



## Public Consultations

### MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (JOINT OPS DIVISION)

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Phase II of Public Consultation on Strengthening Measures on Liquor Sale and Consumption in Public Places  
 Consultation Period: 16 Jun 2014 - 31 Jul 2014  
 Status: In Progress

#### Phase II of Public Consultation on Strengthening Measures on Liquor Sale and Consumption in Public Places

##### Ministry of Home Affairs

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#### Introduction

The Ministry of Home Affairs invites the public to provide feedback on the proposals to control liquor sale and consumption in public places.

#### Background

2. MHA is reviewing the measures to control liquor sale and consumption in public places. This seeks to address concerns of safety issues and disamenities that could potentially arise from people congregating and drinking in public places. As part of the review, MHA is consulting various stakeholders in the community. The first phase of the consultation was carried out between 29 October and 31 December 2013, via the REACH portal and focus-group discussions. We sought views on two measures, namely designating no-alcohol zones at public places, and shortening of sale hours of alcohol at retail outlets.

#### Public Feedback and Support for Measures

3. The majority of the respondents supported the two measures. 83% of the respondents who commented on the proposal to designate no-alcohol zones in public places, and 76% of those who commented on the proposal to shorten retail sale hours of alcohol for off-premise consumption, expressed support for the respective measures.

4. On restricting alcohol consumption in public places, the respondents indicated congregation hotspots, and common areas within the neighbourhood such as playgrounds, void decks, and the areas around MRT stations, as areas that could be designated as no-alcohol zones. Many expressed support to curb incidence of public nuisance, and protect the community from safety threats posed by people congregating and drinking in public late at night. Some respondents commented that we should take a targeted approach and implement restrictions in places where the problems are significant, while others commented that we should be mindful to not displace problems from one area to another. There was also feedback that the rules must be simple to understand and comply with.

5. The respondents also welcomed the proposal to shorten sale hours of alcohol at retail outlets. This restricts the supply of alcohol late at night, and minimizes incidences of violence and nuisance cases induced by alcohol intoxication. The respondents also generally stated their preference for such retail sale of alcohol to end by 12am in residential area and 2am in the entertainment districts.

#### Next Phase of Public Consultation

6. MHA is looking at various options available to put the two measures into effect.

#### Measure 1: Restriction on public consumption of alcohol

7. The following table illustrates the models and practices adopted in other jurisdictions to restrict public consumption of alcohol, and their pros and cons.

Models/ Practices	Pros and Cons
<p><b>A. <u>Partial restriction with selective enforcement</u></b></p> <p>In the UK, designated public places orders give Police powers to require people to surrender open containers of alcohol within a zone. The public is generally allowed to consume alcohol until being stopped by Police.</p>	<p>✓ This allows targeted restriction with selective enforcement against certain people who create nuisance when consuming alcohol. The public is generally still allowed to drink alcohol peacefully.</p> <p>× However, this is a more reactive approach and the nuisance would have been caused before intervention takes place. In areas where large groups of people often congregate and drink alcohol, safety concerns will persist. It will also be difficult to identify the specific persons who have created nuisance (e.g. excessive noise/ littering). Enforcement may not be effective in such cases.</p>
<p><b>B. <u>Partial restriction by places</u></b></p> <p>In jurisdictions such as South Australia, New South Wales, certain hotspots or places with high incidence of alcohol-induced violence and disamenities may be designated as "alcohol-free zones". Possession of open bottles of alcohol is not allowed within these zones, except at licensed premises such as pubs. This is also currently practised locally in Little India.</p>	<p>✓ This allows targeted restriction to be imposed at problematic hotspots where large groups of people often congregate and drink alcohol. It will relieve the local community of the disamenities and safety issues posed by these drinkers. Alcohol consumption will still be allowed at permitted places (e.g. pubs, coffee shops, etc) within the designated zones.</p> <p>× However, the community has to be familiar with the rules and boundaries of the various designated zones. Restriction by place will also inadvertently cause some displacement effect. The problems may be transferred to other areas. This effect will be felt strongly by residents living near the designated zones.</p>
<p><b>C. <u>Partial restriction by time</u></b></p> <p>In jurisdictions such as Texas, other than designating no-alcohol zones at problematic areas, there are also state laws that <u>prohibit consumption of alcohol across the state after a certain time at night</u> (i.e. 10pm).</p>	<p>✓ This allows targeted restriction by prohibiting public consumption of alcohol late at night when the propensity of alcohol-induced violence and nuisance is higher. The authority will be able to minimise these problems while the community will be allowed to drink alcohol until the restricted time. The restriction can be applied island wide, so that quieter neighbourhoods will not be affected by displacement problems. Alcohol</p>
	<p>consumption will still be allowed at permitted places (e.g. pubs, coffee shops, etc).</p> <p>× However, at hotspot areas where large groups of people often congregate and drink alcohol before the restricted time, this measure on its own may not be sufficient.</p>
<p><b>D. <u>Wider restriction</u></b></p> <p>In jurisdictions such as Western Australia and many states and cities in the USA (e.g. Washington, Kansas, Maryland), the laws <u>prohibit the consumption of alcohol across the whole jurisdiction at all times</u>. Alcohol consumption is however allowed in permitted public places such as pubs.</p>	<p>✓ This model effectively reduces public consumption of alcohol, as the restriction is applied in all places and at all times. There will not be displacement effect. Alcohol consumption will still be allowed at permitted places (e.g. pubs, coffee shops, etc).</p> <p>× However, public consumption of alcohol will no longer be allowed, except at permitted places.</p>

We would like to seek your views on the above models/ practices. In particular, we would appreciate your feedback on the following:-

- Do you experience problems associated with congregation and public consumption of alcohol? Where and how frequently (e.g. weekly, once in a while)?
- If you consume alcohol, where do you usually do so (e.g. at home, at licensed premises, at the void decks, in the parks)?
- What are your views on each of the models? How can they be adapted to suit our local needs?
  - A. Partial Restriction with Selective Enforcement
  - B. Partial Restriction by Place
  - C. Partial Restriction by Time
  - D. Wider Restriction
  - E. Other suggestions (e.g. a combination of the options above)
- Within a restricted area, public consumption of alcohol may be allowed at specific areas. Other than licensed premises such as pubs, restaurants and coffee shops, which other areas would you like to be exempted from the restriction (e.g. parks, pavilions, beaches)?
- If public consumption of alcohol is restricted by time across Singapore, at which time would you prefer the restriction to start (e.g. 10pm, 12am, 2am)?

#### Measure 2: Shortening sale hours of alcohol at retail outlets

8. Even with the restriction on public consumption of alcohol, there may be transient visitors, or inconsiderate people who do not abide by the rules and continue to create nuisance. To better control the situation, the supply of alcohol can be restricted by ending its retail sale for off-premise consumption at an

earlier time. This is practised in other jurisdictions, such as New South Wales.

9. In Singapore, licensed retail outlets are currently allowed to sell alcohol 24 hours a day, except at commercial zones where there are some residential units, where sale is only allowed up to 3am.

#### Submission

Based on the preferences indicated by respondents in Phase I of the consultation, there are several options that we can adopt (not mutually exclusive):-

- a) End retail sale of alcohol by 2am in entertainment districts;
- b) End retail sale of alcohol by 12am in residential areas;
- c) End retail sale of alcohol earlier (e.g. 9pm) in areas where people tend to congregate and consume alcohol in public places.

What are your views on the above options?

10. We welcome your views on the above measures. Please send your feedback to us via email: [reach@reach.gov.sg](mailto:reach@reach.gov.sg).

11. We seek your support to ensure that the consultation exercise is productive and focused, and would like to request that respondents follow these guidelines:-

- a) Identify yourself and the organisation you represent (if any), as that would assist us to understand of the perspective of various stakeholder groups; and
- b) Make your comments clear and concise;

12. Your feedback is important to us. All views and comments received will be considered. However, we regret that we will not be able to separately address or acknowledge every comment we receive. Instead, we will consolidate and publish a summary of the key comments received with our response, on the REACH website after the consultation exercise closes together with the results gathered from the 1st phase of consultation. The closing date for the submission is 31 July 2014.

Thank you.

Name :

Email :

#### Note:

**REACH reserves the right to remove comments which are irrelevant, defamatory or obscene. Your comments may also be edited for brevity.**

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