes ill-prepared teachers the scholars opt for the taverns.

Those positioned around places of worship, normally show very little respect or tolerance for the beliefs or priorities of those in service by playing loud music during times or hours of service. This then leads to animosity and intolerance within the community between those that worship and those that don't.

Those positioned on the main roads; have led to nothing but heartache as many lose loved ones in death through accidents caused by people who drink and drive. By virtue

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of the fact that these outlets still serve as places of socialisation, normally people want to show off their material well-being and satisfy their positions in the social hierarchy.

<sup>3</sup> Studies have shown that communities with high concentrations of liquor outlets also have higher rates of alcohol-related hospitalisations, drunk-driving accidents, childhood accidents, assaults, child abuse injuries, the spread of HIV and AIDS, pedestrian injuries, crime, violence and last but not least the breakdown of family life and values. A high density of liquor outlets also contributes to economic and social disintegration; this regardless of a society's economic, ethnic or age status. One such area is Xhariep in the Free State; this community has been brought to unravelled poverty because of the popularity of liquor outlets and the accessibility of liquor to minors even.

The over-concentration of liquor stores increases the perceived lack of safety and limits walkability in the community; this hinders healthy socialisation and takes away the power from the community to own their neighbourhoods and environment. Moreover, concentrations of liquor stores in a neighbourhood can constrain economic opportunities for current and new businesses and therefore are both a symptom and accelerator of economic decline.

The report from “Working Group 6: of Sober South Africa of 8 September 2008” alluded to the fact that there is a strong need to facilitate greater community ownership of the alcohol environment in our communities. Also they listed key areas for intervention and priority strategies within each area; for example where drinking and driving is concerned they proposed stronger limits to be placed on novice drivers, e.g. 0.00g/100ml for the

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first three years after obtaining a driver’s licence. Another area they looked at was increasing political will to address alcohol problems and the proposed strategy here was to increase media advocacy around alcohol issues and generally raise public awareness around the societal problems that arise from the misuse and abuse of alcohol.

Everyday government, its agencies and communities make decisions about the sale of alcohol: who can sell it, when and where it can be sold, who it can be sold to. State and local laws and policies control many aspects of the system by which alcohol is manufactured, marketed, sold, purchased and consumed. This sees each element of the regulatory system providing opportunities for creating healthier social environments with respect to alcohol, provided each party plays its role.

<sup>2</sup>The Western Cape government together with the Liquor Board inspectors and other key stakeholders did just this on Monday 12 December 2011 when they had a joint operation to crack down on illegal liquor operations and investigating also whether vendors were compliant; in Wallacedene and Bloekombos. The Chairperson of the Liquor Board, Mr Raybin Windvogel, alluded to the impact of non-compliance by vendors when he said, “We impose conditions for a reason and when sellers don’t obey them, the entire community is affected by increased crime, vehicle crashes, domestic violence and general disorder. We need to guard against these highly damaging effects of alcohol by creating a culture of compliance”.

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<sup>1</sup>The Moral Regeneration Movement agrees with the notion that government should use its regulatory powers to help create healthy and safe communities by:

1. Making rules that set minimum distances between liquor outlets;
2. Embarking on educational programmes that help communities with alternatives to drinking and also find ways of earning a living;
3. Limiting new licences for areas that already have outlets too close together;
4. Not issuing a new licence when a particular outlet goes out of business and
5. Ensure that as it does infrastructure development, recreational facilities and programmes are included;
6. Proliferation of these outlets impacts on regulators and law enforcement [maybe job creation prospects];
7. Permanently closing outlets that violate the laws [e.g. those that sell liquor to minors or to intoxicated persons or those that allow illicit drug sales or prostitution on the premises].

*IN CONCLUSION:*

We are challenged as South Africans to help build a just, tolerant and moral society for the common good.

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The Moral Regeneration Movement as an inclusive movement continues with the South African community at large to engage communities on issues that threaten the Respect of their Human Dignity and Equality by promoting Freedom, the rule of law and Democracy to ensure Improved Material Well-being and Economic Justice for all, contributing to enhanced Sound Family and Community Values by Upholding honesty, Integrity and Loyalty, leading to Harmony in Cultures, Beliefs and Conscience by showing Respect and Concern for all people and to Strive for Justice, Fairness and Peaceful Co-Existence and finally not forgetting our heritage of Protecting the Environment which will serve us and generations to come.

May we continue to have such ground-breaking engagements and processes until we are all committed to being good citizens of this country!

**Remember the challenge is multi-faceted and complex and solutions similarly so,  
but Moral Renewal?**

**WE CAN DO IT!**

I thank you!

**References:**

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<sup>1</sup> Kathryn Stewart [Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation], - ‘How Alcohol Outlets Affect Neighbourhood Violence’;

<sup>2</sup> Western Cape Government > Ministry of Finance Economic Development and Tourism > News > Joint Operation Cracks down on Non-Compliant Liquor Outlets in Wallacedene and Bloekombos;

<sup>3</sup> Pacific Institute; ‘Measuring What Matters > Liquor Stores and Community Health.

<sup>4</sup> Sober South Africa: Working Group 6 Report of 8 September 2012