



NOTES
Workshop on Matt Robson's
Sale of Liquor (Youth Alcohol Harm Reduction) Amendment Bill
13 July 2005

Welcome/Karakia (Rebecca Williams/Charles Moaho)

Introduction

Following a brief round of introductions and broad scope of the workshop Rebecca introduced Matt Robson.

Matt Robson

Matt outlined the background and purpose to his bill. He was concerned about the effects of alcohol on young people and he voted for the purchase age to be lowered to 18 years in 1999 believing that it would help to improve matters. However, after reading some reports (including Alcohol Healthwatch briefing paper *Sale of Liquor – Recommended Changes to the Act*) and doing some information gathering he realised that there was no improvement and clear indications that things had got worse so prepared his Private Members Bill.

He also noted that the liquor/hospitality industries are the most active lobbyists in parliament.

He tried to get as much into the Bill as possible while trying to keep it as simple as possible. The Bill includes measures addressing access, including raising the purchase age to 20 years, and modest measures addressing alcohol advertising. He acknowledged that it could be improved and urged submitters to identify how they felt this could be done. He had received much support for the Bill and the majority of 18-24 year olds he had spoken to supported the purchase age returning to 20 years. He recognised that price was also an issue and gave an example of all-night 'happy hours'.

Matt explained why he had chosen the Law and Order committee to hear his Bill. This was primarily because the chairs of other suitable committees were unsupportive. He advised that the Law and Order committee are able to hear all aspects of the issue. Matt was not fazed by the arguments against the Bill – e.g. 18 year olds can vote, go to war etc.

Matt reminded attendees that submissions should be in by 12 August. He encouraged submitters to be research-based in their discussions and not confine their submissions only to the matters included in the Bill.

Matt then responded to some questions from the floor on issues including:

- Conscience voting
- Submissions timeline and elections
- Law and Order committee
- Limiting number of licensed premises
- Industry lobby v's community capacity and voice

- Returning to 20 years may inhibit progress on other access issues
- Aim of Bill to reduce harm for young people – are there any other objectives?

Bill Content Clarified

- Purchase Age from 18 years to 20 years for on and off licenses – no exemptions.
- Repeal of clause 160 (3) (d) – would mean supply to minors at private social functions only by legal parent/guardian
- Removal of need to prove intent to supply to minors from clause 160 (1)
- Requires designation of all bottle store off license premises either restricted or supervised areas
- Extends the Object of the Sale of Liquor Act by adding broadcast promotion to sale and supply of liquor
- Prohibits broadcast advertising before 10pm (currently 8.30pm) and introduces a fine (not exceeding \$100,000) for failure to comply.
- Transfers jurisdiction of broadcast advertising from the current self-regulatory industry body Advertising Standards Authority to Broadcasting Standard Authority

Submission Writing

What makes a good submission was briefly discussed.

Key Points:

- Address to Law and Order Committee and ensure it arrives by 12 August 2005
- Identify yourself and your area of expertise and draw on your area of expertise
- Clearly state if you wish to make an oral submission
- State your support for the **intent** of the Bill
- Provide evidence/research, information and/or experience
- Useful to include a summary of your submission
- Explain how the Bill will achieve/not achieve it's desired aim (reducing alcohol-related harm for young people)
- Identify how the Bill could be strengthened
- Clear and concise
- A booklet, How to Make A Submission is avail from Bennetts Bookshops or from the Parliamentary website
- Send 20 copies to Tracey Rayner, E-mail: tracey.rayner@parliament.govt.nz or SC-LO@parliament.govt.nz, Phone: +64 4 471 9530

Workshops:

Two workshop/discussion groups were established 1) Licensing and monitoring and 2) Public Health. The groups were asked to consider the components of the Bill and assess the benefits and risks towards achieving the aim of reducing alcohol-related harm for young people and how could the Bill be strengthened.

Alcohol Healthwatch provided a document to stimulate discussion.

The following is a summary of points from each group:

Workshop 1) Licensing and monitoring – facilitator Adrian Knowles, Alcohol Healthwatch

- Group saw little benefit in the Bill and discussion focussed on risks
- Access issues not sufficiently covered by the Bill “would not solve the problem”

- Retrograde step – too many exceptions, would not enable the Sale of Liquor Act to reduce harm, did not go far enough
- Bill doesn't provide for adequate enforcement
- Clarification needed on what was a "private function" and recent changes to Guardianship Act may pose issues for Sale of Liquor Act enforcement
- Suggestions included: remove "private function" clause from the Bill; create a true "drinking age"
- Regulate number of licensed premises – licenses would be more highly valued and therefore licensees would be more willing to comply to Sale of Liquor Act

Workshop 2) Public Health – facilitator Rebecca Williams, Alcohol Healthwatch

- This group saw potential in the Bill to help address the wider issues of youth drinking. They acknowledged it did not go far enough but considered it contained some "steps in the right direction". Puts boundaries back in place
- Stronger advertising control would support efforts to achieve 'culture change'
- The Bill is a start and needs to be built on
- Purchase Age returning to 20 years would have some impact
- Social supply clause drew stronger support – making supply to minors by anyone other than parent/guardian illegal. Implications for After Balls, after match functions and other places where alcohol "given" as a reward
- Language important – e.g. 'supply' equals both sale and provision
- Acknowledged that whatever the law adequate enforcement and appropriate judicial responses needs to be ensured
- Opportunities for all alcohol promotion to be controlled, labelling e.g. warning messages and nutritional information (opportunity for submitters to make links with other health issues like FASD and Obesity), Opportunities to raise awareness of other issues – greater priority for preventing alcohol-related harm, better resourcing of efforts, enforcement, mandatory ID, include supermarkets in the "designation" clause, and links with other laws/Acts e.g. children under 15 years not to be left alone.
- Broader issues include – alcohol marketing including product, price, sponsorship – particularly sport and youth activities, youth development, road safety (purchase age/driver license age), taxation, FASD, role models

The two groups then reconvened as one and shared main discussion points and also considered a) how the bill could be strengthened and b) what else needed to be considered.

How could the Bill be strengthened?	What else needed to be considered?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require a commitment of adequate resources for enforcement/monitoring • Appropriate penalties/justice • Strengthen object of the SOL Act. Call the SOL Act the Alcohol Harm Reduction Act or similar to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boarder marketing controls – product, price, sponsorship etc • Classification of alcohol as drug (not food) • All alcohol related legislation under one Act e.g. Smokefree Environments Act

<p>make more explicit it's object</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law re: consumption as well as sale/supply "drinking age" • Criminalise supply • Require community consultation re: licensing i.e. applications are notifiable • Regulate number and location of premises • Requiring monitoring of law – impacts and effects • Strengthen/make more specific requirements for host responsibility; no liquor license without food license • Community education regarding the Sale of Liquor Act and penalties for non-compliance • Remove "private function" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact assessment to monitor the effects of legislation/policy and changes • Strengthen role of Medical Officers of Health – e.g. warrant to enter premises, impose fines or close premises and lodge applications for cancellation/suspension of license, require them to report on public health impacts of alcohol • Require Nutritional Information Panels on Alcohol containers • The influence of liquor lobby including other industries supermarket, hospitality, advertising • Raise awareness of other harms related to alcohol not covered by any legislation
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Workshop included attendees from:

Guest: Progressive MP Matt Robson
 Alcohol Healthwatch
 Auckland City Council, Environmental Health and Licensing
 Auckland City Council, District Licensing Agency
 Auckland College of Education, Social Work Student
 Auckland Regional Public Health Service
 Auckland Regional Transport Authority
 Hapai Te Hauora
 Maori Wardens (Waiuku)
 New Zealand Drug Foundation
 NZ Police
 Rosmini College
 SHORE/Whariki
 Toi Te Ora Public Health
 University of Auckland