

MEDIA RELEASE

Tasmania takes out Fizzer Award on national day of alcohol harm

Tasmania has today received the 2017 annual Fizzer Award as the poorest performing jurisdiction, in a national alcohol policy scorecard released on Australia's worst day for alcohol harm.

Scoring only 23 per cent when it comes to effective alcohol policy – closely followed by New South Wales at 24 per cent – the result highlights some clear opportunities for Tasmania and New South Wales to boost their efforts to address significant levels of alcohol harm in their communities.

Queensland has continued its performance as the state doing most to protect people from alcohol harm while the Northern Territory has shown the most improvement since last year.

The scorecard – produced by the National Alliance for Action on Alcohol (NAAA), a coalition of more than 40 health and community organisations – assesses the policies put in place by Australian governments to reduce harms caused by excessive alcohol consumption.

NAAA co-Chair Dr John Crozier said the absence of a state plan to reduce harms from alcohol and the Tasmanian Government's close relationship with the state's peak industry body for hotels, restaurants, cafes, pubs and clubs, were the reason for the jurisdiction's low score.

"The Premier should know that attending an election event hosted by the Tasmanian Hospitality Association where free beer is being provided sends the wrong message to voters," Dr Crozier said.

"New South Wales had the biggest slip in ranking after watering down its highly effective reduced trading hours in the Sydney CBD, threats to the world-leading Newcastle conditions and reducing the capacity of communities to object to licensing decisions.

"Alcohol consumption kills 5,500 Australians, hospitalises a further 157,000 each year and is a factor in a third of Australia's fatal road crashes. We cannot afford to be complacent with policies to prevent dangerous drinking. Stronger evidence-based alcohol policy reforms must be implemented to promote public health and community safety.

"As a surgeon I see the damage first hand. Many of my colleagues will be treating a large number of drunk and injured people in emergency departments today. It's normally around one in eight patients but today it will likely be more."

NAAA co-Chair Ms Jane Martin said that Queensland's state-wide introduction of 2am and 3am last drinks was a major step forward in the state's efforts to limit dangerous drinking and injury caused by alcohol.

"We congratulate the Northern Territory Government for reintroducing the Banned Drinker Register and its commitment to adopt the recommendations of the Riley Review into alcohol, but more needs to be done to strengthen national and state alcohol policy," Ms Martin said.

“The evidence about which policies keep people safe is clear. We aren’t waiting for medical breakthroughs to substantially reduce the health burden from alcohol. We’re just waiting for the political action.”

Indeed, all jurisdictions can do a lot better on alcohol policy, but where should they start? For some, the challenge is firstly to acknowledge that they have an alcohol problem in their backyard; and stop ignoring the evidence. It is time to put health and community safety before alcohol industry interests and begin introducing measures that have proven to be effective in reducing alcohol harm.

A copy of the scorecard is available on the NAAA [website](#).

**TO ARRANGE AN INTERVIEW WITH DR JOHN CROZIER OR MS JANE MARTIN PLEASE CONTACT:
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Table 1.
Total scores (%) for 2017 policies and implementation by jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	Rank	Score (%)	Progress since 2016	Ranking change
QLD	1	66	↑	No change
SA	2	64	↑	No change
WA	3	51	↑	No change
ACT	4	51	↓	No change
VIC	5	40	↓	+2
NT	6	38	↑	+2
NSW	7	24	↓	-2
TAS	8	23	↓	-2

Table 2.
Relative change (%) between the end of 2016 and the end of 2017

Jurisdiction	Rank	Score (%)
NT	1	69
SA	2	61
Qld	3	56
WA	4	52
Vic	5	49
ACT	6	46
Tas	7	43
NSW	8	27

About the National Alliance for Action on Alcohol:

The National Alliance for Action on Alcohol (NAAA) is a national coalition representing more than 40 organisations from across Australia. NAAA’s members cover a diverse range of interests, including public health, law enforcement, local government, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, child and adolescent health, and family and community services.

NAAA’s National Alcohol Policy Scorecard aims to: raise awareness of progress in alcohol policy development within Australian states and territories; recognise good practice in alcohol policy; and motivate governments to continue to strengthen and improve alcohol policy.

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