

TASKFORCESUBMISSION: submission

NAME: Mr. Chris Watters

POSITION: CEO

ORGANISATION: DrinkWise Australia

SUBMISSION1: DrinkWise (DW) is an evidence-based alcohol research and social change body, jointly funded by the Aust Government and the Aust liquor industry. The DW board comprises of an independent chairperson, six community and six industry representatives. The DW mission is the development and maintenance of safer drinking cultures across Australia. DW supports and agrees with the identified priorities recommended in the PHT Report. However, DW believes that some of the action items proposed to achieve the key priorities represent old thinking and lack a strategic and holistic approach.

Conversely, the DW strategic plan encompasses a 10 yr cultural change agenda, empirical data, systemic, targeted social change and grassroots community engagement. The DW approach to changing Australia's drinking culture is both preventative and proactive and readily transferable as a holistic template.

Over the past 3 yrs, DW has funded research by leading academics across a number of Australian Universities, eg; the seminal research on the cultural drivers impacting upon young people and alcohol, by Prof Ann Roche, Flinders University has identified a range of key influences on GenY, indicating current policies have little to no impact on young, single, upwardly mobile, brand conscious, highly educated, affluent and technologically astute drinkers. Further research funded by DW, conducted by Dr Lyn Harrison at Deakin University surveyed 20–24 yr olds who indicated that they routinely ignore government alcohol messages, warning labels and related health warnings as the messages are authoritarian and don't respect individual choice.

Some of the actions identified in the PHT Report provide the opportunity for the design and delivery of new thinking such as addressing the cultural place of alcohol via carefully planned, targeted and research-based social marketing. DW is uniquely placed to assist and support the government in this regard because it represents a pivotal link between the preventative health sector and the liquor industry.

The DW KIDS ABSORB YOUR DRINKING campaign is based on groundbreaking research which evidences that children form their attitudes toward alcohol consumption from a very early age, based largely on observations and perceptions of their parents'; attitude to, and consumption

of, alcohol. Accordingly, DW engaged in a mass advertising campaign, and the provision of support and advice to parents and young people alike, from a panel of independent experts.

Independent research by Quantum revealed 83% of parents surveyed agreed the DW campaign made them think about how children form their attitudes about alcohol and 76% of parents agreed the DW campaign made them think about how their own alcohol consumption may affect their children's future drinking behaviours. In addition, there were 20,000 hits on the DW website following the campaign launch.

Elsewhere in the PHT recommended action items there is a call for tailored approaches and services to reach indigenous and other disadvantaged groups. DW has contributed significant funding, mentoring, support and review of the Sports Challenge Indigenous Intervention Program in the NT. The project, piloted at Timber Creek, enjoyed outstanding success and has recently been extended to Ngukurr in East Arnhem Land.

A new community education program being funded by DW with the Brisbane City and neighbouring councils, targets a broad range of socio-economic demographics, including disadvantaged groups. This initiative will benefit from our participation and \$1M in funding provided to the national Good Sports program.

DW is a unique government and industry funded body with the capacity to assist, support and deliver the key priorities as recommended by the PHT. DW has established research credentials, community programs, social change and policy expertise and remains committed and available to assist the government in any of the areas outlined herein.

PRIVACY: yes

SUBMIT: Submit