# Submission on the need for a nationally-consistent approach to alcohol-fuelled violence

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### This FARE, PHAA, and NAAA submission to the Senate Inquiry into the need for a nationally-consistent approach to alcohol-fuelled violence, highlights the ad hoc approach Australia has taken in its efforts to reduce alcohol harm despite long standing recognition of a significant problem in this country.

The Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE), the Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) and the National Alliance for Action on Alcohol (NAAA) submission to the Senate Inquiry into the need for a nationally-consistent approach to alcohol-fuelled violence, highlights the ad hoc approach Australia has taken in its efforts to reduce alcohol harm despite long standing recognition of a significant problem in this country.

The most effective strategies to reduce alcohol harm are well known: increasing the price of alcohol, reducing its availability, addressing alcohol advertising and sponsorship. A comprehensive, coordinated and consistent approach by governments incorporating these three strategies will see significant reductions in the levels of harm currently being observed. These are cost effective strategies that can be easily introduced and sustained.

This submission looks at particular elements of the Terms of Reference that fall within the expertise of FARE, PHAA and NAAA.

## Recommendations

FARE, PHAA, and NAAA recommend that:

1. The Inquiry recommend that the Council of Australian Governments adopts harm minimisation as an underlying principle of action.
2. The Inquiry recommend that the Council of Australian Governments establish minimum standards for alcohol-related legislation and policies for all states and territories relating to:
	* prioritisation of harm minimisation in liquor licensing legislation over all other objects of the Act
	* a reduction in trading hours so that all venues licensed to sell alcohol for consumption on the premises cease serving alcohol at no later than 3am
	* a reduction in trading hours so that all venues licensed to sell alcohol for consumption off the premises cease sales at 10pm
	* the introduction of a risk based licensing system that takes into consideration the type of licence, trading hours, venue capacity, location of licence and history of compliance
	* strengthening of provisions relating to alcohol advertising and promotion to restrict practices and behaviours that encourage harmful consumption of alcohol.
3. The Inquiry recommend that there is national consistency between states and territories in the content and delivery of Responsible Service of Alcohol courses that is based on best practice.
4. The Inquiry recommend that all staff in licensed venues who have direct contact with patrons, including but not limited to bar staff, should receive training in Responsible Service of Alcohol so they have an understanding of the issues and risks and can better support the venue in managing alcohol service.
5. The Inquiry recommend that states and territories enhance compliance and enforcement activities in relation to the Responsible Service of Alcohol.
6. The Inquiry should recommend that education programs in states and territories should be introduced as part of a broad based strategy to reduce alcohol harm and be based on the evidence of what works, implemented comprehensively, provided with adequate and sustainable funding, and evaluated to assess effectiveness and areas for improvement.
7. The Inquiry recommend that a national alcohol strategy is developed that compels state and territory governments to implement key measures related to price, availability, advertising and promotion.
8. The Inquiry recommend that as a matter of urgency, the Australian Government reforms the alcohol taxation system to introduce a volumetric tax for wine and related products.
9. That the Inquiry recommend that a minimum unit price for alcohol is introduced to stop the extreme discounting of alcohol.
10. The Inquiry recommend that the Australian Government phases out alcohol advertising, commencing with the removal of alcohol advertising from times and placements which have high exposure to young people aged up to 25 years.
11. The Inquiry recommend that the Australian Government abolishes the Alcohol Beverages Advertising Code (ABAC) and establishes an independent regulatory body that is free of alcohol industry involvement and introduces alcohol advertising regulation that is mandatory, covers all alcohol marketing activities, includes penalties for non-compliance and is transparent and accountable.
12. The Inquiry recommend that the Australian Government develops guidelines on the changes to Competition Policy and that this should clearly identify that alcohol is a special product and therefore actions taken in the public interest, such as reduced trading hours, can and should be implemented.
13. The Inquiry recommend that the Council of Australian Governments agree to developing nationally consistent data sets that are publicly available to enable a better understanding of the true extent of harm in Australia and to inform the development and evaluation of alcohol policies at all levels of government.
14. The Inquiry recommend that governments at all levels should exclude alcohol industry involvement in the development of policy.

[view the submission](https://fare.org.au/wp-content/uploads/FARE-PHAA-NAAA-submission-on-the-need-for-a-nationally-consistent-approach-to-alcohol-fuelled-violence-FINAL.docx.pdf)

### Metadata