

# GROUP AGAINST LIQUOR ADVERTISING (GALA)

## FACT SHEET ON ALCOHOL ADVERTISING

### Historical Introduction

- 1981 Advertising of alcohol retail outlets on broadcast media permitted.
- 1987 Advertising of alcohol corporate and sports sponsorship permitted.
- 1991 Brand name alcohol advertising on television and radio was first permitted. The decision was made by Cabinet. It was not debated in Parliament.
- Voluntary codes or restrictions were applied. These include no TV brand name advertising before 9pm (now 8.30pm). Sponsorship advertising was permitted at any time, except around children's programmes.  
Radio advertising was permitted at any time.  
The broadcasters gave some free air- time to moderation advertising, mainly by ALAC and the Land Transport Safety Authority.
- The voluntary codes are administered by the Advertising Standards Authority (which has jurisdiction over cinema, billboard, press and other advertising too) and the Broadcasting Standards Authority.
- Codes are monitored by the public and complaints may be made to the Advertising Standards Complaints Board (an industry body) and the Broadcasting Standards Authority (a statutory body).
- The codes have been reviewed three times by panels appointed by the Advertising Standards Authority. On each occasion submissions recommending a ban on broadcast alcohol advertising have far outnumbered those in favour of continuing it. In 2003 the panel brought TV alcohol advertising forward to 8.30pm.

### Exposure to Alcohol Advertising

- 5 to 17 year olds see on average 400 to 500 TV alcohol advertisements per year. For many, alcohol ads are their favourite TV ads. (1)& (2)
- On Friday nights 51% of children watch TV after 8.30pm, and 62% on Saturday nights. 31% were still watching at 10pm on Saturdays. (3)

### Effect of Alcohol Advertising

#### A. New Zealand Research

- Alcohol advertisements appeal to children and teenagers. Many thought that drinking the product would result in them having more fun, being stronger, or having other qualities portrayed in the advertisement. Many said they felt encouraged to drink after watching the advertisements.(4)
- A longitudinal study in Dunedin found that males who could recall more alcohol ads at age 13 drank larger amounts of alcohol at age 18. (5)
- Among 10 to 13 year old boys, half said that they knew more about drinking from watching alcohol ads. Liking the ads was associated with drinking because of the feeling that 'drinking makes life more fun and exciting' and 'people get on better when they have a few drinks'. (1)
- Over the 10 year period 1990 to 1999, 14 to 17 year olds doubled the amount they drank on a typical drinking occasion. They drank 2-3 drinks in 1990, and 5-6 in 1999. This coincides with the period in which alcohol advertising on TV and radio were introduced.(6)
- Much alcohol advertising penetrates and worsens youth drinking culture. Some of it is advertising intoxication eg Export Gold "The best weekend you'll never remember." (17)

## **B. Overseas Research**

- A US study found that alcohol advertising was a contributing factor to motor vehicle fatalities. A ban on broadcast advertising could result in a reduction of between 200 to 3000 road deaths annually. (7)
- Countries that introduced alcohol advertising bans had significantly lower consumption and alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes.(8)
- Exposure to advertising increases the frequency of drinking and reinforces pro-drinking attitudes.(9)
- A US survey of 10 and 11 year olds found that those who could identify more beer ads tended to drink more frequently as adults. (10)
- The amount drunk correlates with advertising expenditure. A \$1 per capita increase in expenditure resulted in a 3% increase in consumption. (18)

## **How Alcohol Advertising Works**

- Alcohol advertising glamorises and normalises drinking. Drinking is portrayed as part of attractive lifestyles which appear within the reach of normal aspirations. Many alcohol ads are designed to meet important needs among young people. (11)
- "The liquor industry isn't selling bottles or glasses or even liquor. It is selling fantasies." (12)
- Alcohol advertising recruits new drinkers, encourages greater consumption in current drinkers, and makes it more difficult for those who want to give up.

## **New Technologies**

- These are being exploited to advertise alcohol to youth. They include web sites with competitions, email, txtting, E-cards, and downloads for wallpaper and screen savers.(2)

## **The Economics of Alcohol Advertising**

- The liquor industry spends about \$35 million per year on advertising and more on sponsorship.(13)
- The cost of harm from alcohol is estimated at between \$2 billion (14), and \$16 billion (15) annually. This is borne by taxpayers through health, judicial, police, ACC, and social welfare systems.
- Government receives about \$600 million in alcohol tax per year.
- Teenagers from 14 to 17 drink about \$2.7million worth of alcohol per week. (16)

## **Countries with Alcohol Advertising Bans**

Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, France, Iceland, India, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Turkey, Ukraine and Muslim countries ban broadcast alcohol advertising.

Other countries have partial bans eg Belgium bans advertising on State TV and all radio, Denmark bans ads for alcohol over 2.25%, Ireland bans spirits advertising on TV and radio, Portugal bans TV ads before 10pm.

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