

Senate Community Affairs Committee
13 March 2009

Matters taken on Notice at the CAC hearing on 10 March, and supplementary questions and additional information:

(1) Re the question of “missing” data for January 2009 (ref CA47).

I think this question is the result of a misunderstanding: there is no missing data on the chart because the data for January 2009 is present and the data on the chart is compared with data for the corresponding month of the previous year i.e. the result presented for January 2009 is a comparison with January 2008.

(2) Re the question of European countries applying taxation specifically to alcopops (ref CA 53). Switzerland increased tax on alcopops by 300% in 2004 and both Germany and France increased taxes on alcopops by 2005. However I can find no record that the UK has done so.

(3) Re the source of the data presented by the Australian Drug Foundation, in response to a supplementary question received post-hearing.

The source of the data is the market research company Nielsen. The ADF asked Nielsen to verify the interpretation of the data in the bar charts as published on the ADF website on 8 March 2009 and as presented to the committee. Mr Michael Walton, Executive Director, Nielsen Liquor Services Pacific, confirmed the validity of the analysis on 2 March 2009.

(4) Please note: in the series of slides of bar charts presented by the ADF that illustrate trends in sales of particular beverages for the period since the tax was introduced, one slide was omitted inadvertently. This was due to an error in collating the slides, for which I apologise. The ADF published this bar chart on its website on 8 March 2009 and intended it to be presented formally to the committee. I have included the missing slide in the attached set.

The slide in question is entitled “Comparison of monthly volumes vs year ago” and represents the movements in volume of sales month by month for the beverage class RTD, Spirits, Beer, and Wine. However the data contained in this slide was presented to the committee in a slightly different format via the slide entitled “Total number of standard drinks sold since April 08 has declined by 148.6 million on previous year”, and it was the focus of some discussion. I am pleased to take this opportunity to provide the committee members with a full set of slides.

I thank the committee for the opportunity to address these additional matters and I will provide any further information or assistance as required by the committee.

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13 March 2009