#### alcohol on television sports broadcasts

##### Press release

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A television viewer of Heineken Open Men’s Tennis Tournament 2012 was exposed to alcohol logos for 53% of the tournament’s collective broadcast time, according to researchers at Massey and Otago Universities.

The research, commissioned by the former Alcohol Advisory Council (ALAC) which has now been replaced by the Health Promotion Agency (HPA), put four major sporting events under the spotlight and analysed SKY Sport television coverage of the events to see how often viewers were exposed to alcohol promotions.

The four events were the Rugby World Cup 2011 (the RWC), the Heineken Open Men’s Tennis Tournament 2012 (the Heineken Open), the Hertz Wellington International Rugby Board Rugby Sevens 2012 (the Wellington Sevens) and the New Zealand Cricket International Twenty20 (T20) and One Day International (ODI) 2012 matches.

Across the events, alcohol‐related billboards were visible to viewers for 30% of the 2011 Rugby World Cup (RWC) games, 9% (Wellington Sevens) of the televised broadcasts. The Wellington Sevens, the Heineken Open and the 12 games of the RWC had average billboard screening frequencies ranging from 64 times per hour to 180 times per hour.

For the RWC viewers were exposed to the Heineken and Brancott Estate logos for an average of 17.89 minutes per hour of coverage.

Part of Heineken’s sponsorship of the RWC also included the brand’s signature ‘Enjoy Responsibly’ campaign to encourage sensible beer consumption and accounted for 9% of the total coverage and an average rate of 65 times per hour or 5.67 minutes per hour.

Comparatively, the ‘Enjoy Responsibly’ billboards occurred approximately one third less often than the Heineken and Brancott Estate billboards.

The researchers also looked at frequency and duration of broadcast content showing crowd alcohol consumption. Alcohol consumption by the crowd ranged from 0.4% of total broadcast time (12 games of the RWC) to 29% (T20 cricket) of the broadcasts.

The Heineken Open broadcast, on average, showed images of crowd alcohol consumption 85 times per hour or for 5.23 minutes per hour. Images of the crowd consuming alcohol at the Wellington Sevens appeared on the television screen at an average of 31 times per hour or for 3.11 minutes per hour.

The T20 cricket broadcast televised the crowd drinking for an average 22 times per hour or 17.36 minutes per hour, while the ODI cricket broadcast showed crowd alcohol consumption seven times per hour or for 13.86 minutes per hour.

Massey University researcher Dr Sarah Gee said the results showed that the broadcasting of alcohol sponsored sports events in New Zealand should not be overlooked by policy makers and regulatory agencies.

“While formal regulation of alcohol sponsorship remains a controversial public policy debate, alcohol brands can still achieve a presence in televised sports events through various forms of alcohol-related images,” she said. “The results of this study illuminate our common-sense understandings of the increasingly naturalised sport-alcohol link in the entertainment experience of major sports events in New Zealand.”

Health Promotion Agency (HPA) General Manager Policy, Research and Advice Dr Andrew Hearn said the research provided a useful picture of exposure to alcohol messages in the broadcasting of alcohol‐sponsored sports events in New Zealand. This research would be useful to “decision makers looking at alcohol advertising,” he said.

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The research is available at [www.hpa.org.nz](http://www.hpa.org.nz)