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Imagine the uproar if a Christian owner of a restaurant banned gays from his/her premises...

BBC

A gay pub in the city of Melbourne has won the right to ban heterosexuals - the first time such legislation has been passed in Australia.

The Victorian state civil and administrative tribunal ruled the Peel Hotel could ban patrons based on their sexual orientation.

The pub's management said the move would stop groups of heterosexual men and women abusing gay people.

Civil liberties groups have supported the decision.

'Safe balance'

The tribunal's president said groups of straight women found homosexual men entertaining but that such attention was dehumanising, the BBC's Phil Mercer in Sydney says.

Managers complained raucous hen nights and stag parties created a poisonous atmosphere for its gay clientele, our correspondent says.

"If I can limit the number of heterosexuals entering the Peel, then that helps me keep the safe balance," the hotel's manager, Tom McFeely, told Australian radio, according to the Reuters news agency.

Tom McFeely, The Peel manager, 28 May 2007
Mr McFeely says he wants a "safe balance"

He said while Melbourne had 2,000 venues catering for heterosexuals, his was the only bar aimed exclusively at gay men.

Civil liberties groups said homosexuals should be allowed to relax in places without fear of bullying or intimidation.

Australia's equal opportunity laws prevent discrimination based on race, religion or sexuality.

(<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/6697469.stm>) Gay Bar Bans Straights