# DrinkWise is a front for alcohol companies. We're exposing their slimy tactics

***Content warning:*** *This article discusses alcohol use and violence.*

On State of Origin game night this week, women’s shelters and domestic violence hotlines prepared for a surge in people seeking help.

Survivor advocates and people working in shelters say alcohol is often the accelerant.

Yet, NSW politicians proudly stood alongside DrinkWise – a front for alcohol companies –asking people to drink in moderation, while those same companies routinely block effective alcohol policy reforms that could prevent harm.

**This is despite clear evidence that the risk of violence** [**increases by 40 per cent**](https://fare.org.au/domestic-violence-surge-state-of-origin-game-leaves-women-and-children-battered-and-bruised/) **around State of Origin games**.

It’s beyond disappointing to see the NSW Government, NSW Police and the NRL partnering with DrinkWise yet again.

DrinkWise is funded by 20 major alcohol companies and retailers.

While they’re telling us to, “Always Respect, Always DrinkWise”, these same companies are also pouring money into Retail Drinks Australia – a lobby group that travels the length and breadth of the country putting pressure on governments to resist common sense liquor laws or regulations that could prevent violence.

[Common sense measures that would reduce harm](https://fare.org.au/alcohol-and-gendered-violence/) include keeping alcohol home delivery between 10am – 10pm, introducing a two-hour safety pause between ordering alcohol and having it delivered, and effective ID checks.

When alcohol is delivered rapidly into the home, it’s more likely to be used at risky levels and more likely to cause harm.

“To see these companies, through their front organisation, stand beside governments and hold these press conferences talking about campaigns that will be completely ineffective and don't even say anything … is at best, disingenuous,” [FARE CEO Caterina Giorgi told the ABC](https://www.abc.net.au/news/2024-07-17/origin-nsw-blues-qld-maroons-nrl-domestic-violence-alcohol/104105740).

“At worst, it's a really slimy tactic that they use to try and stop any meaningful action.”

DrinkWise’s track record is disturbing and shows reducing harm isn’t their goal.

They’ve run campaigns including “[How to drink properly](https://theconversation.com/drinkwises-cynical-campaign-shouldnt-fool-anyone-23813)”, which glorified alcohol use and have had to remove posters from GP clinics [because of false claims](https://www.smh.com.au/healthcare/utterly-wrong-what-happens-when-the-alcohol-industry-makes-pregnancy-warning-posters-20180827-p50022.html) around alcohol use and pregnancy.

This year, ahead of State of Origin game one, Endeavour - a DrinkWise funder and Australia’s largest alcohol and gambling retailer - publicly boasted that sales for its online alcohol delivery service [Jimmy Brings’ increased by 2](https://www.foodmag.com.au/most-popular-state-of-origin-drinks-revealed/)[6](https://www.foodmag.com.au/most-popular-state-of-origin-drinks-revealed/)[per cent](https://www.foodmag.com.au/most-popular-state-of-origin-drinks-revealed/) on Origin game night.

If governments and sporting codes are serious about violence prevention, they must end their partnerships with alcohol companies who stand in the way of the very laws that could help keep women and children safe.

Alcohol companies shouldn’t be running health campaigns.

It’s time to stop sanitising the truth, stop the delay tactics, and stop hiding behind vague ineffective campaigns.

***If you or someone you know needs help, there is***[***support available***](https://fare.org.au/resources/support/)***.***

[***1800RESPECT***](https://www.1800respect.org.au/)***(1800 737 732) provides 24/7 domestic and family violence support and counselling services.***