

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 13 & 15 February 2013

Question: E13-223

OUTCOME 1: Population Health

Topic: National Binge Drinking Strategy Sponsorship Program

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Senator Edwards

Question:

The Government offered a \$25 million sponsorship deal with 14 sports codes last year. The deal was that the sports involved would promote the safe drinking message through advertising, uniform branding, sports ambassadors and communication with players, their families and spectators I follow the Adelaide Reds in South Australia and the mighty Thunderbirds in the netball but I'm not seeing any evidence of these above promises.

- a) How many of these sports "gave up" alcohol sponsorship to take government's sponsorship deal?
- b) How has this helped reduce alcohol consumption and/or alcohol related issues?
- c) What are your measurables? What KPI's were put on sports to justify the funding?
- d) Soccer is one sport that relies on money from this program. What work are the clubs, players and importantly the top flight stars of the game doing to promote education about reducing alcohol consumption or related issues?
- e) How long does do you intend to continue offering this sponsorship deal to these sports?

Answer:

- a) All 14 National Sporting Organisations have agreed as part of their sponsorship agreements not to enter into sponsorships with alcohol companies, and therefore are providing sporting environments free from alcohol-promotion. Four of the 14 sports had alcohol sponsors in the financial year immediately preceding the Community Sponsorship Fund.
- b) These national sporting partnerships mean that more than one million young Australians aged between 16 and 24 are now participating in sports that are free from alcohol promotion. These sponsorship arrangements have been welcomed by the national sport partners and do not affect pourage rights or the licencing, availability and service of alcohol at sporting venues, which are covered by state and territory government legislation and include responsible service of alcohol practices.

Early alcohol initiation, (before age 15) and high levels of consumption in adolescence are associated with a range of negative outcomes in both the short and long-term. In the short-term, negative outcomes include: violence, accidents, reckless driving, physical injury, depression, school absenteeism, decreased academic performance, initiation of drug use, suicide, risky sexual behaviour, sexual assault and unplanned pregnancies. In the long-term, heavy alcohol consumption in adolescence has been linked with heavier consumption, alcohol-related harm, poorer mental health and poorer educational outcomes in adulthood.

c) Program level measures are:

- The number of Australians that participate in sports involved with the Community Sponsorship Funds;
- The number of sporting environments that are free from alcohol promotion; and
- Awareness of Be the Influence – Tackling Binge Drinking messages with the target audience will be evaluated.

Each of the sponsorship agreements provides an array of ‘properties’ and opportunities for the activation of the Be the Influence – Tackling Binge Drinking message. These include: uniform branding, stadium and ground signage, public announcements and big screen video promotions. These messages are also reaching a wider audience through sporting newsletters, emails and social media.

Under the Community Sponsorship Fund, National Sporting Organisations (NSO) must comply with, and must make sure that all Competitions and Events are conducted in compliance with, the minimum preventive health policy requirements. Each NSO must comply with, and must make sure that all Competitions and Events are conducted in compliance with, the following minimum preventive health policy requirements:

- alcohol (or vouchers for alcohol) must not be provided as prizes or awards;
- water/non-alcoholic drink choices must be available if alcohol is available;
- no activities or promotions that encourage rapid consumption of alcohol (eg discounted drink prices, happy hours, drinking competitions) are permitted;
- alcoholic drinks must be served in standard-sized drink portions;
- no promotions or event names that glamorise getting drunk or imply that getting drunk is desirable (eg, providing drinks or cocktails with names that imply they will get you drunk) are permitted; and
- all indoor and outdoor areas under the control of the relevant NSO (including any venues) must be maintained as smoke-free.

d) Elite athletes are important role models for many young Australians. The Tackling Binge Drinking message emphasises the inspiration that sporting heroes and team spirit provide to children and young people. Active participation in sport and physical activity is also a key to motivating health and wellbeing, including preventing obesity.

The Tackling Binge Drinking initiative is active across all these sporting environments through Be the Influence Athlete ambassadors, who have come together with a call to action on harmful drinking for young Australians. Their video, which is being played in sporting environments where screens are available, can also be viewed at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NxAwGrIX_9I

During the period October to December 2012, Be the Influence – Tackling Binge Drinking messaging including signage was present at 67 A-League matches, with a total event attendance of 878,227 and broadcast reach of 5,608,820. In the same period, it was also present at four netball matches, with a total event attendance of 32,990 and broadcast reach of 91,020.

- e) All current sponsorship agreements end 30 June 2014.

Sponsorship agreements with Athletics, Basketball, Canoeing, Cycling, Equestrian, Football, Hockey, Netball, Skateboarding, Swimming, Triathlon and Volleyball run from 1 July 2012 to June 2014. The Australian University Sport sponsorship agreement runs from 1 September 2012 to 30 June 2014. The Australian Baseball League sponsorship agreement runs from 1 October 2012 to 30 June 2014.