



27 July 2016

Steve Ella  
Foundation for Alcohol Research & Education  
PO Box 19  
Deakin West  
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Dear Steve

### **2016 State of Origin – Alcohol Advertising**

Thank you for your letter. We appreciate you taking the time to share the concerns of FARE relating to the level of alcohol sponsorship during this year's State of Origin series.

The National Rugby League believes that sport plays an important role in delivering messages and initiatives to the broader community. As a national sporting organisation, the NRL takes this role seriously.

The NRL does extensive work through its welfare and education programs to promote social responsibility messaging in relation to the consumption of alcohol. It also takes steps to equip players with tools to make the right choices off the field. Last year the NRL delivered programs relating to alcohol and drugs to over 4,500 players and staff at the elite levels of the game from the junior representative teams to the NRL. The NRL will continue to provide these programs and develop new programs and initiatives that encourage all players and participants in the rugby league community to drink responsibly and engage in a healthy lifestyle.

As part of the NRL's commitment to education and welfare, it has not only committed to the Federal Government's National Alcohol Code of Conduct, which promotes responsible attitudes and practices to alcohol through leadership and sport, but it has also implemented its own Alcohol Management Strategy program. This program marked the first time a national sporting organisation simultaneously partnered with a national health organisation (the Australian Drug Foundation) and the alcohol industry to create a program that specifically targeted the attitudes to alcohol consumption in sport. In 2014 the program was recognised with the Australian Drug Foundation 'Leadership Award' in organisational alcohol management.

These programs and initiatives would not be possible without the joint efforts and investment from the NRL's commercial partners. It is important to recognise and acknowledge that industry-specific expertise and knowledge is invaluable when creating effective programs.

The NRL does not believe that selectively banning alcohol sponsorship in sport will be the silver bullet to reduce the incidence of harmful drinking, rather, we see that sport can actually send a positive message about responsible alcohol use in the context of an environment where health and fitness are key elements of the event.

The NRL has long been committed to creating an environment that encourages the responsible consumption of alcohol within the area of the game it controls. The next step in this process is to extend this influence and these programs throughout the wider rugby league community. To this end, the NRL is currently reviewing all of its alcohol partnerships, as well as how it allows these partners to activate their sponsorships through advertising and media.

Yours Sincerely

**Todd Greenberg**  
Chief Executive Officer

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