



Kia ora and warm greetings to you all,

The Law Commission has completed its review of New Zealand's liquor laws and in April they released their final report entitled *Alcohol in our lives: Curbing the Harm*. A summary of the report is included later in this newsletter.

In his press release on the 27 April 2010 Justice Minister Hon. Simon Power said he expected the Government to outline its position on the report within weeks. As we go to print this has not been publically released. However, increasing the price of alcohol has already been slashed from the reform agenda by Prime Minister John Key, with his comments that there was “no appetite” for such a move widely reported in the media.

The Law Commission have indeed given us a precious gift and a strong platform to build a new culture on. Commission President Sir Geoffrey Palmer has been clear that the recommendations are designed as a package and has warned against ‘cherry-picking’

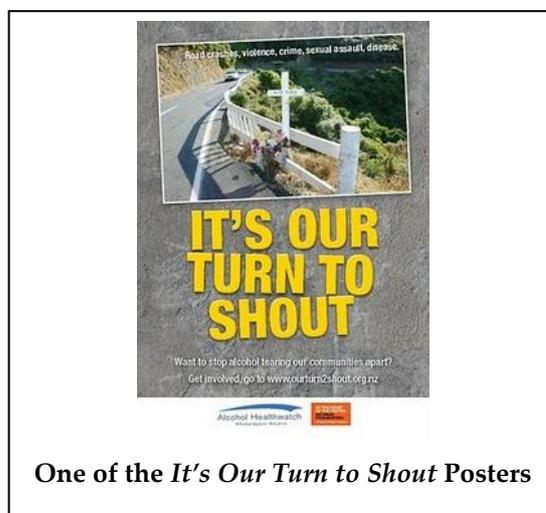
It's Our Turn to Shout

To build on the great work of the Law Commission and all of you good folk working to reduce alcohol-related harm, Alcohol Healthwatch and the New Zealand Drug Foundation have launched a new initiative called *It's our turn to shout*. The aim is to encourage and support concerned groups and individuals to become engaged with the process from here and send a clear message to our politicians that it's time to take important steps towards alcohol law reform.

It's our turn to shout involves regular media releases, opinion pieces and emails to stakeholders. Facebook and blog pages are updated several times a week, and we are communicating daily through Twitter. Later in the year we'll be holding workshops and events around the country for people wanting to be further involved.

To help you help us reach as many people as possible posters and postcards are available.

To find out more or to order free posters visit www.ourturn2shout.org.nz



One of the *It's Our Turn to Shout* Posters

Dithering on Lower BAC

As we go to print Government are still to announce their decision about whether to lower the Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) for adult drivers from the current 0.08 to 0.05.

Many of you reading this could very well be asking – what is their problem?

This is not a question of evidence as this clearly demonstrates that the move will save lives and reduce injuries on our roads, and that it is a cost effective way to do so.

Neither is it a question of public support - that too is in the bag. A powerful 85% of us believe that we should limit ourselves to one or two drinks before driving. This roughly equates to the lower 0.05 limit. The current 0.08 limit ridiculously allows men to consume up to 6 standard drinks and women up to 4 standard drinks before driving. Significant impairment of driving skills and the drinker's ability to make sensible decisions has kicked in by this stage. In addition, 70% supported the lowering of the BAC to 0.05 in a recent survey of 1000 New Zealanders by UMR Research.

The Government have agreed to adopt a zero tolerance for drivers under 20 years, which is a positive step. Lowering the adult limit would strongly support and ensure both measures achieve the optimal results. Failing to do so makes a mockery of the Safer Journeys strategy and will undermine its success.

There can be no excuse this time!

Please make sure your local representative knows what you think.

For further information on the issue please visit our website www.ahw.org.nz or contact Roanne Govender at roanne@ahw.org.nz

Price and Promotions

Should we be concerned about cheap booze?

Of course! Lower prices are closely related to the more hazardous aspects of drinking. In a nutshell the lower the price the more drinkers can afford to drink and the more often they are able to do so. Price is also closely linked with youth drinking. Conversely, the higher the price the less often drinkers drink and the less they drink when they do. Evidence shows price increases accurately target younger and heavier drinkers. Moderate drinkers will have little to worry about as price increases will have a minimal impact on their back pocket. Higher prices also serve to stop drinkers moving up the drinking scale, for example a moderate drinker is less likely to become a

heavy drinker, and a heavy drinker less likely to become an even heavier one.

So why haven't we done something about price?

The sheer effectiveness of pricing strategies is why alcohol industry interests work so hard to ensure Governments don't look in that direction. Less drinking translates into less profit for them.

At what price?

A quick scan of any supermarket or liquor chain advertisement in your daily paper will give you a pretty good idea about price promotions and the deep discounting that goes on. Offers such as 20% off beer or 25% off wine are common, and sometimes discounts of up to 75% are advertised. You can also find RTD's on sale for as cheap as \$1 a pop!



Hot Special! While stocks Last!!
WKD-5%-24pack 330ML bTLS
IRON BREW OR ORIGINAL RED
24 FOR \$24
Item #22

Given the clear evidence linking cheap prices to increased harm, Alcohol Healthwatch believes that price promotions and the advertising of such promotions are socially irresponsible and must stop.

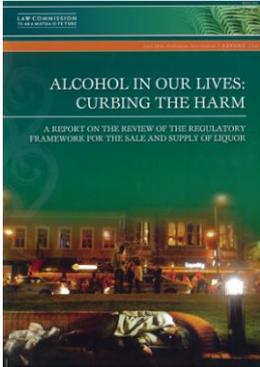
Self-regulatory promotions codes for liquor currently require marketing and promotions to "observe a high standard of social responsibility." These new codes relating to naming, labelling, packaging and promotion came into effect earlier this year, and therefore complaints can now be made.

What can you do?

- Make a complaint to the Advertising Standards Authority – it's easy to do! See www.asa.co.nz
- Tell us about any examples of pricing promotions that you are concerned about.

- Support the Law Commission's recommendations on tax increase and banning alcohol marketing in your submission to Government later this year.
- Also recommend the introduction of a minimum price regime.

The Law Commission Report



Here is a brief summary of the Law Commission's final report.

The report entitled *Alcohol in our lives: Curbing the harm*, presents an integrated package of policy recommendations aimed

at reducing overall consumption and alcohol-related harm in New Zealand.

In total there are 153 recommendations in the report, some of the key proposals are as follows:

- Introducing a new Alcohol Harm Reduction Act to replace the Sale of Liquor Act 1989;
- Increasing the price of alcohol through a rise in excise tax;
- Phasing out alcohol marketing over 5 years, allowing only objective product information to be communicated;
- Increasing the purchase age for alcohol to 20 years;
- Strengthening parental responsibility for supplying alcohol to minors;
- Increasing personal responsibility for unacceptable or harmful behaviours induced by alcohol;
- Introducing national standard hours of operation for both on and off- licensed premises;
- Introducing new grounds upon which licences to sell alcohol can be declined;
- Allowing more community say into licensing decisions through local alcohol policies and District Licensing

Committees (to replace District Licensing Agencies);

- Improving the treatment system for people with alcohol problems.

For a copy of the executive summary or full report see www.lawcom.govt.nz

You can also visit our website www.ahw.org.nz to get a full summary of all 153 recommendations.

World Health Organisation – Global Strategy on Alcohol

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has recently released a new global strategy aimed at reducing the harmful use of alcohol. All 193 Member States of WHO reached consensus to confront the detrimental effects alcohol has on families, communities and worldwide health at the World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland.

This is the first time countries have collectively agreed to take measured and evidenced based steps towards reducing alcohol-related harm worldwide. The strategy provides a strong international framework to help guide and support countries to take action. New Zealand will now need to step up and ensure it is meeting or exceeding world standards.

Each year, alcohol kills 2.5 million people, including 320 000 young people between the ages of 15 and 29, and is the eighth leading risk factor for deaths worldwide. It is little wonder WHO have recognised alcohol misuse as a vital issue to tackle.

The strategy provides ten target areas for policy options and interventions that can be implemented by Member States at a national level. These are closely aligned with the Law Commissions recommendations.

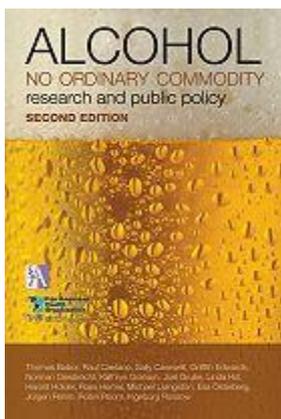
The ten target areas are as follows:

- Leadership, awareness and commitment;
- Health services' response;

- Community action;
- Drink-driving policies and countermeasures;
- Availability of alcohol;
- Marketing of alcoholic beverages;
- Pricing policies;
- Reducing the negative consequences of drinking and alcohol intoxication;
- Reducing the public health impact of illicit alcohol and informally produced alcohol;
- Monitoring and surveillance.

In order for these strategies to be successful and effective on a global level, countries are required to show leadership and strengthen advocacy on the issues and make alcohol harm reduction an integral area of focus within global development.

Alcohol: No Ordinary Commodity



The second edition of the book *Alcohol: No Ordinary Commodity*, published by Oxford University Press, is now available. The book has been written collaboratively by a team of international alcohol policy experts and presents an array

of scientific knowledge related to the development of alcohol policy on local, national and international levels.

The book centres around the idea that alcohol cannot be treated as an ordinary commodity due to the multitude of negative effects alcohol has on the health and well-being of people. Alcohol policies therefore need to recognise and reflect on this fact and stronger regulation is needed around alcohol marketing.

This edition builds upon their original review of world-wide scientific literature on alcohol

research and public policy and looks at the reach of the alcohol industry on a global scale.

FASD – Update

The Fetal Alcohol Network NZ is pleased to announce that a new Facebook Group page has been created as an additional tool for people to get up to date information on FASD, share ideas and network with one another. The page entitled *FASD Network NZ*, can be found at

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=126230967409053>

If you have a Facebook page please take a look and click on the *Join* button if you want to become a member!

Coming Events

Auckland Regional Alcohol Forum

Tuesday 22nd June 2010

Waipuna Conference Centre

RSVP to Roanne Govender at AHW by 5pm,

Thursday 17 June 2010 roanne@ahw.org.nz

Cutting Edge Conference

23-25 September 2010

Rendezvous Hotel, Auckland

Visit www.cuttingedge2010.org.nz to register



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Disclaimer: The views in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of Alcohol Healthwatch Trust

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