

It's your
turn to shout

AT THE HEART
OF THE MATTER,
NZ DRUG
FOUNDATION.

Te Tūāpapa Tarukino o Aotearoa

Have your say on the Alcohol Reform Bill : BACKGROUND

HAVE YOUR SAY
ON ALCOHOL
LAW CHANGES.

SUBMISSIONS CLOSE ON

01 | 02 | 11

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A new alcohol bill is currently before Parliament. The Alcohol Reform Bill is the Government's response to the review of our liquor laws by Law Commission President Sir Geoffrey Palmer. The Law Commission made 153 recommendations but not all have been accepted. There is still time to persuade the Government to strengthen its response.

“ Unless a comprehensive approach is taken to addressing the problems that alcohol poses for New Zealand society, those problems will not be solved. ”

SIR GEOFFREY PALMER

FACTSHEETS

- 1 Background to Alcohol Reform Bill
- 2 Alcohol Pricing
- 3 Alcohol Marketing
- 4 Alcohol in your Community
- 5 Drink Driving
- 6 Social Supply
- 7 Purchase Age

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KEY FACTS

THE MISUSE OF ALCOHOL IS CAUSING ENORMOUS HARMS ACROSS OUR SOCIETY.

THIS IS A ONCE-IN-A-GENERATION CHANCE FOR INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES TO HAVE A SAY IN CREATING BETTER ALCOHOL LAWS.

ALCOHOL LAWS PLAY AN IMPORTANT PART IN SHAPING THE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH ALCOHOL IS SOLD AND SUPPLIED.

THE LAW COMMISSION HAS MADE 153 RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT FOR NEW ALCOHOL LEGISLATION BUT MANY OF THESE HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED.

20 WE HAVE BEEN RELAXING THESE LAWS FOR 20 YEARS.

153 RECOMMENDATIONS



How did the new liquor bill come about?

- In 2007, the Government tasked the Law Commission, an independent advisory body headed by Sir Geoffrey Palmer, to review our liquor laws. This followed increasing concerns among ordinary New Zealanders about alcohol-related harms in our society.
- During the review, the Law Commission met and talked with various people and organisations throughout the country and received nearly 3,000 submissions.
"Alcohol is destroying our community. I work with families, and we can see the damage to them, to their children and to the wider community. I see it in the courts, the hospitals, family violence." – A community worker in Otara speaks out at a consultation meeting with the Law Commission.
- In May 2010, the Law Commission released its final report to the Government. This contained 153 recommendations that are intended to work together as a mutually reinforcing package.
- In response, the Government has proposed adopting many, but not all, of these recommendations. Among those it has left out are some of the most effective policy levers to reduce alcohol-related harms, particularly around price and marketing.
- The Alcohol Reform Bill currently before Parliament must go through a Select Committee process. This is your chance to be heard by making a written submission to the Select Committee. If you make a written submission, you should also ask to make an oral presentation.

Why do we need to change our liquor laws?

- We have been relaxing our liquor laws for the last 20 years.
- The number of outlets licensed to sell alcohol has more than doubled from 6,296 in 1990 to 14,424 in 2010.
- Alcohol has become more affordable over the last decade.
- Existing laws are failing to control alcohol advertising, which continues to blatantly associate alcohol with social, sporting and sexual success.
- The Law Commission described the current situation as "**the unbridled commercialisation of alcohol**". This has contributed to an environment that promotes a binge-drinking culture and has led to an increase in alcohol-related harms.

“ Positive new alcohol legislation needs to be introduced with urgency to deal with an increasingly out-of-control situation of heavy drinking in New Zealand. ”

FORMER GOVERNOR-GENERAL SIR PAUL REEVES

How are we drinking?

- Total alcohol consumption rose by 9% between 1998 and 2008.
- 700,000 New Zealanders have been categorised as binge drinkers (consuming seven or more standard drinks per session).
- Binge drinking among teenagers is increasing. Between 1995 and 2004, the proportion of young people drinking more than six drinks on a typical occasion increased from:
 - 14% to 25% in 14–15 year olds
 - 25% to 36% in 16–17 year olds
 - 31% to 40% in 18–19 year olds.



What are some of the alcohol-related harms to our communities?

- Each year, about 1,000 people die due to alcohol. Half of these deaths are from chronic alcohol-related diseases such as cancer. The other half are from injuries.
- Alcohol is responsible for a net loss of 12,000 years of life each year.
- In 2005/06:
 - harmful alcohol use cost an estimated \$4.4 billion of diverted resources and lost welfare
 - there were 280,429 alcohol-related injury claims to ACC.
- Alcohol is a factor in one in three of all recorded crimes.



What should the Government do?

- The Law Commission's recommendations were designed to be a 'mutually supportive package'. The Government should accept all 153 recommendations instead of 'cherry picking' the least politically risky options, as Law Commission President Sir Geoffrey Palmer warned it not to do.
- Most importantly, the Government needs to accept the Law Commission's recommendations for raising prices and restricting marketing. It should also lower the blood alcohol content limits for driving.
- These issues are all addressed in more detail in separate factsheets.



What should you do?

- Have your say in creating better alcohol laws by making a written submission to the Select Committee before Tuesday 1 February 2011. This can be as short or long as you like, and you can use this toolkit to help you.
- Tell the Government that it should accept all 153 of the Law Commission's recommendations.
- If you make a written submission, you should also make an oral presentation. You can be as creative as you like. This is your chance to tell your story about the impact of alcohol on your family and community and to tell our politicians about the changes that you want to see.
- Encourage your friends, family and community to get involved. The more New Zealanders who speak out, the more likely it is that the Government will listen.
- Ask to meet with or write to your local MP and let them know your views on alcohol law change.
- Visit www.drugfoundation.org.nz/your-turn-to-shout for more information and the full toolkit.

ABOUT US



The New Zealand Drug Foundation has long been interested in how laws governing the sale and supply of alcohol could be strengthened to reduce alcohol-related harm and create a healthier drinking culture in New Zealand. We provide leadership and representation for our nationwide membership of organisations and individuals working on alcohol and drug issues. This factsheet is one of a number we have developed as part of a toolkit to support communities to be heard on the Alcohol Reform Bill. **Check out our website for more information and the full toolkit.**

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Have your say on Alcohol Pricing



“ One of the consequences of alcohol being promoted and sold at pocket-money prices is that we risk losing sight of its status as a legal drug, capable of causing serious harm to others. ”

SIR GEOFFREY PALMER

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KEY FACTS

ALCOHOL HAS BECOME MORE AFFORDABLE RELATIVE TO INCOME.

RAISING THE PRICE OF ALCOHOL IS ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO REDUCE ALCOHOL-RELATED HARMS.

62¢

A 3L CASK OF WHITE WINE CAN BE BOUGHT FOR AS LITTLE AS \$16.99 (62C PER STANDARD DRINK).

75%

OVER 75% OF SUBMISSIONS TO THE LAW COMMISSION SUPPORTED INCREASES IN PRICE (EITHER VIA EXCISE TAX OR MINIMUM PRICING).



What did the Law Commission recommend?

- Raising the excise tax on alcohol by 50% to achieve a 10% average increase in retail prices. They advised that this would be the most effective pricing policy to reduce harms.
- Government fully investigates a minimum pricing scheme and makes it a legal requirement for retailers and producers to provide sales and price data.
- Excise tax on low-alcohol products (up to 2.5% alcohol by volume) should be reduced to encourage the production and availability of these products.

What was the Government's response?

- **Very weak.** The Government rejected all three of the Law Commission's recommendations on pricing. It has ruled out raising excise tax and stalled for time on the idea of minimum pricing. Instead, it prefers to 'monitor international developments' and 'review the information available on alcohol sales and price after one year'.
- It has rejected the Law Commission's recommendation to make it a legal requirement for retailers to provide price and sales data.
- It has rejected the idea of reducing excise tax on low-alcohol products.

OVERALL GRADE AWARDED

D

FAIL, HAS SHOWN NO UNDERSTANDING OF THE ISSUE AND FAILED TO RECOGNISE ANY OF THE REQUIREMENTS. COMPLETE REWRITE NEEDED.

“ One thing there is literally no appetite for is to increase excise taxes. ”

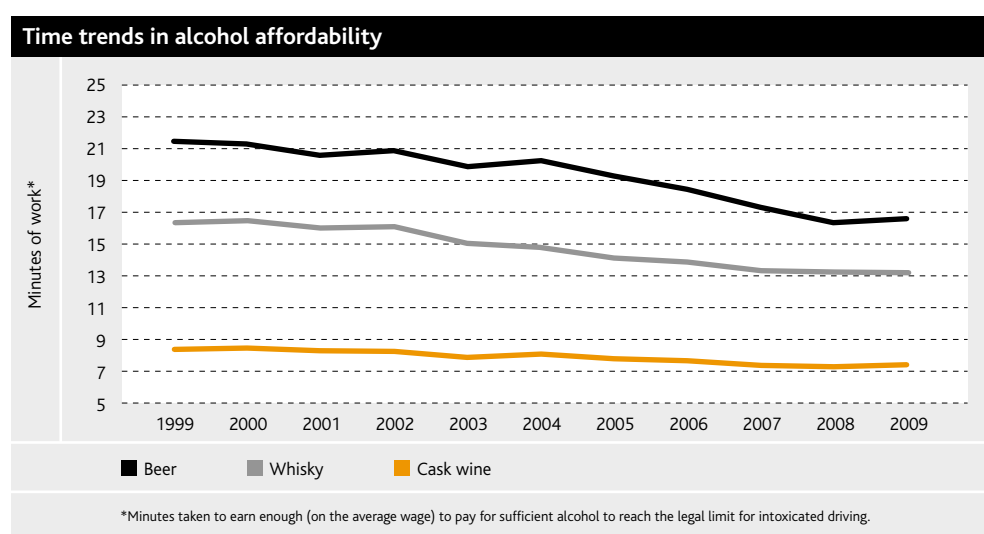
PRIME MINISTER JOHN KEY – WITHIN HOURS OF THE LAW COMMISSION'S REPORT BEING RELEASED

“ A can of beer or an RTD can be bought for one or two dollars in many retail outlets. This is less than we pay for bottled water. ”

SIR GEOFFREY PALMER

Research and experience shows:

- Alcohol has become more affordable over the last decade.



- Cheap products are favoured by heavy, harmful and young drinkers.
- Widespread availability of cheap alcohol products encourages excessive and harmful consumption.
- Raising alcohol prices:
 - is one of the best ways to reduce alcohol-related harms such as motor vehicle accidents, violence, sexually transmitted diseases and cirrhosis
 - reduces consumption in high-risk groups such as heavy drinkers and the young
 - reduces the likelihood of young or moderate drinkers becoming heavy drinkers.
- People who enjoy alcohol in moderation will have only minor cost increases if the Government accepts the Law Commission's proposals. The average price of a 330ml beer would rise by just 17 cents and an \$11 bottle of wine would increase by just 96 cents.
- A rise in excise tax will have net economic benefits via the reduced costs to our Police, health services and prisons – a national saving of \$72 million each year.



What should the Government do?

- The Government should accept the Law Commission's main recommendations on pricing, including:
 - increasing excise tax by 50% to achieve a 10% average increase in retail prices
 - fully investigating minimum pricing schemes and making it a legal requirement for retailers and producers to provide sales and price data
 - reducing excise tax on low-alcohol products.
- All revenue from excise tax on alcohol should be used to pay for prevention, treatment and rehabilitation services.
- We believe there is a strong case for minimum pricing in addition to a rise in excise tax.
- The Law Commission's recommendations were designed to be a 'mutually supportive package'. We believe the Government should accept the Law Commission's entire suite of recommendations instead of 'cherry picking' the least politically risky options.

What should you do?

- Have your say in creating better alcohol laws by making a written submission to the Select Committee before Tuesday 1 February 2011. This can be as short or long as you like, and you can use this toolkit to help you.
- Tell the Government that it should accept all 153 of the Law Commission's recommendations.
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Have your say on Alcohol Marketing



“ Exposure of young people to alcohol marketing speeds up the onset of drinking and increases the amount consumed by those already drinking. ”

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

HAVE YOUR SAY ON ALCOHOL LAW CHANGES.

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KEY FACTS

200^K

EACH DAY, \$200,000 IS SPENT PROMOTING ALCOHOL.

90%

90% OF OUR KIDS AGED 5–17 ARE EXPOSED TO ALCOHOL ADVERTISING ON TV EACH WEEK.

86%

86% OF SUBMISSIONS TO THE LAW COMMISSION SUPPORTED BANNING OR RESTRICTING ALL ADVERTISING OF ALL ALCOHOL IN ALL MEDIA.



What did the Law Commission recommend?

- The Law Commission recommended a three-stage plan to control alcohol promotions, advertising and sponsorship. The process would take five years and phase out all forms of alcohol advertising.

STAGE ONE makes it an offence for off-licences to promote any event or activity that encourages excessive alcohol consumption. Promotions that specifically target young drinkers will also become an offence.

STAGE TWO creates a joint committee run by the Ministers of Health and Justice. This will oversee a programme to reduce exposure to alcohol advertising and increase control of advertising content.

STAGE THREE restricts the advertising and promotion of alcohol in all media. Eventually, no alcohol advertising will be allowed, except that which gives factual product information only.

What was the Government's response?

- **Weak.** The Government accepted stage one of the Law Commission's recommendations but rejected stages two and three. Instead, it is asking its officials to 'continue to monitor the national and overseas research on the effects of exposure to advertising'.

OVERALL GRADE AWARDED

D

FAIL, HAS SHOWN NO UNDERSTANDING OF THE ISSUE AND FAILED TO RECOGNISE ANY OF THE REQUIREMENTS. COMPLETE REWRITE NEEDED.

Research and experience shows:

- There are clear and compelling links between alcohol advertising and its influence on young people. Advertising:
 - encourages people to start drinking at a younger age
 - leads young people who already drink to drink more.
- There are links between sponsorship by sportspeople and hazardous drinking.
- Sponsorship of sporting or cultural events reinforces images and messages about alcohol into culture.
- Voluntary self-regulation of alcohol advertising is not working.

“ If we really want to change our drinking culture, we need to address the environment in which our young people are continually bombarded by sophisticated marketing messages that blatantly associate alcohol with social, sporting and sexual success and encourage heavy consumption.”

NEW ZEALAND DRUG FOUNDATION

What should the Government do?

- At a very minimum, the Government should accept the Law Commission’s three-stage plan to control alcohol promotions, advertising and sponsorship.
- The eventual goal should be an end to all forms of alcohol advertising.
- The Government should place external controls over the industry’s ability to advertise.
- According to the current voluntary code for advertising liquor:
 - advertisements shall not be sexually provocative
 - liquor advertisements shall neither conflict with nor detract from the need for responsibility and moderation in liquor consumption.
- The Government should restrict new forms of marketing that target young people using social media such as Facebook or viral text messaging.
- Alcohol sponsorship of sporting or cultural events across New Zealand should end.

What does the liquor industry sponsor in your community?

A snapshot of alcohol-sponsored cultural and sporting events, summer of 2010:

EVENT	SPONSORS
Big Day Out AUCKLAND	Smirnoff, Jim Beam, Speights Summit, Lindauer
Laneways Festival AUCKLAND	Becks, Smirnoff
Jim Beam Home Grown WELLINGTON	Jim Beam
NZI Wellington Sevens	Speights Summit
Rhythm and Vines GISBORNE	Speights Summit, Yellowglen, Harvest Cider
Heineken Tennis Open	Heineken, Deutz Marlborough Cuvee
Bay of Island Sailing Week	Heineken, Mt Gay Rum
Wellington Cup Racing Carnival	Stella Artois
Phat 10 New Year’s Festival INANGAHUA	Jagermeister, Speights Summit
Small Town Big Sounds MANGITINOKA	Tui, Montana
Super 14 pre-season game BLUES AND HURRICANES, AT MANGITINOKA	Tui
Auckland Seafood Festival	Macs Brewery, Glengarry, 42 Below
2010 Michael Hill New Zealand Open GOLF	Allan Scott, Amisfield Wine Company, Heineken
Export Gold Series SURFING	Export Gold
Splore Festival TAPAPAKANGA REGIONAL PARK	Tiger, Cointreau, Jagermeister



It's your turn to shout

“ There is a strong argument that a self-regulatory body for alcohol advertising is inappropriate.”

THE LAW COMMISSION

What should the Government do?

CONTINUED

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