

## ACT Public Service Career - Roger Sharp

When Roger decided to make the move to Canberra in 1997 he was looking for a new opportunity and applied for a job with the ACT Government.

At the time the Office of Liquor licensing was expanding and a recruitment process was in place to appoint some new licensing Inspectors. I was charged with the responsibility to vet the applicants and interview them for the job.

Rogers application came across my desk, his application looked good given his police background. A young constable who was a highway patrol officer in the Goulburn region also looked good and I thought that Roger was a good fit to be teamed up with a young constable, he being able to control the young constables enthusiasms. This worked very well.

Rogers new role required him to seek out underage drinkers and to make sure that liquor licensees complied with the Liquor Act.

So Roger when about his duties after keeping the wallabies and wombats in check at Burra during the day light hours and at night time he would rattle the bushes in town and venture into the nightclubs seeking out anybody that might have been underage.

During these night time endeavours one story comes to mind Di Reilly happened to be working with Roger and early in the morning Di came across an intoxicated young girl coming out of a nightclub who she tried to apprehend, the underage person didn't take to kindly to this and attempted to punch Di, Roger seeing what was happening quickly came to Di's aid and the young girl then swung and tried to punch Roger. Not a good move, Roger grabbed her by the back of her jeans, which resulted in her having the most uncomfortable wedgie as he frog marched her to the city police station. She was swinging punches and screaming through Civic closely followed by her friends. Roger latter commented to Di that she was the second most dangerous inspector, I am not sure who was the first.

A few years on this law enforcement stuff didn't interest Roger any longer and a new venture was awaiting him. Changes were about to happen the Liquor Section took over Consumer Affairs and the Office of Regulatory Services came about, and the opportunity arose for Roger to be charged with the responsibility of the front office in a Customer service role. Roger was now looking for a day time job so he didn't have to doge the kangaroos and wombats on the way home in the early hours of the morning on his trip back to Burra after an exhausting night on the job.

An ACT Politician once referred to the Office of Regulatory services as being responsible for sex, drugs and rock-n-role. Roger in his customer service role was responsible to keep the register of Brothels and sex workers in the ACT, licence and renew licenses for those wishing to sell and produce X Films, licence and renew those wishing to sell legal drugs being alcohol and tobacco and the licensing night-clubs hence the term sex, drugs and rock-n-role fitted in well the role he was now responsible for.

Roger liked to do his customer service role the way he thought was best he was stubborn and determined these being the very characteristics, along with others that made him good at his job. Senior Management didn't always agree with his management style and he would let them know in unambiguous terms when he didn't agree with them, however he would knuckle down and get on with the job and deliver on what was required. A good example of the was when management introduced a revised computerised licensing system which Roger hated with a passion. He had no problem in interpreting policy or instructions to suit his view of the situation.

Roger was well liked by the business people that came into contact with him he helped many get into business and was always there if they needed further assistance.

Roger was an excellent teacher and mentored the younger staff who used to find their way to licensing through the registration area. After Roger retired those same staff would keep in contact with him and meet for coffee or lunch.

Roger liked to portray himself as a grumpy old bugger but in fact he was a gentle giant he was set in his ways and if you were to take a phone call when seeking assistance at his counter he would simply ceased or not serve you he had a sign made up and displayed on his counter to emphasis this point.

Roger over the years had a very good understanding of what was needed to provide good customer service and developed this in this staff. He was well respected by people within the industries that relied on his knowledge and respected by those that worked for him he was sorely missed when he decided to retire in 2010.

Roger you were a friend and a close work colleague to those who worked with or for you, rest in peace.