



Foundation for Alcohol  
Research & Education

## Media Release

# ALCOHOL MISUSE COSTS SA \$2.6 BILLION A YEAR GOVT PROPOSALS WOULD ONLY INCREASE ALCOHOL HARMS

**12 June 2013:** A government alcohol inquiry has been reminded of the State's heavy alcohol toll and told that deaths, hospitalisations and the financial cost to the community would all rise as a direct result of Government plans to increase the availability of alcohol in the State.

With alcohol misuse already costing South Australians \$2.6 billion, and resulting in 283 deaths and 6,756 hospitalisations per year, the inquiry has been told the South Australian Government must more effectively regulate the price, availability and promotion of alcohol.

In its submission to the *SA Parliament Social Development Committee Inquiry into the Sale and Consumption of Alcohol*, the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) again called on the Government to abandon draft legislation to sell wine in supermarkets.

FARE Chief Executive, Michael Thorn says the South Australian Government efforts to increase the availability of alcohol in the State through its determined push to promote small bars and sell wine in supermarkets, will see alcohol harms rise further.

"First and foremost, this Government has the responsibility to protect the public health and safety of the community. We know that the level of harms from alcohol misuse relates directly to the price, availability and promotion of alcohol, and Government needs to step up and show the community that it is prepared to effectively regulate in these areas," Mr Thorn said.

FARE also recommended that the Government legislate for licenced venues to cease trading at 3am (for venues currently trading beyond that time), and called for strengthening of liquor promotion guidelines to ensure off-licence and on-licence premises are regulated with equal weight.

FARE is also highly critical of the Government's failure to use its existing powers to regulate the promotion of alcohol, following a decision in February by the Alcohol Beverages Advertising Code (ABAC).

ABAC, the alcohol industry's own regulatory body determined that the Bachus Shot Bucket should be withdrawn from sale due to the product's evident appeal to young people.

Michael Thorn, says that despite a request from FARE that the SA Government investigate the complaint, and use its powers to remove the product, the Bachus Shot buckets remains on retailer's shelves in South Australia.

“Here’s an example of a product that should not be on store shelves. Even the alcohol industry’s own regulator says it should be withdrawn from sale because it was a dangerous product that appealed to young people. The South Australian Government already has the regulatory and enforcement powers to have this product removed from sale, yet simply refuses to act,” Mr Thorn said.

**Michael Thorn is available for interview.**

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**Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE)** is an independent, charitable organisation working to prevent the harmful use of alcohol in Australia. Since 2001, FARE has invested over \$115 million in research and community projects to minimise the impact of alcohol misuse on Australians. Through its national grants program and commissioned research, FARE has established itself as a leading voice on alcohol and other drugs issues. FARE works with community groups, all levels of government, police, emergency workers, research institutions and the private sector to address alcohol-related problems. For further information visit FARE’s website: [www.fare.org.au](http://www.fare.org.au)