

DRINKWISE TO HELP CONSUMERS GET THE FACTS

In 2010 the DrinkWise Australia Board took the decision to develop Generic Warning Messaging for voluntary inclusion on alcohol labels that will help Australian consumers better understand the issues around alcohol consumption.

Safe Drinking Advocate and DrinkWise Chair, The Hon. Trish Worth said today's release of the Blewett review of food labelling law and policy, 'Labelling Logic', which recommended that generic alcohol warning messages be placed on alcohol labels as part of a comprehensive multifaceted national campaign, validates this decision and the broader work being undertaken by DrinkWise Australia.

"The DrinkWise Generic Warning will encourage consumers to 'get the facts' from the DrinkWise web site which provides evidence based information on alcohol to help people make informed choices when drinking," Ms Worth said.

"Prevention through education is at the heart of DrinkWise activities and our immediate focus is on improving the drinking culture so that consuming alcohol too young and to excess is considered undesirable.

"We are working to achieve this through national information and education campaigns and through the provision of practical resources that inform and support the community about alcohol use.

"To achieve our outcomes the Board recognised that there was an imperative to expand our messaging from television, online and print campaigns directly to the consumer.

"Delivering generic warning messages via product labels and point of sale will help us engage with Australia's current drinkers.

"Australia's major alcohol producers and retailers agreed and we've been working collaboratively to develop consumer messaging that will better enable the community to enjoy alcohol with responsibility and care.

"We are working towards a launch of retail point of sale materials in February 2011, followed by generic warning messages on product and packaging in March 2011. These labels will be adopted by industry on a voluntary basis," Ms Worth said.

"Research we've undertaken through Quantum Market Research has found that one in ten consumers agree that health warning labels will make people drink more responsibly and one third of consumers (32%) have suggested that on seeing a label that resonated with them they would be likely to seek more information about responsible drinking. It is a good start," Ms Worth said.

Available for interview:

The Hon. Trish Worth, Chair of DrinkWise
Cath Peachey, CEO DrinkWise

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Background

The Blewett review of food labelling law and policy, 'Labelling Logic', has recommended that generic alcohol warning messages be placed on alcohol labels but only as an element of a comprehensive multifaceted national campaign targeting the public health problems of alcohol in society.

It has also called for a suitably worded warning message about the risks of consuming alcohol while pregnant on individual containers of alcoholic beverages and at the point of sale for unpackaged alcoholic beverages, as support for ongoing broader community education.