

**TASKFORCESUBMISSION:** submission

**NAME:** John Rogerson

**POSITION:** CEO

**ORGANISATION:** Australian Drug Foundation

**SUBMISSION1:** The Australian Drug Foundation (ADF), [www.adf.org.au](http://www.adf.org.au), an independent, not-for-profit organisation working to prevent alcohol and other drug problems in communities, welcomes the focus on preventative health and the need for a long term commitment to achieve cultural change in Australia. The ADF supports the establishment of a National Prevention Agency as essential to national leadership and co-ordination.

Changing the drinking culture in Australia is a complex and long term challenge that will require the collaboration of all levels of government, the public health field, the alcohol industry and the community at large.

Community engagement and involvement is essential but the ADF is concerned this is not reflected adequately in the discussion paper. Long-term commitment is required to identify models of community development programs which can engage all sectors including parents and families; education, workplaces, sports and recreation, local government and more. Such programs need to be evidence based; subject to trialing and evaluation; and funded adequately over a long period of time. The availability of quality, community based programs offers the means to provide tailored responses to specific sub-groups and at-risk groups on a sustainable basis.

The ADF's Good Sports (GS) program is an example of a successful community development program working in partnership with, and achieving real change within, sporting clubs and their wider communities across Australia. What could enhance the impact of this program is a coordinated, strongly supported approach from all the other sectors of the sports industry, including major national sporting organizations. However sponsorship funding from the alcohol industry significantly reduces the interest of these bodies in supporting community based programs.

The ADF supports the target of reducing the prevalence of harmful drinking by 30% but detail on what this actually means and how it will be measured is now required. Survey-based measures of alcohol consumption are often quite imprecise, and recent trends in alcohol-related harms amongst young people are not always reflected in survey-based measures of drinking. More

appropriate and reliable measures (e.g. alcohol-related hospitalisations, total population consumption) should be considered as benchmarks and targets. The harmful drinking patterns and behaviours of 14-29 yr olds must be specifically addressed.

Overall the ADF agrees with and supports the identified priorities for action as a means of promoting and establishing a low risk drinking culture. Sufficient evidence exists for many of these strategies for immediate action to be undertaken. All the actions associated with these priorities need to be integrated into a comprehensive, strategic approach to changing Australia's drinking culture.

Specifically the ADF calls for:

- A coherent, principles-based alcohol taxation regime
- An end to self-regulation of alcohol advertising by the alcohol industry
- Prohibition of alcohol advertising on TV, cinema and public transport
- Prohibition of alcohol sponsorship of sporting and cultural events
- Implementation of an alcohol sponsorship buy back of all major Australian sports similar to the tobacco sponsorship buyout in the late 1980's (funded through the new alcohol taxation regime)
- Consistent liquor license regulation and legislation across states
- Secondary supply legislation restricting adults supplying alcohol to children
- Improved research and data to support evidence-based decision making on licensing
- Implementation of a comprehensive, sustained, and well resourced social marketing campaign
- Provision of consumer information through compulsory health and nutritional information and warning labels
- A stronger focus on evaluation and building evidence on existing and newly funded programs to improve impact and efficiencies

To promote accountability and implementation of best practice the ADF calls for the application of realistic and practical performance indicators to the funding of the preventative health strategy on alcohol.

**PRIVACY:** yes

**SUBMIT:** Submit