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FRIDAY 16TH JANUARY 2009

**PUB ASSOCIATION PUBLISHES LIQUOR LICENCE APPLICATION NUMBERS
– ONE IN FIVE ALCOHOL LICENCE APPLICATIONS NOT LODGED**

The Scottish Beer and Pub Association (SBPA) has today (16th January 2009) published details of the numbers of applications for new Premises Licences lodged under the terms of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005. These licences are required to allow the sale of alcohol under the new Licensing Act. The Association's findings indicate that roughly one in five, or nearly 2,500 licences applications, which could have been lodged for a new Premises Licence in 2008, were not lodged.

Today is the last scheduled date for applications for new Premises Licences to be lodged to allow the applicants who are already trading to take advantage of the limited grandfather rights and the simplified application process offered by the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005.

The SBPA's figures (compiled from figures from the Licensing Boards in thirty one of Scotland's thirty two Council areas) suggested that:

- In the first tranche of licence applications with a deadline of 7th March 2008 for premises to submit their Premises Licence applications, 81.3% or 3,255 had done so, meaning 18.7% or 749 anticipated applications were not submitted;
- In the second tranche of licence applications with a deadline of 6th June 2008 for premises to submit their Premises Licence applications, 77.9% or 3,115 had done so, meaning that 22.1% or 882 anticipated applications were not submitted;
- In the third tranche of licence applications with a deadline of 3rd October 2008 to submit their Premises Licence applications, 81.2% or 3,703 had done so, meaning that 18.8% or 855 anticipated applications were not submitted;

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- Overall during 2008, in the three tranches of licence applications, some 19.8% or 2,486 expected applications for new Premises Licences were not submitted, equivalent to roughly one in five of the anticipated total of 12,559 applications;
- Overall the Licensing Boards with the highest percentages of expected applications for new Premises Licences not submitted were: the Shetlands Islands Licensing Board with 43% of applications not submitted; the Moray Licensing Board with 32.8% of applications not submitted; and the Dundee Licensing Board with 31.1% of possible applications not submitted;
- Overall the Licensing Boards with the lowest percentages of expected applications for new Premises Licences not submitted were: the South Lanarkshire Licensing Boards with only 9.3% of applications not submitted; the East Ayrshire Licensing Board with 11.6% of applications not submitted; and the Western Isles Licensing Board with 11.8% of possible applications not submitted;

Said Patrick Browne, SBPA Chief Executive: "These figures suggest a high proportion of Scotland's licensed premises so far have failed to lodge new Premises Licence applications, either because the cost and complexity of the new Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 has discouraged them from doing so, or because they are no longer trading. Whilst premises, which have so far not submitted new licence applications, can still do so, they risk joining a backlog of tens of thousands of applications for Personal Licences and registered members clubs which also have to be dealt with over the next seven months."

"With one in five expected applications not yet submitted, even allowing for new premises starting to trade, that must undermine the ability of the industry to meet the growth targets for Scottish tourism given that licensed premises would have played a major role in delivering that growth."

"Those premises that haven't yet applied for a new licence need to do so before the end of February in order to give them the certainty of continuing to trade, and Licensing Boards could help by identifying those licensed premises that haven't applied yet for a new licence, but could still do so, and reminding them of the need to apply."

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“The information from Licensing Boards also makes it clear that the premises not applying for new licences aren’t simply florists delivering the occasional bottle of champagne or licensed B&Bs. There are a wide range of types of premises that haven’t lodged new premises licence applications. It is only on 1st September 2009 when the new licensing regime comes into effect that we will be able to fully assess how many of Scotland’s licensed premises have actually made the transition to the new regime.”

Commenting on the fact that the Fife and the Argyll and Bute Licensing Boards did not supply all of the information requested, said Patrick Browne: “It is disappointing that these two Boards were unable or unwilling to fully supply the information requested, indeed Fife Licensing Board have totally ignored a series of Freedom of Information requests. Their lack of response must raise questions about how they are handling the process of licensing transition, given that other Boards were able to supply the information requested.”

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Notes for Editors

1. The process of licensing transition to the new licensing regime in Scotland began on 1st February 2008, with new Premises Licences under the terms of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 due to be brought into force on 1st September 2009. Over an eighteen-month period all of Scotland's 19,000 licensed premises will be issued with new 2005 Licensing (Scotland) Act licences.
2. The information was compiled on behalf of SBPA by AH Strategies Ltd. using Freedom of Information legislation.
3. Details on the numbers of licensed premises in Scotland at the end of December 2007 can be found at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/08/11160147/0>
4. The attached table gives information supplied by the Licensing Boards in thirty one of the thirty two Council areas in Scotland relating to numbers of applications under the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005.
5. The Argyll and Bute Licensing Board did not supply all of the information requested, instead only supplying the information for the March 2008 tranche of applications, and partial information for the June 2008 tranche of licence applications.
6. There was no response from the Fife Licensing Board.
7. The figures reported for the East Dunbartonshire Licensing Board exclude reported data for registered clubs in the October 2008 tranche of applications.

For further information contact Patrick Browne, SBPA on:

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<i>Licensing Board</i>	<i>Applications Expected</i>	<i>Applications Submitted</i>	<i>Difference</i>	<i>% lodged</i>	<i>% not lodged</i>
Aberdeen City Licensing Board	541	450	91	83.2%	16.8%
Aberdeenshire Licensing Boards	528	403	125	76.3%	23.7%
Angus Licensing Board	276	203	73	73.6%	26.4%
Argyll and Bute Licensing Board	159	139	20	87.4%	12.6%
City of Glasgow Licensing Board	1629	1368	261	84.0%	16.0%
Clackmannanshire Licensing Board	120	97	23	80.8%	19.2%
Dumfries & Galloway Licensing Boards	579	442	137	76.3%	23.7%
Dundee Licensing Board	376	259	117	68.9%	31.1%
East Ayrshire Licensing Board	303	268	35	88.4%	11.6%
East Dunbartonshire Licensing Board	133	114	19	85.7%	14.3%
East Lothian Licensing Board	239	171	68	71.5%	28.5%
East Renfrewshire Licensing Board	86	74	12	86.0%	14.0%
City of Edinburgh Licensing Board	1488	1249	239	83.9%	16.1%
Falkirk Council Licensing Board	252	209	43	82.9%	17.1%
Highland Licensing Boards	1037	778	259	75.0%	25.0%
Inverclyde Licensing Board	148	129	19	87.2%	12.8%
Midlothian Licensing Board	136	101	35	74.3%	25.7%
Moray Licensing Board	326	219	107	67.2%	32.8%
North Ayrshire Licensing Board	308	248	60	80.5%	19.5%
North Lanarkshire Licensing Board	515	424	91	82.3%	17.7%
Orkney Islands Licensing Board	97	68	29	70.1%	29.9%
Perth and Kinross Licensing Board	537	417	120	77.7%	22.3%
Renfrewshire Licensing Board	348	284	64	81.6%	18.4%
Scottish Borders Licensing Boards	362	270	92	74.6%	25.4%
Shetland Islands Licensing Board	114	65	49	57.0%	43.0%
South Ayrshire Licensing Board	411	352	59	85.6%	14.4%
South Lanarkshire Licensing Boards	569	516	53	90.7%	9.3%
Stirling Licensing Board	363	284	79	78.2%	21.8%
West Dunbartonshire Licensing Board	193	162	31	83.9%	16.1%
West Lothian Licensing Board	310	243	67	78.4%	21.6%
Western Isles Licensing Board	76	67	9	88.2%	11.8%
Total	12559	10073	2486	80.2%	19.8%