

*National
Drug Strategy*



National Alcohol Strategy

A Plan for Action 2001 to 2003-04



endorsed by the
Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy

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Community support for legislative and policy measures on alcohol is strongest when the focus is on harm reduction and action targets those perceived to be at risk of alcohol-related harm. While legislative and regulatory measures can be effective in controlling primary sources of alcohol supply, the impact of secondary sources also needs to be addressed. Community education may be the most effective way of ensuring a responsible attitude to the supply of alcohol to minors (for example, by parents, family members), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and to those already intoxicated (by friends, paid third person etc).

The development and implementation of effective regulations and legislation requires a shared responsibility between governments, health professionals, law enforcement agencies, the alcohol beverages industry and the community to ensure that a reduction in alcohol-related harm is realised.

Key Strategy Area 8

Responsible marketing and provision of alcohol

Objective:

- Alcohol advertising and availability that is consistent with community standards and harm minimisation principles

Responsible marketing strategies can contribute to the reduction of alcohol-related harm by supporting the aims of educational programs designed to improve community awareness of alcohol-related harm and low risk drinking behaviours, and by not promoting practices that are potentially harmful or that undermine health promotion messages.

The alcohol beverages and hospitality industry has played a role in addressing unsafe marketing practices through the development of voluntary industry codes of conduct and directly intervening to delay (or prevent) the introduction of new alcohol products associated with particular public health concerns. There should be regular consultation between the alcohol beverages and hospitality industry, government, public health advocates and the community to ensure that industry self-regulatory advertising codes promote outcomes consistent with policy directions and community expectations.

Key Strategy Area 6

Pricing and taxation

Objective:

- Systems of pricing and taxation that have a positive public health impact, particularly in terms of minimising harm related to the misuse of alcohol

The price of alcohol has an impact on the rates of alcohol consumption in a community. The literature demonstrates that, when all other factors remain unchanged, an increase in price generally leads to a drop in consumption and similarly a reduction in the price of alcohol leads to a rise in consumption. However the precise magnitude of this effect is difficult to determine. Price elasticities for alcoholic beverages have been shown to vary across different countries, populations and cultural settings and different beverage types.

Taxation regimes are one avenue through which price can be influenced. More research is needed to clarify how taxes affect various patterns of drinking amongst different groups. Pricing and taxation regimes that create incentives for consumption of lower alcohol beverages in preference to comparable high strength alcohol beverages can contribute to the reduction of alcohol-related harm.

Key Strategy Area 7

Promoting safer drinking environments

Objectives:

- Reduction in the incidence of alcohol-related crime, violence and anti-social behaviour in and around licensed premises
- Reduction in the incidence of alcohol-related crime, violence and anti-social behaviour at organised public events, such as sports matches, shows, rodeos and open-air concerts

KEY STRATEGY AREA 6: PRICING AND TAXATION

Objective:

- Systems of pricing and taxation that have a positive public health impact, particularly in terms of minimising harm related to the misuse of alcohol

Action issue	What will be achieved?	How will it be achieved?	Identified outputs
Incentives to choose lower strength alcohol products	Consumption of lower strength beverages in preference to comparable high strength alcohol beverages	Incentives for marketing and sale of lower alcohol beverages	Incentives for consumption of lower alcohol beverages in preference to comparable high strength alcohol beverages
Research	Increased understanding of the association between pricing and taxation of alcohol beverages and alcohol-related problems	Undertake and disseminate research into the association between pricing and taxation of alcohol beverages and alcohol-related problems	Research reports on the association between pricing and taxation of alcohol beverages and alcohol-related harm

KEY STRATEGY AREA 7: PROMOTING SAFER DRINKING ENVIRONMENTS

Objectives:

- Reduction in the incidence of alcohol-related crime, violence and anti-social behaviour in and around licensed premises
- Reduction in the incidence of alcohol-related crime, violence and anti-social behaviour at organised public events, such as sports matches, shows, rodeos and open-air concerts
- Reduction in the incidence of alcohol-related problems at private social gatherings
- Reduction in alcohol-related domestic and family violence
- Reduction in alcohol-related problems in the workplace
- Reduction in injuries and fatalities in the aquatic environment

Action issue	What will be achieved?	How will it be achieved?	Identified outputs
Licensed premises	Continued development of licensed premises as safe drinking environments	Develop and promote principles of quality practice management of licensed premises to minimise alcohol-related harm	Guidelines for quality practice management of licensed premises
		Develop or enhance intersectoral safety audit processes	Documentation of regular safety audits of licensed premises
		Develop codes of practice for the use of trained security personnel	Legislation/codes for the use of trained security personnel
		Promote the development of local accords	Local accords engaging licensed premises, and evidence of compliance by licensed premises with the accords they are involved in