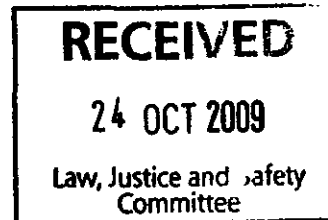


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Research Director  
Law, Justice and Safety Committee  
Parliament House  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

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Dear Sir / Madam

**Submission to the Inquiry into Alcohol-related Violence  
by the Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation (AER)**

Thank you for your letter of 4 September 2009 inviting submissions to the 'Inquiry into Alcohol-related Violence' to be conducted by the Law, Justice and Safety Committee of Queensland Parliament.

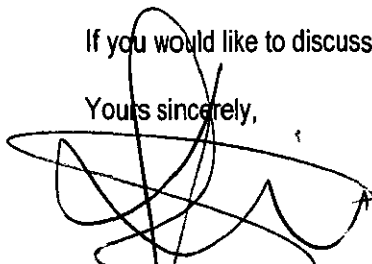
I am responding on behalf of the Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation (AER), an independent, not-for-profit, national organisation with specific expertise in the area of alcohol related harm minimisation and fostering behavioural change towards petrol and solvent sniffing.

Since its inception in 2001, AER has partnered and collaborated with over 700 organisations from its \$ 115 million grants program. AER has unique professional capabilities in the areas of advocacy, policy development and grants management related to alcohol and solvent misuse. Over the past eight years AER has built an extensive intellectual property library through commissioning and funding research and supporting relevant projects.

We are pleased to provide the attached submission to the 'Inquiry into Alcohol-related Violence', based on information gained through funding over 950 projects across Australia. Naturally, given the vast amount of information acquired over the years, we can only provide very brief highlights in response to each area identified by the Inquiry. If the Inquiry would like to explore any of these topics more in depth, we suggest they approach the author of the research papers cited directly. To facilitate such contact, a list of references is provided at the end of our submission.

If you would like to discuss our submission further please feel free to contact me

Yours sincerely,

  
Tracey Purdam  
Chief Executive Officer  
22 October 2009

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**Submission to the Inquiry into Alcohol-related Violence  
by the Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation (AER)**

**Best practice harm minimisation measures**

There is clear evidence to confirm that an increase in the number of liquor outlets, regardless of outlet type, is associated with an increase in alcohol related violence and assault in the surrounding area.

The relationship between outlet density and assault rates is non-linear. A 'threshold effect' was found, suggesting a possible upper limit for licensed premises in a certain geographical area, but this threshold will vary from community to community.

There is also positive correlation between injury, particularly interpersonal violence, and 'bunching of outlets', rather than just 'outlet density' per se. The most unexpected finding however is that alcohol related violence mainly occurs in private homes rather than at, or near, licensed premises.

As outlet density affects different communities differently, it is suggested that individual communities should determine the optimal balance between the benefits derived from physical availability of alcohol, and the possible negative impacts arising, such as health and social harm. For example, in remote Indigenous communities voluntary restrictions on alcohol sales have proven to have a positive effect, and therefore should continue to operate.

**References**

- NSW rollout of a linking project – implementation, draft report, 2009 (Hunter Population Health, John Wiggers)
- Alcohol restrictions working in Alice Springs (NT), news article, June 2009, (Menzies School of Health Research)
- Increased domestic violence an unexpected consequence of new liquor licenses: New licensing model can predict impact on alcohol related violence, February 2008, National Drug Research Institute
- Alcohol outlet density and assault: a special analysis, 2008, (Michael Livingston)
- Review of restrictions on the sale and supply of alcohol in Australia and Western Australia, 2007, Curtin University of Technology
- Changing the density of alcohol outlets to reduce alcohol-related problems, September 2007, (M Livingstone, T Chikritzhs, R Room)
- Predicting alcohol related harm from licensed outlet density: a feasibility study, September 2007, (Chikritzhs, Catalano, Pascal for NDLERF under NDS)
- Investigating the relationship between the density of liquor outlets and perceived problems of public disorder and violence, Dec 2005, (NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR))
- Identifying a framework for regulation in packaged liquor retailing, June 2005 (Marsden, Jacob Associates for the National Competition Council)

### **Impact of late opening hours**

There is evidence to support a relationship between reduced trading hours of licensed premises and reduced rates of alcohol related violence.

#### **References**

- Enforcing liquor licensing laws (and other regulations relating to the sale and supply of alcohol), May 2009 (Launch Group for AER)
- Changes in intoxication levels and the experience of responsible service practise initiatives among 18-39 year olds drinking at licensed premises in NSW 2001-2005, April 2007, (NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR))
- 'If you are told it is time to leave, remember it's the law' (Fail to Quit name changed to Take the Hint Call it a Night without the Fight), April 2006 (Wollongong Local Area Command , NSW Police)

### **Flow-on issues for emergency service workers, police and front line health workers**

Research into 'linking' particular licensed premises with alcohol related harm, followed by increased police enforcement of licensing laws at high risk premises, has led to significant reduction in the number of alcohol-related incidents and accidents, proving the potential benefits of enforcing liquor licensing regulations more stringently and in a more targeted way.

#### **References**

- NSW rollout of a linking project – implementation, draft report, 2009 (Hunter Population Health, John Wiggers)
- Increased domestic violence an unexpected consequence of new liquor licenses: New licensing model can predict impact on alcohol related violence, February 2008, (National Drug Research Institute)
- Alcohol outlet density and assault: a special analysis, 2008, (Michael Livingston)
- Changing the density of alcohol outlets to reduce alcohol-related problems, September 2007, (M Livingstone, T Chikritzhs, R Room)
- Changes in intoxication levels and the experience of responsible service practise initiatives among 18-39 year olds drinking at licensed premises in NSW 2001-2005, April 2007, (NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR))

### **Education campaigns and their role in cultivating effective social change in terms of community attitudes to alcohol consumption**

Alcohol is a 'socially controlled' substance in all cultures. There are specific norms to determine who people may drink with, how much, where, when and why.

Education and persuasion can be effective in modifying behaviour. Drinkers will consider changing their behaviour if we can provide them with reasons that satisfy the specific needs they were drinking to fulfil

in the first place. (e.g.: those who drink to meet 'social expectations' will be motivated to stop drinking if the 'new norm' becomes to stay sober).

Evidence suggests that change is most likely if it can be demonstrated that a person's actions are harmful to others, and therefore there is considerable social pressure to alter the behaviour. Examples of successful educational campaigns that used 'harm to others' as one of their motivators are 'drink driving countermeasures' and 'non-smoking workplaces'.

### References

- A multi-site investigation of the social meanings of alcohol misuse among young adults in recreational settings, Sep 08 (Curtin University – NDR, David Moore)
- Trialing "Social Norms" strategies for minimising alcohol-related harm among rural youth, Jun 08 (University of Tasmania, Clarissa Hughes)
- Identifying cost-effective interventions to reduce harm with alcohol misuse, May 08 (University of Queensland, Chris Doran)
- Changing drinking cultures: can alcohol education work? June 2005, (Anne Fox, Galahad SMS Ltd – Substance Misuse Solutions)

### The role of parents in influencing attitudes towards alcohol consumption

Family and social norms do have considerable effect on young people's alcohol use. While the influence of friends and peers may mediate this effect, parents make the strongest impact on children.

Research indicates that parents are trusted and admired. Children listen and watch their parents. Parents can influence their own behaviour and effect their children's actions through modelling.

Drinkwise's successful recent campaign "Kids Absorb Your Drinking" use this family context to reinforce the message: 'Kids look up to you. They model your behaviour. They are watching and listening to you all the time'.

Research confirms that adolescents who are poorly monitored start drinking from an earlier age. When parents are more permissive about drinking, young people tend to drink more. Warm, supportive parenting is associated with lower alcohol consumption and lower risk taking behaviour in adolescents.

Interventions to delay the 'first drink' and supervision of recreational spending of teenagers are likely to prevent harmful alcohol use in later years.

### References

- Adolescent and Young Adult Alcohol Use and Abuse: Secondary Data Analysis, Apr 2009 (Centre for Adolescent Health, Murdoch Children's Research Institute, George Patton)
- What works! A generational social marketing approach to changing alcohol consumption patterns, 2009 (Noel Turnbull, Drinkwise)
- Alcohol risk and harm reduction: drinking amongst young adults in recreational settings in Perth, Mar 09 (NDR Curtin University of Technology, Grace, Moore, Northcote)

- What a great night: Cultural drivers of drinking practices among 14-24 year old Australians, Jan 09 (Monash / Deakin University Consortium for Drinkwise and Department of Health and Ageing)
- Get them young: mapping young people's exposure to alcohol marketing in Ireland, 2009 (National Youth Council of Ireland)
- Individual and community correlates of young people's high risk drinking in Victoria, Australia, Jun 2008 (Livingston, Laslett, Dietze)
- Trialling "Social Norms" strategies for minimising alcohol-related harm among rural youth, Jun 2008 (University of Tasmania, Clarissa Hughes)
- A multi-site investigation of the social meanings of alcohol misuse among young adults in recreational settings, Sep 2007 (Curtin University, David Moore)
- Peer social networks in the development of harmful alcohol and drug use in early high school, Jul 2007 (Centre for Adolescent Health, University of Melbourne, John Toumbourou)
- Age of drinking onset and alcohol dependence, 2006 (Ralph, Hingson, Heeren, Michel, Winter, Youth alcohol prevention Centre Boston USA)
- Parenting influences on adolescent alcohol use, Oct 2004 (Australian Institute of Family Studies for Department of Health & Ageing)

#### **The economic cost of alcohol related violence**

It is estimated that the economic cost of alcohol to Australia is around \$ 15.3 billion annually, yet only around \$ 6.4 billion in revenue is earned by the Government, leaving an \$ 8.9 billion deficit.

Australians believe that responsibility for alcohol related harm minimisation should be shared between federal, state and local government, alcohol manufacturers and distributors, individuals in the community, alcohol retailers, and the health and not for profit sector, under the leadership of the federal government.

Research indicates that population-wide interventions are more cost effective and successful than interventions that target hazardous or harmful drinkers or those dependent on alcohol.

'Taxation and pricing' are just one package of the many successful interventions that can reduce alcohol related harm by diverting drinkers to low or no-alcohol products through price impact, based on the drink's pure alcohol content.

In addition, there should be a 'minimum floor price' and no discounting of alcoholic products. Alcoholic beverages should never cost less than non-alcoholic drinks.

There is strong evidence to show that the most cost-effective package of interventions is to change to 'volumetric (linear) alcohol taxation', coupled with a 'complete ban on alcohol advertising'

According to a recent consumer conducted by Galaxy Research, Australians believe that taxes collected through the sale of alcohol should be used for the prevention and mitigation of alcohol related problems, and that those who receive funds from this source should have proven experience in alcohol related harm prevention and minimisation.

## References

- Alcopops Study Report, April 2009 (Launch Group and Galaxy Research for AER)
- The avoidable cost of alcohol abuse in Australia and the potential benefits of effective policies to reduce the social costs of alcohol, Monograph Series No 70, National Drug Strategy, 2008 (Department of Health and Ageing)
- Identifying cost-effective interventions to reduce the burden of harm associated with alcohol misuse in Australia, (ACE Alcohol = Assess the Cost Effectiveness in alcohol related harm), May 2008 (National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, University of NSW and School of Population Health of University of Queensland)
- Identifying a framework for regulation in packaged liquor retailing, June 2005 (Marsden, Jacob Associates for the National Competition Council)