

QUEENSLAND COALITION FOR ACTION ON ALCOHOL



Political party responses to QCAA Election Platform: *Our Shout*

January 2015



About QCAA

The Queensland Coalition for Action on Alcohol (QCAA) is a coalition of Queensland health and community organisations committed to reducing alcohol-related harm. QCAA identifies and prioritises actions needed to reduce alcohol harms and improve the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders and ensures that these actions are raised with decision makers.

QCAA currently has 11 member organisations, these are:

- Australian Medical Association Queensland
- Collaboration for Alcohol Related Developmental Disorders
- Drug and Alcohol Nurses Australasia
- Drug ARM Australasia
- Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education
- Healthy Options Australia
- Lives Lived Well
- Safe Streets Association Inc
- Queensland Alcohol and Drug Research and Education Centre
- Queensland Homicide Victims Support Group
- Queensland Network of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies
- Royal Australasian College of Surgeons

For further information about QCAA, visit www.qcaa.org.au or contact the QCAA secretariat at contactus@qcaa.org.au.

Approach

On 7 January 2015, the Queensland Coalition for Action on Alcohol (QCAA) wrote to the leaders and state offices of six political parties contesting the Queensland state election; the Liberal National Party (LNP), the Queensland Labor (Labor), Katter's Australian Party (KAP), the Queensland Greens (Greens), Palmer United Party (PUP) and One Nation.

The letter posed ten questions for the political parties on alcohol policy:

1. Will your Party support the development of a state-wide alcohol harm reduction plan that includes prevention, early intervention, treatment, monitoring and evaluation and also includes working with and supporting non-government organisations to provide alcohol and other drug services to reduce alcohol harm?
2. Will your Party support a reduction in trading hours for on-licence premises to no later than 3am, the introduction of 1am lockouts and recommencement of the moratorium on all applications for late night trading beyond midnight across Queensland?
3. Will your Party support the prohibition of the harmful discounting and promotion of alcohol products at both on-and off-licence premises and ban alcohol promotions on state property, including public transport?
4. Will your Party support the provision of \$2 million over four years to support domestic violence services and alcohol and other drug services to develop shared models of care?
5. Will your Party support the provision of \$1 million over four years to develop and implement a state-wide Queensland Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) Action Plan?
6. Will your Party support the provision of \$2 million over four years to fund a brief intervention program for alcohol in primary care and emergency department settings to support health professionals to talk to consumers about their alcohol consumption?
7. Will your Party support the provision of \$4 million over four years to develop and fund an ongoing public education campaign on the negative health impacts from alcohol consumption and ways to avoid these risks?
8. Will your Party support the introduction of a policy that excludes alcohol industry involvement in policy development, in line with the World Health Organization's (WHO) recommendation, and a ban on donations to Queensland political parties from the alcohol industry and their representatives?
9. Will your Party support the collection and public reporting of alcohol harms and compliance data, including police data on alcohol-related violence, to inform the development of alcohol policy and the evaluation of programs and services?
10. Will your Party support a comprehensive, independent evaluation of the *Safe Night Out Strategy* incorporating adequate consultation with people who have expertise in public health?

Responses were received from four of six parties; the LNP, Labor, KAP and the Greens. Responses were received by State Director of the LNP Brad Henderson, Deputy Leader of the Opposition the Hon Tim Mulherin, the Convenor of the Queensland Greens Penny Allman-Payne and National General Secretary of KAP Andrew Jackson.

Answers are categorised as ‘supported in full’, ‘some action committed’ and ‘no commitment’.

Answers were categorised as being ‘supported in full’ where it was clear that a commitment to the full policy is made, while answers were categorised as having ‘some action committed’ where the party indicated support for part of the policy being proposed. Answers were categorised as having ‘no commitment’ where a response was received indicating that the policy would not be implemented or no answer was received relating to the question.

A summary of responses received against each category is provided in Table 1. An overview of responses to each question is provided in Table 2 and verbatim responses received against each of the ten questions is provided in Table 3.

Tally of responses from Queensland Political Parties

Table 1 below summarises the total number of responses to QCAA’s ten alcohol policy questions categorised as ‘supported in full’, ‘some action committed’ or ‘no commitment’.

When examining policies that are either supported in full or have some action committed, the Greens receive a score of 9/10, followed by KAP (8/10), Labor (6/10) and the LNP (5/10). When only examining policies that are supported in full, the Greens receive a score of 8/10, followed by Labor and KAP (both on 4/10) and LNP (1/10). The LNP were most likely to have no commitment made to policies (5/10), followed by Labor (4/10), KAP (2/10) and the Greens (1/10).





	Number of policies supported in full	Number of policies with some action committed	Number of policies with no commitment
	1	4	5
	4	2	4
	8	1	1
	4	4	2

Table 1: Tally of responses from Queensland political parties

Overview of responses from Queensland political parties

Table 2 below provides an overview of the political parties' responses to the ten alcohol policy questions posed by QCAA. Questions that receive a '✓' indicate that the policy was 'supported in full'. Both symbols '✓/✗' indicates that there was 'some action committed', while a '✗' indicates that there is 'no commitment' by the party.









				
1. Development of a state-wide alcohol harm reduction plan & work with & support non-government organisations	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Reduction in trading hours for on-licence premises to no later than 3am, 1am lockouts and recommence the moratorium	✗	✓	✓/✗	✗
3. Prohibition of harmful discounting and promotion of alcohol products at on-and off-licence premises and ban alcohol promotions on state property	✓/✗	✓/✗	✓	✓
4. Support the provision of \$2 million over four years to support domestic violence services and alcohol and other drug services develop shared models of care	✓/✗	✗	✓	✓/✗
5. Support provision of \$1 million over four years to develop and implement a state-wide Queensland Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Action Plan	✓/✗	✗	✓	✓/✗
6. Support provision of \$2 million over four years to fund a brief intervention program for alcohol in primary care and emergency department settings	✗	✗	✓	✓/✗
7. Support the provision of \$4 million over four years to develop and fund an ongoing public education campaign on the negative health impacts from alcohol consumption and ways to avoid these risks	✓/✗	✓/✗	✓	✓/✗
8. Support policy that excludes alcohol industry involvement in policy development and a ban on alcohol industry donations to Queensland political parties	✗	✗	✗	✗
9. Support the collection and public reporting of alcohol harms and compliance data, including police data on alcohol-related violence	✗	✓	✓	✓
10. Support a comprehensive, independent evaluation of the <i>Safe Night Out Strategy</i>	✗	✓	✓	✓

Table 2: Overview of responses from Queensland Political Parties

Detailed responses from Victorian political parties

Table 3 below details each of the political party's responses to the alcohol policy questions posed by QCAA. Verbatim extracts from correspondence from the political parties are provided against each of the questions. Again, the responses are categorised as being 'supported in full', having had 'some action committed' and having 'no commitment'.

1. Will your party support the development of a state-wide alcohol harm reduction plan that includes prevention, early intervention, treatment, monitoring and evaluation and also includes working with and supporting non-government organisations to provide alcohol and other drug services to reduce alcohol harm?	
	<p>Supported in full</p> <p>The Newman LNP Government is committed to a state-wide alcohol harm reduction plan in addition to its Safe Night Out initiative.</p> <p>In October 2014 the Mental Health Commission –established by the Newman LNP Government - launched the Queensland Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol Strategic Plan which had been developed in consultation with stakeholders. That plan can be found at: http://www.qmhc.qld.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/QMHC-Mental-Health-Drug-and-Alcohol-Strategic-Plan-2014-2019_web.pdf.</p> <p>The LNP notes the position of the Labor Party, and its supporting industrial unions, to reject and scale-back outsourcing of services in Queensland Health; and notes the potential threat this would have on future funding for non-government providers of services.</p> <p>Member organisations of the Queensland Coalition for Action of Alcohol are strongly recognised and supported by the Newman LNP Government for the provision of alcohol and drug treatment and diversion services such as \$1.3 million in funding for Drug ARM (2014/15) and \$2.7 million in funding for Lives Lived Well (2014/15).</p>
	<p>Supported in full</p> <p>Yes.</p>
	<p>Supported in full</p> <p>Yes, the Queensland Greens support the development and implementation of a state-wide alcohol harm reduction plan as detailed. It is important that independent non-government organisations with relevant expertise in these fields be involved in the ongoing implementation and refinement of such a plan.</p>
	<p>Supported in full</p> <p>Yes Support in principle.</p>

2. Will your party support a reduction in trading hours for on-licence premises to no later than 3am, the introduction of 1am lockouts and recommencement of the moratorium on all applications for late night trading beyond midnight across Queensland?

No commitment



There is no magic, silver bullet solution to this issue. The Safe Night Out Strategy is a comprehensive package of reforms to deal with alcohol and drug related violence, focusing on bad behaviour, education to change the binge drinking culture and safe and supportive environments.

The moratorium on extended trading hours applications was just a band-aid solution that was introduced by the former Bligh Labor Government. Business deserves the opportunity to compete in a marketplace that employs thousands of Queenslanders and adds to a vibrant tourism industry. It is important that checks and balances are maintained through the application process and local communities have the opportunity to have their say and that is what we have implemented.

Supported in full



Specifically, Labor's 2015 election commitments to tackle alcohol-fuelled violence are:

Introduce a 1am lockout and stop the service of alcohol at 3am. Venues with an existing 5 am closing licence may choose to remain open to serve food, non-alcoholic beverages and provide entertainment.

Re-introduce the moratorium on very-late-night/early morning licensed trading in Queensland.

Some action committed



The Queensland Greens support evidence based measures which will lead to an overall reduction in the harm that alcohol can cause, whilst also being conscious of the need not to unduly impede peoples' right to enjoyment of legal entertainment.

We would support the reduction in trading hours for on-licence premises to later than 3am outside of official entertainment precincts, and only when comprehensive alcohol service plan with effective monitoring is in place. We believe the effective implementation of 1am lockouts is to some extent dependent on the locations involved. We would work with relevant organisations, including police and venues, to ensure that such lockouts can be safely and effectively implemented.

The Queensland Greens do not support extended late night trading hours for the sale of take away liquor from bottle shops.

No commitment



We need to be convinced of efficacy of this strategy and will consider the results of current trials before giving commitment. Our concern at the moment is that releasing large numbers of drunks on to street all at the same time will do more bad than good.

3. Will your party support the prohibition of the harmful discounting and promotion of alcohol products at both on-and off-licence premises and ban alcohol promotions on state property, including public transport?



Some action committed

The Safe Night Out Strategy includes measures to implement new ways to ensure licensees aren't encouraging rapid or excessive consumption of alcohol, including a new power to prohibit licensees from engaging in specific promotional practices.

We have also made it easier to prosecute licensees who disregard responsible service of alcohol laws.



Some action committed

Specifically, Labor's 2015 election commitments to tackle alcohol-fuelled violence are:

Ban the sale of high-alcohol-content drinks, including shots, after midnight.



Supported in full

Some of the Greens' policies in this area we are promoting include the need to prioritise programs that promote Prevention strategies, including...the tighter regulation of alcohol marketing and promotions.

Yes. As stated above, the Queensland Greens support the tighter regulation of alcohol marketing and promotions, which includes (but is not limited to) the harmful discounting and promotion of alcohol products. We also support the banning of alcohol advertising and promotions on state property and public transport.



Supported in full

Yes we support in principle.

4. Will your party support the provision of \$2 million over four years to support domestic violence services and alcohol and other drug services to develop shared models of care?

Some action committed

The Newman LNP Government has a strong plan to make Queensland the safest place to live, work and raise a family. On 10 August 2014, the Premier announced a Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence chaired by the Honourable Quentin Bryce AD CVO. The recommendations of this bi-partisan Taskforce, due on February 28, will inform the development of a statewide domestic and family violence strategy. More recently, the Newman LNP Government has provided an additional \$100,000 to assist DVConnect to respond to the increase in calls for support and assistance since the announcement of the Taskforce.



Domestic violence is everybody's business. It cannot be resolved by government alone. We must work together in partnership with government and the community side-by-side to tackle this heinous crime.

The community has already demonstrated in numbers that they will not tolerate domestic and family violence. In 2013 the Newman LNP Government released a new three-year social marketing campaign *Make the Call* to increase community awareness about the signs of domestic and family violence and encourage Queenslanders, if they are concerned they or someone they know may be experiencing domestic and family violence to make the call to DV Connect. The Facebook page for the campaign attracted up to 27,000 'likes' demonstrating that the Queensland community is getting behind this important issue.

As part of our landmark investment in child protection reforms, the Newman LNP Government announced last year that it will be investing an additional \$49 million over 5 years to enhance the domestic and family violence service system with a focus on delivering better integrated local responses. These new services will work in collaboration with other local services, including the new Family Connect services, to help prevent domestic and family violence from occurring and build stronger families.

No commitment



Labor acknowledges the need to invest in public health programs to address alcohol related harm. However we cannot make any funding commitments until proposal have been evaluated and fully costed. To do so would be irresponsible

Supported in full



Yes. The Queensland Greens support the provision of funding for this purpose. The Greens believe that addressing domestic violence requires much greater attention from all political parties. The Greens Senator for Queensland, Larissa Waters, successfully initiated a Senate Committee inquiry into domestic violence with an aim to develop more effective policies and programs to tackle this issue.

Some action committed



Support in principle but will leave for Budget Process to determine priority

5. Will your party support the provision of \$1 million over four years to develop and implement a state-wide Queensland Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) Action Plan?

Some action committed



As a part of the Newman LNP Government's strong plan for health, Queensland has already commenced working with other state and territory health ministers, along with the principal committee of AHMAC (Australian health Ministers Advisory Council), to develop a nationally consistent approach and/or action plan on FASD.

Additionally, as a part of its targeted investment in frontline health services, the Newman LNP Government sponsored a team of 7 specialists to travel to Vancouver in 2013 to undergo training in FASD.

As a result of the above funding, the Newman LNP Government has now established Australia's first FASD diagnostic clinic based on the Gold Coast.

No commitment



Labor acknowledges the need to invest in public health programs to address alcohol related harm. However we cannot make any funding commitments until proposal have been evaluated and fully costed. To do so would be irresponsible.

Supported in full



Yes.

Some action committed



Support in principle but will leave for Budget Process to determine priority.

6. Will your party support the provision of \$2 million over four years to fund a brief intervention program for alcohol in primary care and emergency department settings to support health professionals to talk to consumers about their alcohol consumption?



No commitment



No commitment

Labor acknowledges the need to invest in public health programs to address alcohol related harm. However we cannot make any funding commitments until proposal have been evaluated and fully costed. To do so would be irresponsible.



Supported in full

Yes.



Some action committed

Support in principle but will leave for Budget Process to determine priority

7. Will your party support the provision of \$4 million over four years to develop and fund an ongoing public education campaign on the negative health impacts from alcohol consumption and ways to avoid these risks?

Some action committed

The LNP notes that the previous Labor Government axed funding for vital education programs such as those provided through the nationally renowned *Life Education*.



As a part of the LNP's strong plan and targeted investment in health prevention campaigns, the Newman LNP Government reversed Labor's funding cuts and entered into a \$4.8 million three-year funding agreement with *Life Education* to teach primary school children about the effects of alcohol and tobacco, food choices, physical activity, etc.

Additionally, the Newman LNP Government has provided further funding to *Life Education* of \$818,000 for a specific additional tobacco education project; and \$327,000 to roll-out mobile learning centres.

The Newman LNP Government strongly supports the role of non-government providers in providing education as a part of Alcohol and Drug treatment services and has increased funding to the sector by 11.3% for these services since the change of government just three years ago – up from \$23 million in 2011/12 to \$26 million in 2014/15.

Some action committed



Conduct a multimedia education and awareness campaign, targeting young males, about safe drinking practices, the impacts of alcohol-related violence, the changes to service times and the increased enforcement of existing regulations.

Supported in full



Yes.

Some action committed



Support in principle but will leave for Budget Process to determine priority.

8. Will your party support the introduction of a policy that excludes alcohol industry involvement in policy development, in line with the World Health Organization's (WHO) recommendation, and a ban on donations to Queensland political parties from the alcohol industry and their representatives?



No commitment

The LNP is unsure if this question also relates to donations (both direct or in-kind) from industrial unions or industry bodies representing workforces engaged in the provision and/or manufacture of alcohol, and seeks more details from the Queensland Coalition for Action on Alcohol.



No commitment

Consultation is an important component of public policy development. Labor is well aware of the vested commercial interest of the alcohol industry and their past efforts to influence alcohol policy in Australia. Listening does not mean agreeing.



No commitment

Whilst it is important that the alcohol industry not have too great an influence over the development of policies relating to alcohol, the Queensland Greens will need to give further consideration to the idea of excluding the industry entirely from the policy development process. We also believe the entertainment industry needs to be considered as somewhat separate from the alcohol industry, and should not be excluded from policy development in this area.

The Greens both federally and at state level have a strong commitment to electoral reform which would significantly reduce the role, size and impact of all political donations, particularly from corporations. This would involve the introduction of caps on the size of all political donations.

The Queensland Greens also have a view that donations from some specific industries, such as tobacco companies, property developers and coal and uranium miners should be prohibited. At this stage, this position does not extend to the alcohol industry or their representatives, but we will give further consideration to this matter.



No commitment

Have not considered this. To our knowledge we have never received a donation from an alcohol company.


9. Will your party support the collection and public reporting of alcohol harms and compliance data, including police data on alcohol-related violence, to inform the development of alcohol policy and the evaluation of programs and services?	
	No commitment
	Supported in full Yes
	Supported in full Yes. The more comprehensive the amount of data that is collected and publically available, the better informed policy decision will be.
	Supported in full Support in principle.
10. Will your party support a comprehensive, independent evaluation of the <i>Safe Night Out Strategy</i> incorporating adequate consultation with people who have expertise in public health?	
	No commitment
	Supported in full Yes. The Safe Night out Strategy will be independently evaluated for its effectiveness and cost effectiveness.
	Supported in full Yes. The Queensland Greens support such a review and would give serious consideration to all findings that resulted from it.
	Supported in full Support and will base our policy on results of this evaluation.

Table 3: Detailed responses from Queensland political parties

Analysis of responses from Queensland political parties

When examining policies that are either supported in full or have some action committed, the Greens receive a score of 9/10, followed by KAP (8/10), Labor (6/10) and the LNP (5/10).

When only examining policies that are supported in full, the Greens receive a score of 8/10, followed by Labor and KAP (both on 4/10) and LNP (1/10).

The LNP are most likely to have made no commitment to policies (5/10), followed by Labor (4/10), KAP (2/10) and the Greens (1/10).

All parties supported in full the proposal to develop a state-wide alcohol harm reduction plan and work with and support non-government organisations to provide services to reduce harms.

Other popular policies include the prohibition of harmful discounting and promotion of alcohol products at on and off-licence premises and ban of alcohol promotions on state property which was either supported in part (LNP and Labor) or supported in full (Greens and KAP) by all parties and funding an ongoing public education campaign which was also supported in full (Greens) or in part (LNP, Labor, KAP) by all parties.

There were also two policies which were supported in full by all parties except the LNP, these were the collection and public reporting of alcohol harm and compliance data and support for a comprehensive, independent evaluation of the *Safe Night Out Strategy*.

No party indicated that they would support a policy that excludes alcohol industry involvement in policy development and bans alcohol industry donations to Queensland political parties.



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