
From: Dean Edwards
Sent: Monday, 27 May 2013 3:34 PM
To: Macrae, Tess
Subject: APRA

To the ACCC,

I am writing to let the ACCC know about the behaviour of APRA's licensing guys as it really is too hard for small venues to deal with this stuff. I am the General Manager of Bartletts Tavern in Rockhampton. I have run venues for many years and always paid my music fees. I have never seen behaviour like this from any other part of my business and I have had enough.

A few years ago I was sent a blank form from APRA's rep [REDACTED]. We sent this back and then got a massive invoice (that didn't make any sense). [REDACTED] then began a campaign of heated phone calls and threatening us with APRA's lawyers if we didn't pay. I am always happy to pay for my music, but I am at a loss as to how they have calculated their invoice. After talking to some other publicans, they said that if APRA took me to court I could be up for hundreds of thousands, so I felt I had to pay regardless.

When the tavern changed owners this year [REDACTED] contacted me again and told me that we need a new license as the owners had changed. [REDACTED] then sent me an invoice that had a credit for my current invoice which was based on previous years but then sent me a new one for nearly double the license fee even though most of my TV's are showing Fox or Keno. When I asked about this, [REDACTED] said that I have to pay for all TV's and then sent me another letter saying that APRA could sue me if I didn't.

In the end, I was worried about what to do so I contacted the Queensland Hotels Association who mentioned that they get these kind of calls about APRA all the time. They gave me some advice which helped me to understand what I should be paying for.

My plan now is to go back to [REDACTED] to let [REDACTED] know that I am prepared to only pay for TVs which are playing sound and I think this is fair. I hope that APRA accepts this and that I don't have to spend any more time on this as it is hard enough to run a business these days.

Regards,

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