



MEDIA RELEASE

25 January 2013

Health groups welcome plan to reduce alcohol toll

The Alcohol Policy Coalition (APC) has welcomed the release of its new alcohol and drug strategy – *Reducing the alcohol and drug toll; Victoria's plan 2013-2017* by the Victorian Government today

Brian Vandenberg, Senior Policy Adviser, Cancer Council Victoria, welcomed the plan saying it was the first all-of-government strategy to tackle alcohol in two years.

“After several years with no strategy to reduce alcohol related harm in Victoria, a new plan is extremely important, but time is of the essence. Immediate action is needed to halt the continuing spiral of preventable alcohol-caused injuries, diseases and deaths in the Victorian community. We need to see an implementation timetable,” said Mr Vandenberg.

The APC welcomed the broad nature of the 15-point plan, in particular the emphasis on strengthening liquor licensing laws.

“It’s positive to see that this plan goes beyond only treating the symptoms of our harmful drinking culture and addresses some of the causes such as the availability of alcohol in the community. In particular, we applaud the government’s plan to support local communities to have an effective say in liquor licensing issues. State level action is also needed to tackle other key contributors to the current culture of excessive drinking, such as the relentless advertising and promotion of booze to young people.

“We welcome the government’s plan for a long-term cultural change strategy, but achieving this will require a substantial investment from government and bold action from day one,” said Mr Vandenberg.

For media enquiries contact Rebecca Cook : 03 9635 5207/ 0438 316 435

The Alcohol Policy Coalition (the Coalition) is a collaboration of health agencies – Australian Drug Foundation, Cancer Council Victoria, and Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre – with shared concern relating to the misuse of alcohol and its health/social impacts on the community.

Alcohol remains one of the major causes of preventable death and illness in Australia. As such, the Coalition advocates for evidence based policy to prevent and reduce the harms caused by alcohol to Australians. For more information visit www.alcoholpolicycoalition.org.au