

# **VIOLENT CRIME REDUCTION ACT 2006**

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## **EXPLANATORY NOTES**

### **BACKGROUND**

#### **Part 1: Alcohol-related violence and disorder**

##### **Power of police to require review of premises licence**

39. Through this legislation the Government is seeking to introduce a power for police to require an expedited review of an alcohol licence where the premises are associated with serious crime and disorder, and a power for councils to take temporary steps in relation to the licence (including imposing additional conditions) pending the determination of the review.
40. These objectives fit into the overall government aim of achieving a 15% reduction in crime, (including violent crime) by 2008 by:
  - contributing to changing the culture of carrying weapons – searching pubs and clubs where this is a demonstrable risk will serve as a clear deterrent to carrying knives;
  - reducing the risk of injury caused by glass – requiring pubs and clubs to use toughened glass where there is a demonstrable risk will help reduce the risk of injury from glassing.
41. These are selective measures. It is not the aim to require all licensed premises to undertake these searches or use toughened glass. Rather, the policy aim is to provide a selective tool, to be used proportionately, to limit this condition to those pubs that are at risk either because police intelligence shows there is a risk of knives/guns being carried or because crime and disorder has occurred on the premises.
42. The Licensing Act 2003 is the main statutory lever to regulate both on and off licence traders. Operators are issued with a licence to sell alcohol, and this licence is the main vehicle for regulating their behaviours.
43. There are conditions applied to this licence, relating to crime and disorder, which are on the face of the Licensing Act 2003 (e.g. not knowingly allowing alcohol to be sold to a person who is drunk) and apply universally to all licensed establishments.
44. There is also a provision which allows other conditions to be attached to licences, by licensing authorities, which are tailored to the particular circumstances of individual establishments. Searching for weapons and use of toughened glass are examples of this type of selective provision that can already be applied to licences where there is a demonstrable need.
45. The aim of this provision is to supplement the existing provisions in the Licensing Act 2003, which provide for conditions to be attached to licences. This is achieved by giving the police the power to issue a certificate where they believe that a premise is associated with serious crime and disorder. This would trigger an accelerated review of the licence with the attaching of temporary conditions to the licence.

*These notes refer to the Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006  
(c.38) which received Royal Assent on 8 November 2006*

46. The provision would cover serious crime and disorder generally (rather than be limited to weapons and glass related incidents – although the need to use the provision for these purposes could be brought out in guidance). And the appropriate modifications and conditions to the licence could be set.