

NEWS RELEASE

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DRINKWISE AND RETAIL DRINKS AUSTRALIA PARTNER TO DRIVE POSITIVE DRINKING CULTURE

Social change organisation DrinkWise and Retail Drinks Australia (**Retail Drinks**) has today announced a partnership, which will see new moderation messaging displayed across the retail drinks industry nationally, as part of efforts to create a healthier and safer drinking culture across the country.

The new messaging “*Choose to DrinkWise*” will be displayed across marketing channels used by drinks retailers including Australian Liquor Marketers/Independent Brands Australia, Coles Liquor Group, Endeavour Drinks, Liquor Legends and Liquor Marketing Group, as well as many independently owned and operated liquor retailers across Australia from today.

The announcement comes in the lead up to the festive holiday period and serves as a timely reminder for Australians to choose to drink in moderation.

Simon Strahan, CEO of DrinkWise said, “The latest Australian Government statistics confirm the continuing trend that Australians’ relationship with alcohol is improving. Overall, less are drinking at risky levels and many have reported that they have cut down*. This initiative aims to harness and support that trend through visible point-of-sale messaging, which will also be seen across advertising and promotional channels.”

“Of course, while the majority of Australians are choosing to drink within the recommended government guidelines, there are still some who are drinking at risky levels, which is why we’re increasing our efforts and the presence of the moderation message,” added Strahan.

Michael Waters, CEO of Retail Drinks commented, “Retail Drinks, our members and the broader industry are strongly committed to retailing responsibly, which is why we’re proud to launch this initiative in partnership with DrinkWise. It joins our other responsible retailing initiatives focusing on education and awareness on the sale and supply of alcohol.”

“*Choose to DrinkWise* focuses on the important message of ‘choice’ – pleasingly Australians are continuing to make wiser choices about their relationship with alcohol; choosing what they drink and from where they purchase, choosing why they drink, when and with whom. Australian are choosing to drink less, and better quality and we expect this positive trend to continue,” added Waters.

The initiative is a proactive campaign designed to engage consumers in a positive, retail-consistent moderation message. It will also allow consumers to access moderation information and advice in a timely manner through digital channels.

To find out more about this initiative or the work of DrinkWise or Retail Drinks, visit www.drinkwise.org.au or www.retaildrinks.org.au.

-ENDS-

Notes to editors:

*Source: AIHW, National Drug Strategy Household Survey Report 2019.

Attributable Quotes:

The Hon Victor Dominello MP, Minister for Customer Service, NSW:

“If there was ever a year to pay attention to the Choose to DrinkWise campaign, this is it. The collaboration that you’re going to get out of this is going to change lives.

“Particularly during COVID I think this is critical. We all have to drink wisely of course, so I can’t think of a more important time to get behind the Choose to DrinkWise campaign.

“Enjoying a drink with friends or family is part of the Australian culture. Any way that we can educate and remind Australians about the importance of enjoying a drink responsibly, is a message I’m in favour of. I fully support this new initiative from Retail Drinks Australia and DrinkWise.”

The Hon Melissa Horne MP, Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation, VIC:

“We’ve had such a challenging year with people being stuck at home and people being really worried about what their future holds.”

“Victorians are back seeing family for the first time, and potentially for a very long time, and having a drink with them might be part of that social experience. But do it sensibly and do it in moderation.”

“It’s great to see Retail Drinks Australia partnering with DrinkWise to get that message out to make sure that everyone has a fun and safe summer.”

The Hon Paul Papalia CSC MLA, Minister for Tourism, Racing & Gaming; Small Business; Defence Issues; Citizenship & Multicultural Interests

“I commend Retail Drinks Australia on this proactive additional initiative to help reduce alcohol-related harm in Western Australia.”

“Industry has an important role to play in helping consumers of alcohol to understand the risks involved with overconsumption, and the Choose to Drinkwise campaign is a good step in encouraging positive behaviours.”

“The State Government is committed to working with industry, health representatives and other stakeholders to continue to encourage measures which reduce alcohol-related harm.”

Steve Donohue, Managing Director, Endeavour Group:

“This year has seen a really big uptake in home delivery services. But people aren’t drinking more overall, they’re drinking more from home – because they’ve been at home.”

“We as retailers recognise the responsibility that goes beyond the service that we give our customers and steps into the space of educating and helping them make better choices when they’re thinking about their consumption.”

Steve Hugginson, General Manager of Operations and Supply Chain, Coles Liquor Group:

“Coles Liquor has always taken a proactive role in promoting responsible drinking. Education is a really important part of the process and these reminders help ensure that customers keep the Choose to DrinkWise message top of mind when choosing to have a drink.”

Chris Baddock, CEO, Australian Liquor Marketers / Independent Brands Australia

“As a key player in the industry, we truly believe that moderation is the best way to consume alcohol. However, some people do have a problem with alcohol and for this reason we are committed to continually remind those who choose to consume alcohol about the importance of doing so wisely and responsibly.”

Ed Kitchen, Head of Operations New Verticals, Uber:

“The safety and wellbeing of everyone that uses the Uber Eats app is always our priority, and we are proud to partner with Retail Drinks and DrinkWise and join a number of industry leading organisations in promoting safe and responsible alcohol consumption.”

ABOUT DRINKWISE

DrinkWise is an evidence-based social change organisation dedicated to changing the Australian drinking culture to one that is safer and healthier. We do this through national education campaigns, partnerships with community leaders and organisations, and the development of practical strategies and resources that better support the community in relation to the responsible use of alcohol. DrinkWise is funded through voluntary industry contributions across the alcohol sector and has previously been in receipt of funding from both Coalition and Labor governments.

ABOUT RETAIL DRINKS AUSTRALIA

Retail Drinks Australia is a national industry body that represents the interests of Australia’s packaged retail liquor stores, providing unwavering leadership, advocacy and support for its members. We act as a consistent unified voice with both industry and government stakeholders, with the objective of nurturing a stable political, social and commercial environment in which the retail liquor industry may grow sustainably. Our vision is to enhance the freedom to retail responsibly.