
MEDIA RELEASE

NCETA BACKS OPERATION UNITE

This weekend (7-8 December) Australian and New Zealand Police will conduct the sixth [Operation Unite](#), a concerted effort to focus attention on and reduce alcohol-related violence and disorder.

The operation, co-ordinated by the Australian and New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency, demonstrates the united determination of policing agencies to challenge alcohol misuse, crime, violence and anti-social behaviour and achieve significant change in community attitudes and behaviour.

A recent review of Australian liquor licensing legislation undertaken by the [National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction](#) (NCETA) at Flinders University highlighted the important role played by police in reducing alcohol-related violence.

The research found that problems associated with alcohol intoxication also place a major burden on police.

NCETA Director Professor Ann Roche said that over the past decade, Australia has experienced a dramatic increase in the numbers and types of licensed premises, enhanced hours of alcohol availability and a larger range of alcoholic beverage types.

“This has increased a range of problems for police,” Professor Roche said.

“Operation Unite provides an excellent opportunity to focus public attention on the extent of problems in the community associated with alcohol related violence and disorder,” she said.

“It is also a good opportunity to consider whether police and other liquor enforcement agencies have the powers they need to reduce the problem.

“Alcohol intoxication is a major problem for police despite the fact that it is an offence in every state and territory for the staff of licensed premises to continue to serve alcohol to drunken patrons.”

The review also found that:

- Australian liquor licensing legislation tended to favour the interests of the alcohol industry and did not always give police and liquor licensing authorities the powers

they needed to reduce alcohol-related crime and disorder;

- some legislation was out-dated, overly complex and needed fundamental reform;
- police were often not sufficiently involved in legislative and regulatory reform processes and in licensing decision-making; and
- in some jurisdictions an opportunity existed to clarify the roles of police and liquor licensing authorities in reducing alcohol-related problems.

As a result of these problems, some jurisdictions have amended their legislation since the review was undertaken.

NCETA is pleased to support the Police Commissioners in their efforts to promote greater public awareness of drug and alcohol-related issues and associated harms, and to collaborate in support of change.

Copies of NCETA's review into liquor licensing legislation in Australia are available from:

<http://nceta.flinders.edu.au/general/news/liquor-licensing-legislation-in-australia-a-national-review/>

or

<http://www.nationaldrugstrategy.gov.au/internet/drugstrategy/publishing.nsf/Content/liquor-license-legislation>

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