



NSW ELECTION 2019 ALCOHOL POLICY SCORECARD

MARCH 2019

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The majority of NSW adults believe we have a problem with alcohol (68 per cent) and think that more needs to be done to reduce alcohol harm (72 per cent).

So where do the major parties stand on alcohol policy measures this election?



	THE COALITION	LABOR	THE GREENS
Support late-night last drinks measures			
Support an inquiry into alcohol harm in regional NSW			
Support a mass media campaign on long-term alcohol harm			
Support removing alcohol advertising from government property, including public transport			
Support a moratorium on new online liquor licences and a review of online liquor sales			

YES NO MAYBE




Background and methodology:

The NSW and ACT Alcohol Policy Alliance (NAAPA) wrote to the leaders of major NSW political parties asking for their stance on five key policy initiatives. Responses were received from the Liberal/National Coalition, the Australian Labor Party NSW Branch and Greens NSW. The Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party and the Christian Democratic Party did not respond to our requests.




NAAPA sought a yes or no response to the questions, however all parties responded with more detail. The parties' answers were ranked on a sliding scale where green demonstrated a response in line with evidence-based alcohol policy, orange an answer with room for improvement and red an answer that indicates a policy contrary to the public health imperative. The results are displayed in the table above.

The parties' answers, taken verbatim, are provided below, along with brief contextual commentary.




1. Will your Party keep our youth safe by retaining and not weakening all of the evidence-based late-night alcohol measures, including last drinks restrictions, introduced in King's Cross, Sydney CBD and Newcastle?

THE COALITION	LABOR	THE GREENS
		
PARTY RESPONSE		
<p><i>The NSW Liberals and Nationals Government is committed to striking the right balance between a vibrant night life across NSW and ensuring people have a safe night out. A 2016 review by the Hon. Ian Callinan AC confirmed the effectiveness of the 1.30am lockout and 3am last drinks on reducing alcohol-related violence and antisocial behaviour in the Sydney CBD and Kings Cross precincts. The effectiveness of these measures was further confirmed by a 2017 Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research report. Following the independent review of the lockout laws in the CBD and Kings Cross, a number of changes were implemented which included a moderate thirty minute extension of lockout and last drinks times for genuine live music venues. The Government is closely monitoring this key reform and the impacts on public safety and vibrancy and has committed to a full review of these measures in 2019. An independent review of several licence conditions of Newcastle venues was also conducted last year. The review found that the measures remained suitable for the area.</i></p>	<p><i>Labor believes that policy decision making in relation to alcohol regulation should be evidence based. Labor will continue to review the evidence and consult on these issues. Labor has no plans to weaken evidence-based late-night alcohol measures, including last drinks restrictions, introduced in King's Cross, Sydney CBD and Newcastle. Labor believes in principle that venues with a good record should have that behaviour recognised when it comes to the way venues are regulated.</i></p>	<p><i>No, we do not support these measures as the best way to reduce the harm caused by alcohol and other drugs and behaviours across all suburbs and parts of the community.</i></p>




2. Will your Party conduct an urgent inquiry into the disproportionate level of alcohol harm in regional and rural NSW and recommend appropriate reforms?

THE COALITION	LABOR	THE GREENS
		
<p>While there is support for treatment services there is no support for prevention of alcohol-related chronic diseases, family violence and other harm.</p>		
PARTY RESPONSE		
<p><i>The NSW Government recently responded to the Legislative Council Committee Inquiry into the provision of drug rehabilitation services in regional, rural and remote NSW. The Committee outlined a number of recommendations to improve services. Of the 12 recommendations outlined in the report, the NSW Government fully supports or supports in principle 11 of the recommendations, the remaining recommendation is noted.</i></p>	<p><i>Labor would support a Legislative Council inquiry with appropriate terms of reference into the issue of alcohol harm in regional and rural NSW.</i></p>	<p><i>Yes, we will be happy to support this inquiry.</i></p>




3. Will your Party support funding a \$30 million four year state-wide alcohol harm awareness campaign focusing on the long-term harm of alcohol consumption including cancer, cardiovascular disease and dementia?

THE COALITION	LABOR	THE GREENS
		
While there is support for raising awareness there is not support for mass media campaigns or direct funding.	While there is support for raising awareness there is not support for mass media campaigns or direct funding.	
PARTY RESPONSE		
<i>The NSW Liberals and Nationals Government regularly provides funding specifically for health promotion and education on alcohol consumption and will continue to do so. In addition, NSW Health is delivering health education and harm awareness and reduction programs through a combination of online and telephone based services, school-based education and early intervention, and community based programs and targeted Aboriginal alcohol and pregnancy programs.</i>	<i>Labor supports alcohol harm awareness campaigns and will work with health advocacy groups, medical practitioners and local health districts to deliver and resource the most appropriate strategy for minimising the long-term harm of alcohol consumption.</i>	<i>Yes, we will be happy to support this awareness/ education campaign as part of the harm reduction measures we support.</i>

4. Will your Party protect children from alcohol marketing on the way to school by banning alcohol advertisements from public transport and other government owned infrastructure?

THE COALITION	LABOR	THE GREENS
		
The new guidelines are not publicly available and the response indicates they would not support a ban.	While there is support for restrictions to alcohol marketing on government property, there is not direct support for a ban.	
PARTY RESPONSE		
<i>The NSW Liberals and Nationals Government has recently strengthened the guidelines for liquor promotions. The new guidelines make it clear any kind of promotion close to a school or other place mostly used by minors is unacceptable and include a greater focus on digital promotions; in particular, ensuring social media promotions are not targeting minors. Individual Government agencies make decisions about advertising on their infrastructure and have policies in place to ensure advertising on property and infrastructure is conducted in a responsible and appropriate manner.</i>	<i>Labor voted for and supports the recommendation of the Legislative Council inquiry. "That the NSW Government consider appropriate restrictions and/or exclusions on alcohol advertising on all government infrastructure and property, particularly advertising to which children and young people are exposed."</i>	<i>Yes, we will be happy to support this advertising ban.</i>

5. Will your Party address the unregulated market of online liquor sales and support an immediate moratorium on new online liquor licences until a review of emerging technologies and online sales is completed?

THE COALITION	LABOR	THE GREENS
 <p>While regulating online liquor sales is a priority there is no support for a temporary moratorium or a review of online sales.</p>	 <p>NAAPA is unaware of such a review already taking place.</p>	
PARTY RESPONSE		
<p><i>The NSW Liberals and Nationals Government agrees that alcohol delivery is a growing frontier in today's on-demand market. Liquor & Gaming NSW has made it a key regulatory priority for 2019 and is leading the way nationally by chairing an inter-jurisdictional working group looking at the risks of various online models and how to strengthen responsible service of alcohol measures in this space. Currently, companies selling alcohol for online delivery must have a liquor licence under NSW law and all licences for online sales are closely scrutinised. The standard rules for responsible service of alcohol and liquor distribution apply to these venues including that their liquor licence number is prominently displayed on their website. Liquor & Gaming NSW is proactively reviewing the operations of online operators including covert testing of alcohol deliveries to ensure they are being conducted responsibly.</i></p>	<p><i>Labor supports evidence based decision making in relation to alcohol regulation. We understand the completion of such a review is imminent. Labor would closely examine the outcome of any such review.</i></p>	<p><i>Yes, we recognise that regulation has not kept up with technology and support a review to find the best way to minimise harm within current laws restricting drinking to adults.</i></p>



The NSW and ACT Alcohol Policy Alliance (NAAPA) is an alliance of health, community, emergency services and research organisations formed with the objective of promoting evidence-based actions to prevent and reduce acute and chronic alcohol-related harm.