

MEDIA RELEASE



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STAFF SHORTAGE HAMPERS RECOVERY FOR BROKEN HILL PUBS

Staffing issues, especially the lack of security personnel, will be high on the agenda when publicans from Broken Hill meet with AHA NSW Director of Liquor and Policing John Green later today.

Mr Green said many pubs are still getting back on their feet after two years of restrictions and - with bills outstanding - many aren't out of the woods just yet.

"It's good to see people in regional communities like Broken Hill getting back to their locals," he said.

"Socialising in person with family, friends and colleagues is important for mental health.

"It's been a hectic few years in NSW with floods, drought, fire, mice plagues and COVID, and now we have critical staff shortages with backpackers and working holiday maker numbers still well under pre-pandemic levels.

"We are also seeing staff still often wiped out for a week in COVID isolation which can throw business operations into chaos.

"In regional areas getting security guards is a real concern in particular, due to issues with access to training and shortages across NSW. But you can add to that a range of positions like cooks and chefs – which often sees kitchens in regional pubs closed on certain days or certain times because they just can't be staffed.

"This is something the AHA is working on at the state and federal levels."

AHA Delegate and owner of The Mulga Hill Tavern Dean Trengove said getting staff in Broken Hill has long been a problem and COVID has just made things worse.

"The course to be able to stand guard at the door of the pub used to be two days now it's two full weeks," he said.

"Access to training here is non-existent and you need to get a least 12 people to make it viable for someone to come here and run a course and you have to get people to give up two weeks of their life to get what is essentially a part-time job.

"I have always tried to hire local, especially for apprentice chefs, but TAFE in the Western Region has no hospitality courses at all so it has become near impossible to train them up. The whole issue just makes our recovery so much tougher."

Mr Green will meet publicans at the Broken Hill Pub today at 4.30pm.

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