

REVIEW OF THE REGULATION OF ALCOHOL ADVERTISING

MINUTES OF THIRD STEERING GROUP MEETING 16 AUGUST 2006

Present:

Steering Group

Ashley Bloomfield, Ministry of Health (Chair)
Hilary Souter, Advertising Standards Authority (ASA)
Phil Knipe, Ministry of Justice
Tim Rochford
Alison Taylor, Ministry of Youth Development (MYD)
Tim Harding
Mike Macavoy, Alcohol Advisory Council of NZ (ALAC)
Ruth Richards, Ministry of Social Development (MSD)
Jane Wrightson, Broadcasting Standards Authority (BSA)

Apologies: Nonnita Rees, Ministry of Culture and Heritage (MCH)
Working Group: Wendy Moore (ALAC)

Working Group

Chris Laurensen, Ministry of Health
Megan Larken, ALAC
Jo Burgi, Ministry of Health

1. Previous minutes, and matters arising (17 July)

The members discussed the previous minutes and matters arising from them. Agreed that in future, minutes will be circulated when ready, then re-circulated again later with the papers. One change to the minutes was agreed.

It was noted that the draft RFT for closed tender for sponsorship research had not yet been circulated to the Steering Group. Nor was there a literature review plan.

The Chair reported back on the presentation to the MYD sector meeting. The feedback received was very useful in informing the best approach to engaging youth in consultation. Members asked for notes to be supplied.

Actions:

- Megan Larken to circulate draft RFT for closed tender for sponsorship research
- Jo to circulate the Appendix to the consultation document
- Jo Burgi to supply notes from the MYD sector meeting
- Jo Burgi to amend 17 July minutes – minutes to be posted on NDP website

2. Chair's report back

The Chair had met with Minister O'Connor. The Minister's office has a copy of the consultation plan.

3. NZ Bill of Rights Act as it relates to alcohol advertising

Phil Knipe presented on “Alcohol advertising and the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act: Basic principles to assist the Alcohol Advertising Steering Group”, followed by discussion. (Phil’s notes will be posted on www.ndp.govt.nz).

Phil brought out that although New Zealand’s Bill of Rights is not supreme law and can be overridden by Parliament, when laws are made the Attorney-General is required to report to Parliament on the law’s compliance or otherwise with the Bill of Rights Act.

Action: Jo Burgi to post Phil’s notes on the NDP website.

4. Consultation plan

Members were updated on the progress of the consultation plan. There was discussion about the stakeholder list for targeted consultation (ie those to be emailed a link to the consultation document). A number of suggestions were made that will be incorporated.

The consultation plan and discussion document were discussed further at the end of the meeting.

Actions:

- Steering Group to email additions to the stakeholder list to Megan Larken
- Megan Larken to update consultation plan and stakeholder list
- Working Group to liaise with Tim Harding about consultation with people with dependency problems

5. Research - Alcohol Advertising and Young People

Members discussed research needs for the review. The Working Group had supplied a number of research papers to the Steering Group. The Chair was asked for his opinion on the relative strengths and weaknesses of these papers. The Chair’s view was that the 2002 University of Strathclyde systematic review appeared to be the most comprehensive and robust, and was a useful starting point. The review by the Foundation for Advertising Research missed some studies, and did not show how it selected studies, but it is useful for the purpose of finding common conclusions. The paper by the NZ Drug Foundation was provided primarily for its reference list.

It was agreed that two things would be desirable. First, a straightforward, critical review of the robustness of the methodology of the studies. Second, advice on the relative significance of the studies’ conclusions in relation to New Zealand and the review. For instance, US-based studies have been conducted in an advertising environment more permissive than in New Zealand.

A review of media reporting on alcohol issues was suggested. Members discussed the merits and limitations of this idea.

It was suggested that a framework for drawing together research in a cohesive and meaningful way is needed. Then the Steering Group can consider how the research helps the review.

Action:

- Jo Burgi to circulate research papers by Snyder, Ellickson and McCreanor
- Working Group to follow up on Steering Group's suggestions

6. Expert presentations

Tim Rochford departed the meeting at this point for another engagement.

NZ youth experience of alcohol marketing

Dr Tim McCreanor, Amanda Gregory and Hector Kaiwai presented some of the findings of a Massey University research study involving thematic and discursive analysis of 40 groups of 3 or more New Zealand young people.¹

The presentation included several direct quotes from young people interviewed during the study. It showed that youth were very aware of alcohol brand marketing, perceiving the “cool”, fun and humorous elements, and expressing opinions on what brands appealed to them and why. Older youths (approx 17) displayed an ability to be “media savvy”, whereas younger ones (approx 14) were much less likely to. Drinking was associated with entering the adult realm. Some of the young women interviewed associated drinking with freedom. Some advertising alluded to the binge-drinking culture, such as a campaign that used the line “the best weekend you’ll never remember”.

Action: Working group to circulate the McCreanor et al research paper to the Steering Group.

Brands: connecting with consumers

Jeff Clark of Clemenger BBDO, gave a presentation on modern marketing principles, objectives and methods. Strong brands succeed in “telling a story”, understanding that the heart is as important as the head when it comes to consumers’ choices. He pointed out that for integrated “marcoms”, content is more important than channel, and channels are decided through “360 degree planning” considering all brand contact points.

The presentation included recent trends in alcohol marketing that Jeff Clark had observed, including a surge in marketing in youth environments and cultural events where branding is carefully tailored to appeal to particular youth sub-cultures. Promotion occurs where young people congregate and make good use of internet and texting. Older people not attuned to youth environments are seldom aware of it.

During discussion, it was brought out that the current regulatory framework is designed for the traditional 3-party process to advertising, ie the advertiser, the media company and the consumer. However, some forms of advertising, such as

¹ McCreanor T. et al. (2005) Consuming identities: Alcohol marketing and the commodification of youth experience. *Addiction Research and Theory*. 13(6): 579-590.

internet and viral marketing, involve a 2-party process without a media company acting as gate-keeper.

7. Remaining business

Mike Macavoy departed the meeting at this point for another engagement.

Youth consultation

Discussion returned to the subject of the consultation plan and document.

Alison Taylor outlined the plan for the Working Group and MYD to work together to produce a “youth-friendly” version of the document, and send it to youth sector organisations who can pass it on to youth they work with who may be interested in making a submission. Alternatively the youth workers can use the document as the basis for a youth discussion group before making a submission. It was agreed that the Working Group/MYD would not directly organise face-to-face consultation with youth (as was originally considered) because of the intensive time and resources involved.

Members agreed that, as well as emails to stakeholders, a press release would announce the consultation and point to the document on the NDP website.

The timeframe of six weeks was agreed as being adequate, and people wanting an extension would need to apply individually in writing to the Chair.

8. Next meeting

The next meeting is **11 September**, location to be arranged.

Agreed that one presentation would be sufficient at the next and further meetings. It was suggested that Professor Sally Casswell be invited to present a summary of alcohol consumption and harms data.

Action:

- Jo Burgi to invite Sally Casswell to present.
- Jo Burgi to arrange meeting location for 11 September.