# Campaign to demand real warnings on alcohol products

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Australia’s leading alcohol research and education body has launched a campaign calling on the community to demand real warnings on alcohol products, following the publication of an independent audit which has shown the alcohol industry isn’t serious about labelling.

Conducted by IPSOS Social Research Institute, the audit of the alcohol industry’s DrinkWise warning labels found that a full year into the voluntary program, fewer than one in six products carry the consumer information messages.

The audit also found that most Drinkwise messages are largely hidden with 98 per cent of the messages taking up less than 5 per cent of the label or face of the packaging.

Launching the on-line campaign in Canberra today, Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) Chief Executive Michael Thorn says the failure of the voluntary initiative would come as no surprise to most Australians who recognise that the primary concern of the alcohol industry is its sales, and not the health of consumers.

“What we need are evidence-based warning labels applied consistently across all alcohol products. The best industry can manage after a full 12 months is one in six products. Even worse, those few products that actually carry messages do so in such a way as to make the message all but invisible,” Mr Thorn said.

While the alcohol industry has shown itself unwilling or unable to deliver a robust labelling regime, Mr Thorn says that community support for greater efforts to address alcohol-related harms is extremely high.

“There is no question that Australians are demanding greater action. Each year FARE’s Annual Alcohol Poll has consistently shown that over 75 per cent of Australians want action to reduce alcohol related harms, and a majority of Australians also believe government and industry are not doing enough,” Mr Thorn said.

With the alcohol industry failing to adopt its own labels, Mr Thorn says it is crucial that Government accepts that it alone carries the responsibility for this important public health initiative.

“We need to make some noise if the Government is ever going to stand up to the powerful alcohol industry lobby. The audit showed us what we long feared and suspected. Industry has failed. There is no message on the bottle,” Mr Thorn said.

FARE’s online campaign consists of a series of digital and physical graphic postcards that highlight the failure of the DrinkWise initiative, together with an online petition. The postcards, which have been distributed to media and politicians, can be found online at www.fare.org.au.

Together with the digital campaign, FARE has also launched an online petition and aims to attract as many signatures as possible to ensure the Government introduces mandatory pregnancy warning labels on alcohol products. On 1 September, the petition will be sent to the Hon Catherine King MP, Chair of the Legislative and Governance Forum on Food Regulation.

[view the petition](https://www.change.org/p/the-hon-catherine-king-mp-implement-a-mandatory-evidence-based-alcohol-labelling-regime-in-australia)

### Metadata