

Submission No. 28

(Youth Violence)

A.O.C. Date: 27/10/2009

Submission to the Inquiry into the Impact of Violence on Young Australians

23 October 2009

Contents

	Page
1. Introduction	3
2. ADCA and the AOD sector – Who we are and what we do	4
3. Executive overview of ADCA’s response	5
4. ADCA’s response to the Terms of Reference	7
5. Previous submissions	14
6. Conclusion and Recommendations	16
7. References	17

1. Introduction

The Alcohol and other Drugs Council of Australia (ADCA) is pleased to lodge this submission with the House of Representatives' Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing, and Youth for the Committee's Inquiry into the Impact of Violence on Young Australians.

As the recognised national independent peak body, ADCA represents the interests, and provides leadership for the alcohol and other drugs (AOD) sector. ADCA works collaboratively with government at all levels, non-government organisations (NGOs), as well as the business and community sectors to promote evidence-based and socially just approaches aimed at preventing or reducing harm caused by alcohol and other drugs to individuals, families, and communities.

The issue of violence and, in particular, violence committed by young people has attracted unprecedented attention in recent years. Only last month (September 2009) Prime Minister Kevin Rudd expressed concern about the incidence of violence among young people – both as perpetrators and victims.¹ ADCA acknowledges the concern of public figures and the community itself about the prevalence of youth violence.

Research verifies a direct link between the excessive consumption of alcohol, the taking of other drugs, and violence.² ADCA is of the belief that a large part of the problem lies in substance misuse by young people. The dangers associated with binge drinking in particular have become a national issue, as growing concern surrounding the misuse and dangers of alcohol continues to dominate community debate. The culture of heavy drinking permeates our society, and bringing about change will need a coordinated, educated, and strategic public awareness approach. The approach must involve prevention, law reform, education, and effective enforcement.

Physical violence among young people has been identified as a priority public health issue internationally.³ In Australia, acts of violence by young people are widespread and not merely confined to city centres or licensed venues.

Violence against young women is also a recognised concern, and addressed by the White Ribbon Foundation Australia. Anywhere from 40 to 57 per cent of women will experience physical or sexual violence by men at some point in their lives⁴.

As Prime Minister The Hon Kevin Rudd MP said in a keynote address to the White Ribbon Foundation in Sydney on 10 September 2009: "The Australian Government will

¹ Saulwick J, 'Rudd Ponders Causes of Violence' Sydney Morning Herald, September 4, 2009.

² Doherty, S. J. and A. M. Roche (2003). Alcohol and licensed premises; best practice in policing: a monograph for police and policy makers. National Drug Strategy. Canberra, Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing.

³ Mercy J, Butchart A, Farrington D, Cerda. Youth Violence. in Krug E, Dahlberg I, Mercy J, Zwi A, Lozano R, editors. *World Report on Violence and Health*. Geneva (CHE): WHO; 2000, pp. 23-56.

⁴ White Ribbon Foundation Australia 2009, *Violence against women: Australian Facts and Figures*, Sydney.

take responsibility and will take action, by developing through COAG and for launch in 2010, an approach that's different. Never before has violence against women been responded to with all of our systems and services working together. The National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women will set out a plan of action, so we can get on with the job – the very difficult job – of making a difference.

As I've said on everything from health reform to education to national security, we have to stop the blame game between governments in this country. If you have a national problem then you need a truly national solution.

That is why the Council of Australian Governments is instrumental in getting the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments on the same page with this, and just as this is not the sole responsibility of one government, or of one portfolio. This is not just a women's matter. This is not a just a legal matter. This is not just a policing matter. This is a complex whole-of-government mission."

On 22 October 2009, the Federal Minister for Youth, The Hon Kate Ellis MP released a substantive report on *The state of Australia's young people: a report on the social, economic, health, and family lives of young people*. The report reveals that there are serious risks to young people's health, safety, and wellbeing. Two relevant findings of this wide-ranging report indicated:

- Teenagers aged 15 to 19 have the highest hospitalisation rate for acute intoxication of all age groups, and one in five 16 year old has used illicit drugs; and
- Almost a quarter of young people feel unsafe walking alone at night, and young people are more likely to be the victim of a crime, but less likely to report it.

Based on the evidence outlined, ADCA urges the Committee to adopt a consistent approach across all jurisdictions, providing adequate funding and appropriate guidelines to the States and Territories. ADCA welcomes the Committee's Inquiry into what is considered to be a serious problem for all Australian communities.

2. ADCA and the AOD Sector: Who We Are and What We Do

ADCA is the national peak body for the AOD sector, providing an independent voice for people working to reduce the harm caused by alcohol and other drugs.

ADCA is a non-government, not-for-profit organisation which receives approximately 80% of its core funding and major ongoing project funding through the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing under its Community Sector Support Scheme (CSSS), and the National Drug Strategy Program respectively. Approximately 12% is received through other project grants from State Governments and/ or the Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation Ltd (AERF). The remaining 8% is generated through ADCA's membership fees, interest and other sources of income

(small one-off projects). ADCA is a company limited by guarantee, a public benevolent institution with income tax and sales tax exemption, and a deductible gift recipient.

As the national peak body, ADCA occupies a key role in advocating for adequate infrastructure support and funding for the delivery of evidence-based AOD initiatives. In this regard, ADCA represents the interests of a broad group of AOD service providers and individuals concerned with prevention, early intervention, treatment, harm minimisation, supply reduction, and research.

Under ADCA's new governance arrangements, the ADCA Board is elected by the ADCA membership and consists of a total of nine Board Directors. The ADCA Federal Council comprising one representative per State/ Territory AOD peak organisation plus the ADCA Board, has been established as a key mechanism for coordination and cooperation with State/ Territory AOD peak organisations. The ADCA Policy Forum comprises the ADCA Board, the State/ Territory AOD peaks, and the Chairs of the ADCA Working Groups, and establishes an advisory forum on key policy issues for the AOD sector. Both the ADCA Federal Council and the ADCA Policy Forum come together for face-to-face meetings, and telephone link-ups.

At 1 September 2009, ADCA's membership totalled 361, comprising 164 organisational members, 55 associate organisational members, and 142 individual members. These include AOD services, agencies, and individual professionals and practitioners engaged in AOD services throughout Australia, as well as major university research centres, tertiary institutions offering courses in addiction studies and other programs for AOD workers, officers of law enforcement and criminal justice systems, policy analysts, and administration.

3. Executive overview of ADCA's response

ADCA is committed to taking a leading role in reducing the burden of alcohol harms to the Australian community – contingent on the fact that Governments at all levels provide support, infrastructure, and funding needed to progress policy change, prevention, and treatment.

ADCA is determined to provide a strong voice in the current climate, to help bring about positive change for the Australian community. ADCA's broad policies on violence and its links with alcohol and other drug consumption are as follows:

- **ADCA supports restricting both the physical and economic availability of alcohol in order to reduce levels of alcohol-related violence**
Reducing the economic availability through taxation and the physical availability could help to change consumption patterns in a way that could promote safer drinking.
- **ADCA supports a holistic and strategic approach to the reduction of violence committed by young people**

A combination of law reform, improved enforcement of service of alcohol laws, policing, awareness and education is required in order to reduce the occurrence of violence in licensed premises and beyond.

- **ADCA supports the enactment of consistent liquor licensing legislative reforms in all Australian States/ Territories**

ADCA contends that further metrics, such as venue capacity multipliers, explicit promotion of the Government's Alcohol Guidelines, and differential person per square metre occupancy ratios could create a more efficient, better targeted licensing regime.

- **ADCA supports limits on the way alcohol is advertised and served to young people**

ADCA recommends that mandatory Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA) training should be enshrined into all State/ Territory jurisdictions' liquor licensing legislation. This RSA training should extend to all workers within a licensed venue. Additionally, ADCA calls for promotional guidelines to limit the scope for licensed premises to provide special drinking promotions/ deals for patrons.

- **ADCA supports effective and well-resourced policing**

The pressure that increased levels of violence places on police services across Australia needs to be addressed through a funding review, more advanced data collection, and specialist taskforces to foster proactive, and not reactive law enforcement.

- **ADCA supports the provision of increased financial support for programs aimed at raising awareness about the negative impact of violence, the link between consumption of alcohol, the taking of other drugs, and increased levels of violence**

Education about ways to avoid involvement in violence is important for all members of the community. This includes raising awareness about the problems associated with violence such as injury or death, as well as the health consequences associated with alcohol and other drugs.

ADCA believes that it is time to further encourage communities to consider making different choices about community safety and, in particular, reducing the alcohol consumption of young Australians. There is a need to change attitudes to drinking, make licensed premises safer places, and affirm within the community that there is no place for violence. Governments at all levels need to work cooperatively with local communities to not only reduce violence overall, but, more importantly, change the drinking culture in Australia.

4. ADCA's response to the Terms of Reference

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youth provided five Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Inquiry into the Impact of Violence on Young Australians. In this submission, ADCA will address the following ToR:

1. Perceptions of violence and community safety among young Australians
2. Links between illicit drug use, alcohol abuse, and violence among young Australians
3. Social and economic factors that contribute to violence by young Australians, and
4. Strategies to reduce violence and its impact among young Australians.

1. Perceptions of violence and community safety among young Australians

ADCA is of the opinion that violence caused by alcohol and other drugs impacts on all community members and not just young Australians. To ascertain explicit data on the Impact of Violence on Young Australians, and personal perceptions of violence in youth situations is compiled, it is considered that an in-depth study is required with the full commitment of the Government and adequate funding.

Preliminary research has drawn the broad conclusion that violence is more likely to be carried out in or around licensed premises than any other location. A 2003 study showed that in inner Sydney 12% of hotels and nightclubs accounted for almost 60% of all assaults at hotels and nightclubs⁵.

ADCA wishes to note that while the overwhelming perception is that the problem of violence is confined to young men binge-drinking in licensed premises in cities⁶, the problem is in fact much broader and includes domestic violence, violence committed at private social events, and violence in rural and remote communities.⁷

The Committee is advised that more specific comments on perceptions of violence among young Australians and the broader community could be sought from law enforcement services, youth groups, charitable organisations, research institutions, and the medical profession.

⁵ Doherty, S. J. and A. M. Roche (2003). Alcohol and licensed premises ; best practice in policing: a monograph for police and policy makers. National Drug Strategy. Canberra, Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing.

⁶ Voukelatos A and Mitchell R, Patterns of Physical Violence in Youth: The Experience of 16-25 year olds, in *Health Promotion Journal of Australia 2009: 20 (1)* at p. 27.

⁷ See Footnote 4.

2. Links between illicit drug use, alcohol abuse and violence among young Australians

Research confirms that young people are more likely to be involved in violence, either as perpetrators or as victims, when they are under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.⁸ ADCA notes that this is not the only contributing factor, but considers it a major part of the problem in our communities.⁹

ADCA also notes the evidence that indicates young males are up to five times more likely to engage in alcohol-fuelled violence than young females.¹⁰

However, ADCA is also aware that intoxication presents a different set of behaviours and risks within women in relation to violence. Research confirms that women are less likely to actually engage in offending behaviour, or to react violently and with heightened aggression, when provoked. Intoxicated women are, however, more likely to be vulnerable to the risk of violence in the form of sexual assault committed by strangers or acquaintances, particularly when drinking occurs in a public environment.¹¹

Research has also uncovered a link between the amount of alcohol consumed and the types of behaviour, and vulnerability exhibited by the consumer.¹² “Grossly intoxicated people are less likely to initiate violence, but are more likely to become the victim of alcohol-related aggression, and to suffer harms from injuries such as falls”.¹³

3. Social and economic factors that contribute to violence by young Australians

The economic (price) and physical (place) availability of alcohol determines, in part, its frequency of use and misuse. Physical (place) availability of alcohol is currently controlled under Liquor Licensing Legislation at the State/ Territory Government level,

⁸ World Health Organization Youth Violence and Alcohol Fact Sheet. Accessed from: http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/world_report/factsheets/ft_youth.pdf date 19 October 2009

⁹ Nicholas R, *The antecedents of alcohol related violence in and around licensed premises*, Australasian Centre for Policing Research, March 2004 (A discussion paper prepared for the Commissioners’ Drugs Committee of the Conference of Police Commissioners of Australasia and the South West Pacific Region by the Australasian Centre for Policing Research) at p. 2.

¹⁰ Doherty, S. J. and A. M. Roche (2003). *Alcohol and licensed premises ; best practice in policing : a monograph for police and policy makers*. National Drug Strategy. Canberra, Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Roche, A. M., Watt, K. A., Purdie, D., McClure, R., & Green, D. (2001). Injury and alcohol: A hospital emergency department study. *Drug and Alcohol Review*, 20, 157-168.

¹³ McLeod, R., Stockwell, T., Stevens, M., & Phillips, M. (1998). *The relationship between alcohol consumption patterns and injury*. Second International Conference on Drinking Patterns and their Consequences. Kettil Bruhn Society meeting. Perth, Australia: The National Centre for Research into the Prevention of Drug Abuse, Curtin University of Technology.

and is discussed in *Section 4.1*. Government at the Federal level also has an impact on the economic availability and/ or price of alcohol through legislation and taxation.

ADCA, in consultation with a number of aligned public health bodies, has prepared and submitted two responses on alcohol taxation to the Future Tax System (Henry) Review. Following are the principles that ADCA believes should be taken into account when setting future tax rates:

- consumer products containing alcohol warrant specific taxation in addition to the taxation applying generally to consumer products and services
- optimal taxation design requires a taxation system to be simple, efficient and equitable: the alcohol taxation system should be no different
- taxation revenue from alcohol should recognise the real costs (particularly but not only health costs) arising from the harmful consumption of alcohol
- a limited measure of hypothecation is warranted by the nature of alcohol products
- using tax as a behavioural tool requires rate-setting to be evidence-based, supported by the ongoing collection and publication of sales and consumption data
- alcohol should be taxed as alcohol regardless of its type or category
- a premium above the standard rate of excise per unit of alcohol is sometimes warranted
- the tax regime should encourage less harmful consumption by taxing alcohol content progressively; and
- the current value of alcohol taxes should be maintained and not erode over time, to ensure that the real price effect of taxation remains constant.

Numerous international and Australian studies have shown that pricing, through taxation, is an effective measure to reduce all harms, including violence from excessive alcohol consumption¹⁴. An AER Foundation media release on the “*Assess the Cost Effectiveness of interventions to reduce Alcohol related harm*” (ACE Alcohol) research report, authored by Chris Doran, showed that in an Australian setting, implementing alcohol taxation reform would be the most cost-effective policy intervention, and would reduce harms, while at the same time raise revenue for the Federal Government.¹⁵

4. Strategies to reduce violence and its impact among young Australians

ADCA believes that the issue of violence among young people must be addressed with an approach combining law reform, improved enforcement of service of alcohol laws, policing, awareness, and education.

¹⁴ For examples see Wagenaar AC, Salois MJ and Komro KA. *Effects of beverage alcohol price and tax levels on drinking: a meta-analysis of 1003 estimates from 112 studies*. *Addiction* 2009; 104: 179-190 and Chaloupka FJ, Grossman M, et al. *The effects of price on alcohol consumption and alcohol-related problems*. *Alcohol Res Health* 2002; 26:22-34.

¹⁵ AER Foundation: http://www.aerf.com.au/showcase/MediaReleases/2008/31-8-08_ACE-ALCOHOL_Doran%20Report_.pdf 2008.

Success is seen as using several strategies with no single group or approach holding the key to the substantial reduction of alcohol-related violence.¹⁶ ADCA recommends that the following five strategies be considered and be reflected in the Committee's findings as a holistic approach to the issue.

4.1 Reforms to Licensing Laws

While ADCA notes recent reforms enacted by both the Queensland and Victorian State Governments to move towards a risk-based model for assessing licensing fees and to promote compliance, it contends that further metrics, such as venue capacity multipliers, explicit promotion of alcohol guidelines, and differential person per square metre ratios could create a more efficient, better targeted licensing regime.

Further, ADCA recommends the commissioning of a national study, similar to the study carried out by the Access Economics Group for Responsible Alcohol Victoria, into the costs to Government associated with enforcing liquor licensing compliance and promoting harm-minimisation. This study could then be used as the basis for forming a fee system based on cost-recovery.

Crowding and alcohol are both irritants, which, in combination, can increase anxiety and reduce tolerance. This may lead to aggression and violence, and crowding can increase anonymity and reduce a sense of accountability. As a consequence, it is less likely that an individual will intervene to prevent conflict situations occurring or worsening. In a conflict situation, the anonymity afforded by crowded settings may have numerous negative consequences, including increased severity of injury. It may also result in an unwillingness to supply information to police.

Overcrowding contributes directly and indirectly to alcohol-related aggression and violence in licensed venues. A number of factors contribute to aggression and violence including accidental contact between patrons, as well as increases in temperature, smoke and noise.¹⁷ Patrons drink more alcohol to overcome discomfort associated with crowding and increased consumption can lead to a lowered tolerance to social and environmental irritants.

Currently there is no national standard to calculate maximum numbers of patrons (occupancy loading) allowed on a licensed premise. Some States/ Territories devolve planning to Local Governments, while others impose a consistent person per square metre limit based on floor plans submitted by licensees.

Imposing an upper limit on patron numbers is intended to limit or reduce the negative effects of crowding such as intoxicated frustration and aggression. It also helps

¹⁶ Doherty, S. J. and A. M. Roche (2003). Alcohol and licensed premises ; best practice in policing : a monograph for police and policy makers. National Drug Strategy. Canberra, Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing.

¹⁷ Briscoe S and Donnelly N, (2001). Temporal and Regional Aspects of Alcohol-Related Violence and Disorder, accessed from [http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/bocsar/ll_bocsar.nsf/vwFiles/ab01.pdf/\\$file/ab01.pdf](http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/bocsar/ll_bocsar.nsf/vwFiles/ab01.pdf/$file/ab01.pdf).

emergency service personnel to manage emergency incidents, and facilitates safe exit from the premises. Door staff play a key role in regulating patron numbers by regulating entry and exit points, implementing policies restricting availability of pass outs, and assisting in maintaining control over patron numbers.¹⁸ In addition, adequate door staffing, crowd control and entry regulations limiting 'pub-hopping', has been found to result in inter-group conflict, fights, crime and public disorder.¹⁹

ADCA recommends that to mitigate the risk of alcohol-related anti-social behaviour and alcohol-related violence from over-crowding and/ or poor ventilation, consideration should be given to:

- referring State/ Territory-based powers of liquor licensing to the Commonwealth
- requiring licensed venues to submit a floor-plan, and
- ensuring any new legislation developed should, at a minimum, use a standard person per square metre rule to calculate a maximum occupancy loading.

ADCA is aware that this principle is followed in both Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). Victorian licensing allows 0.75 people per square metre, while the ACT allows one person per square metre.

Research has noted that “stand-up” drinking cultures are more conducive to anti-social behaviour and excessive consumption of alcohol. The Victorian and ACT capacity multiplier approach could be teamed with current practice in South Australia, where a floor plan specifying designated areas for seating, dance floor, and general bar areas is submitted to licensing teams. This would enable differential person/ square metre rates to apply, and could be used to calculate a further risk premium

ADCA Recommendation

ADCA recommends that Government initiate a national study into the cost of administering liquor laws, which together with other data, could form the evidence base for the development of nationally consistent liquor licensing regimes.

4.2 The Responsible Service of Alcohol

Prevention of intoxication represents the cornerstone of best practice in relation to licensed premises. A major aim of addressing social and physical features of the licensed drinking environment is to reduce the incidence of intoxication. Intoxication is

¹⁸ Lang, E., & Rumbold, G. (1997). The effectiveness of community-based interventions to reduce violence in and around licensed premises: A comparison of three Australian models. *Contemporary Drug Problems*, 24, 805-826.

¹⁹ Felson, M., Berends, R., Richardson, B., & Veno, A. (1997). Reducing pub hopping and related crime. In Homel, R. (Ed.) *Policing for prevention: Reducing crime, public intoxication and injury* Monsey, N.Y.: Criminal Justice Press.

known to increase the likelihood of aggression, violence, and accidental injuries among intoxicated people and other members of the community.²⁰

ADCA notes that the service of alcohol can contribute to alcohol-related violence, by bar staff serving intoxicated people and allowing intoxicated people to remain within licensed premises.²¹ Data compiled by the National Drug Research Institute (NDRI) showed that, with appropriate enforcement, mandatory Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA) training for bar staff reduces the harms arising from alcohol consumption, including alcohol-related violence.

However, there is evidence from New South Wales discussing young people's experience of RSA in licensed venues. The study showed that the overwhelming majority of young people who reported consuming alcohol at harmful rates did not experience any form of RSA, even while displaying signs of intoxication. Only 10 per cent of the study who reported intoxication also reported experiencing RSA initiatives from staff. The survey reported 50 per cent of respondents continued to be served after displaying intoxication, while another 37 per cent were refused service from bar staff, but did not receive any form of RSA intervention.²²

ADCA Recommendation

ADCA recommends that mandatory RSA training should be enshrined into Liquor Licensing Legislation in all State/ Territory jurisdictions. Such training should relate to all workers within a licensed venue, including crowd controllers, hosts and hostesses. Enforcing RSA for Crowd Controllers could aid them to make correct decisions when allowing people entry into venues, which is in line with ADCA's proposed recommendations in the ACT Department of Justice's Final Report of the Review into the *ACT Liquor Act 1975*.

4.3 Limit on Promotional Deals

Rapid, excessive consumption of alcohol has been cited as a causal factor in a number of studies on youth and alcohol-related violence.²³ Further, promotional deals such as "all you can drink" for a low set fee are inherently contradictory to the principles of Responsible Service of Alcohol, as well as harm-minimisation principles.

²⁰ Doherty, S. J. and A. M. Roche (2003). Alcohol and licensed premises ; best practice in policing : a monograph for police and policy makers. National Drug Strategy. Canberra, Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing.

²¹ Briscoe S and Donnelly N, (2001). Temporal and Regional Aspects of Alcohol-Related Violence and Disorder, accessed from [http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/bocsar/ll_bocsar.nsf/vwFiles/ab01.pdf/\\$file/ab01.pdf](http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/bocsar/ll_bocsar.nsf/vwFiles/ab01.pdf/$file/ab01.pdf).

²² Briscoe S and Donnelly N, Young Adults experience of responsible service practice in NSW, (2002). Accessed from: [http://www.safetypartnership.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/bocsar/ll_bocsar.nsf/vwFiles/ab03.pdf/\\$file/ab03.pdf](http://www.safetypartnership.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/bocsar/ll_bocsar.nsf/vwFiles/ab03.pdf/$file/ab03.pdf).

²³ Briscoe S and Donnelly N, (2001). Temporal and Regional Aspects of Alcohol-Related Violence and Disorder, accessed from [http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/bocsar/ll_bocsar.nsf/vwFiles/ab01.pdf/\\$file/ab01.pdf](http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/bocsar/ll_bocsar.nsf/vwFiles/ab01.pdf/$file/ab01.pdf).

The New South Wales Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing has produced guidelines for licensed venues noting what constitutes acceptable and risky promotion practices. In ADCA's opinion, these guidelines, which can be accessed on line at: [http://www.olgr.nsw.gov.au/pdfs/Liquor %20promo_guidelines.pdf](http://www.olgr.nsw.gov.au/pdfs/Liquor%20promo_guidelines.pdf) could be considered for adoption by other State/ Territory jurisdictions. They provide patrons, licensees, and Liquor Licensing officials with clear instructions as to promotions which are consistent with harm-minimisation principles. ADCA believes that this approach could be considered for further development by the proposed Preventative Health Agency.

ADCA Recommendation

ADCA suggests that the Committee recommends that national intoxication and promotion guidelines be prepared, based on the NSW Liquor Promotional Guidelines, for consideration/ implementation by other State/ territory jurisdictions.

4.4 Effective Policing

A crucial component of preventing, monitoring, and dissolving acts of violence is the work of police services. Police officers are instrumental in the reduction of alcohol-related harm particularly that which occurs in licensed drinking environments. They achieve this through enforcement of liquor laws, as well as general law enforcement and the monitoring of situations to avoid escalation into serious incidents of violence.²⁴

A distinct difference between the powers of police and those of crowd controllers at premises is that police can regulate the behaviour of patrons outside of licensed premises. This means that violence occurring among intoxicated young people after leaving licensed premises becomes the sole responsibility of the police, placing undue pressure on police resources.²⁵

A key to effective policing is allowing police to gain knowledge and understanding of patterns of consumption and tendencies within the community. General research data can provide the police with a broad understanding of likely offenders and behavior that might lead to violence but locality-specific data is also important.

For instance, it is known that a high proportion of alcohol-related violence increases over week-ends and late at night.²⁶ If police have data to confirm where violence is most likely to occur and at what times, their responses are likely to be more effective.

²⁴ Williams P (2001) Alcohol, Young Persons and Violence, Australian Institute of Criminology: Research and Public Policy Series: No. 35.

²⁵ Doherty, S. J. and A. M. Roche (2003). Alcohol and licensed premises ; best practice in policing : a monograph for police and policy makers. National Drug Strategy. Canberra, Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing.

²⁶ Teece, M., & Williams, P. (2000). Alcohol-related assault: The time and place. *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice* (169). Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology.

While such data collection, analysis, and implementation within police services is timely and costly, ADCA believes it could reduce levels of violence, and help to shift the policing response from reactionary to proactive.

ADCA Recommendation

ADCA supports the maintenance of a visible police presence around licensed venues and events to reduce the levels of violence, and recommends that (1) specialist police taskforces be trained to administer liquor licensing legislation to ensure that action is taken against staff and patrons for breaches of liquor and other legislation²⁷, and (2) that increased funding be considered to allow police services to enhance arrangements to reduce levels of violence.

4.5 Awareness and Education

An important element of reducing violence among young Australians is seen as changing their attitudes towards violence itself, and the accepted cultural aspect related to the excessive consumption of alcohol. At present, a number of programs operate with these aims.

The *Queensland Crime Stoppers Youth Challenge* is an educational program that targets primary school-aged children and youth organisations. It challenges students to understand the context of crime, why crime is committed, and the consequences of crime for individuals and the community. There are similar programs being conducted across Australia, and ADCA strongly supports these initiatives.

ADCA Recommendation

ADCA recommends that (1) an audit of education and awareness programs already in operation be undertaken to identify areas of need within communities, and (2) project funding be considered to expand the current limited number of educational programs.

5. Previous submissions

Following is a list of Submissions ADCA has previously provided in relation to alcohol-related issues:

- Response to Community Affairs Committee Inquiry into Excise Tariff Amendment (2009 Measures No.1) Bill 2009 and Customs Tariff Amendment (2009 Measures No.1) Bill 2009

²⁷ Doherty, S. J. and A. M. Roche (2003). Alcohol and licensed premises ; best practice in policing : a monograph for police and policy makers. National Drug Strategy. Canberra, Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing.

- Submission to the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) – review by the NHMRC of the Australian alcohol guidelines: health risks and benefits. Submitted/Issued: 10 December 2007
- Submission to Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) – initial assessment report. Labeling of alcoholic beverages with pregnancy health advisory label. Submitted/Issued: 2 February 2008
- Submission to the Senate Community Affairs Inquiry into the *Alcohol Toll Reduction Bill 2007*.
- Submission to the Senate Community Affairs Inquiry into Ready-To-Drink (RTD) alcohol beverages.
- Submission to the National Preventative Health Taskforce
- Submission to Australia's Future Tax System (Henry) Review.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

ADCA and the AOD/ NGO sectors are committed to finding a solution to the problem of violence among young people in Australia. To achieve this aim, ADCA believes there needs to be a united effort from all Governments, schools, community groups, police services, operators of licensed premises, non-government organisations, sporting groups, industry representatives, and the media.

In conclusion, ADCA's recommendations can be summarised as follows:

ADCA recommends:

- **that a holistic and strategic approach be taken to reduce violence committed by young people**
- **that consistent liquor licensing legislative reforms be established across all State/ Territory jurisdictions**
- **that guidelines placing limits on the way alcohol is advertised and served to young people be enacted with consistency across all jurisdictions**
- **that policing needs be reviewed to support effective law enforcement in relation to violence in the community, particularly violence committed by young people; and**
- **that financial support be considered for programs to raise awareness about the negative social and health impact of violence, particularly the link between alcohol, other drugs, and increased levels of violence.**

ADCA would be pleased to assist the Committee further in its Inquiry into the Impact of Violence on Young Australians, and to expand on any of the issues addressed in this submission.

ADCA contact details:

Mr David Templeman
Chief Executive Officer
Ph: 02 6215 9805

Ms Sophie Turnbull
Strategic Communications and Policy Officer
Ph: 02 6215 9808

7. References

AER Foundation: [http://www.aerf.com.au/showcase/MediaReleases/2008/31-8-08_ACE-ALCOHOL_Doran%20Report .pdf](http://www.aerf.com.au/showcase/MediaReleases/2008/31-8-08_ACE-ALCOHOL_Doran%20Report.pdf) 2008.

Briscoe S and Donnelly N, (2001). Temporal and Regional Aspects of Alcohol-Related Violence and Disorder, accessed from [http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/bocsar/ll_bocsar.nsf/vwFiles/ab01.pdf/\\$file/ab01.pdf](http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/bocsar/ll_bocsar.nsf/vwFiles/ab01.pdf/$file/ab01.pdf).

Briscoe S and Donnelly N, (2002) Young Adults experience of responsible service practice in NSW, Accessed from: [http://www.safetypartnership.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/bocsar/ll_bocsar.nsf/vwFiles/ab03.pdf/\\$file/ab03.pdf](http://www.safetypartnership.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/bocsar/ll_bocsar.nsf/vwFiles/ab03.pdf/$file/ab03.pdf)

Chaloupka FJ, Grossman M, et al. *The effects of price on alcohol consumption and alcohol-related problems*. Alcohol Res Health 2002; 26:22-34

Doherty, S. J. and A. M. Roche (2003). Alcohol and licensed premises ; best practice in policing : a monograph for police and policy makers. National Drug Strategy. Canberra, Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing

Felson, M., Berends, R., Richardson, B., & Veno, A. (1997). Reducing pub hopping and related crime. In Homel, R. (Ed.) Policing for prevention: Reducing crime, public intoxication and injury Monsey, N.Y.: Criminal Justice Press

Lang, E., & Rumbold, G. (1997). The effectiveness of community-based interventions to reduce violence in and around licensed premises: A comparison of three Australian models. *Contemporary Drug Problems*, 24, 805-826

McLeod, R., Stockwell, T., Stevens, M., & Phillips, M. (1998). *The relationship between alcohol consumption patterns and injury*. Second International Conference on Drinking Patterns and their Consequences. Kettil Bruhn Society meeting. Perth, Australia: The National Centre for Research into the Prevention of Drug Abuse, Curtin University of Technology

Mercy J, Butchart A, Farrington D, Cerda. Youth Violence. In Krug E, Dahlberg I, Mercy J, Zwi A, Lozano R, editors. *World Report on Violence and Health*. Geneva (CHE): WHO; 2000, pp. 23-56

Nicholas R, *The antecedents of alcohol related violence in and around licensed premises*, Australasian Centre for Policing Research, March 2004 (A discussion paper prepared for the Commissioners' Drugs Committee of the Conference of Police Commissioners of Australasia and the South West Pacific Region by the Australasian Centre for Policing Research)

Roche, A. M., Watt, K. A., Purdie, D., McClure, R., & Green, D. (2001). Injury and alcohol: A hospital emergency department study. *Drug and Alcohol Review, 20*, 157-168

Saulwick J, 'Rudd Ponders Causes of Violence' Sydney Morning Herald, *September 4, 2009*

Teece, M., & Williams, P. (2000). Alcohol-related assault: The time and place. *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice (169)*. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology

Voukelatos A and Mitchell R, Patterns of Physical Violence in Youth: The Experience of 16-25 year olds in *Health Promotion Journal of Australia 2009: 20 (1)*

Wagenaar AC, Salois MJ and Komro KA. *Effects of beverage alcohol price and tax levels on drinking: a meta-analysis of 1003 estimates from 112 studies*. *Addiction 2009; 104: 179-190*

White Ribbon Foundation Australia 2009, *Violence against women: Australian Facts and Figures*, Sydney

World Health Organisation Youth Violence and Alcohol Fact Sheet.

Williams P, Alcohol, Young Persons and Violence, Australian Institute of Criminology: Research and Public Policy Series: No. 35