

FOR RELEASE 08-068
March 25, 2008

LIQUOR ACT AMENDMENTS TABLED TODAY

WHITEHORSE – A number of amendments to the *Yukon Liquor Act* were tabled during the spring sitting of the legislative assembly.

“These proposed amendments represent the expressed desires of Yukoners gathered during the Liquor Act Review,” Jim Kenyon minister responsible for the Yukon Liquor Corporation, said. “Many of the suggested changes from the 2001 Liquor Act and Regulations Review have already been brought into force. The amendments proposed will modernize the act and strengthen enforcement rules and penalties.”

The amendments cover a number of areas including streamlining licensing requirements and lowering the minimum age requirement of people serving alcoholic beverages in restaurants.

The proposed legislation also calls for the removal of meal requirements for people consuming alcohol in restaurants and the elimination of hotel room requirements for bars.

"These proposed amendments speak to more effective use of laws to protect the public," Kenyon said. "For example, the amendments will allow for increased fines and penalties for those who violate the Liquor Act and its regulations, including bootlegging and serving minors. As well, the proposed amendments will reduce red tape for licensed business owners, and provide more flexibility in how they operate."

The original act was drafted in 1976. Times have changed and today's Yukon is decidedly different and the proposed amendments are being examined in today's modern context, Kenyon added.

-30-

Backgrounder attached

Contact:
Matthew Grant
Cabinet Communications
(867) 633-7961
matthew.grant@gov.yk.ca

Doug Caldwell
Communications, Yukon Liquor Corp.
(867) 667-8065
doug.caldwell@gov.yk.ca

Yukon Liquor Act Proposed Regulation Amendments

- The RCMP will be allowed to hold an intoxicated person in custody for up to 24 hours which will correct the long-standing matter of premature release for those under the influence of alcohol;
- Fines and penalties for liquor related offences will increase, particularly for selling and/or supplying liquor to minors, bootlegging, over-service, and use of a forged identification card;
- Licensing requirements will be streamlined to allow greater flexibility in the conditions of use and sale of alcohol for the service industry. For example, a primary food premise may become a liquor primary premise later in the day;
- Minors will be allowed to serve liquor in restaurants, enter bars for limited work purposes, and perform in bars, which satisfies business and Yukon entertainment industry concerns about denying young people work and performing opportunities;
- Home-made beer or wine may be served at private family events held in a public place, with a reception permit.
- RV park owners will be able to sell beer/wine to registered overnight guests which may increase business opportunities, subject to regulations;
- The meal requirement enabling consumption of alcohol in a restaurant and the hotel room requirement for bars will be eliminated, providing businesses with more flexibility and enhanced business opportunities.