

Victorian Health Promotion Foundation

# The Alcohol Cultures Framework

An evidence based framework to guide public health action on drinking cultures



# VicHealth's story

- Established with all-party support under the *Tobacco Act 1987*
- Independent statutory body
- Reports to Victorian Minister for Health and the State Parliament
- Accountable to an independent Board
- Action Agenda – five strategic imperatives
- Alcohol 10-year goal, “more Victorians drinking less alcohol



# VicHealth and Alcohol Culture Change

## Programs/Campaigns

VicHealth Campaigns - funded under the previous state Government

- > [Name that Point](#) – when clear thinking turns to more drinking
- > [No Excuse Needed](#) – empowering young Victorians to say no if they don't want to keep drinking by using a positively framed, humorous approach.

[Good Sports](#) - setting-based approach to alcohol related issues for community sports clubs via an accreditation program

[Hello Sunday Morning](#) – online program encouraging the adoption of a better drinking culture

[Alcohol Innovation Challenge](#) – seeding ideas to create a better drinking culture

- > [Be a brother](#) - peer-led campaign for young African Australian men
- > [#SoberSelfie](#) – social marketing campaign encouraging people to take a break from booze
- > Enough is Enough – technology based brief intervention
- > Peer Modelling – online peer modelling for young adults via Victoria police

[Creating healthy workplaces](#) – pilot projects to reduce alcohol-related harm in workplaces

## Research

- > VicHealth (2013) [A snapshot of Victoria's drinking culture](#)
- > Savic et al (2016) [Defining “drinking culture”. A critical review of its meaning and connotation in social research on alcohol problems](#)  
Drugs: Education, Prevention and Policy



# Drinking culture

Tabloids

**Melbourne needs to change its culture of drinking to excess** *news.com.au 2011*

Which countries have the worst drinking cultures?

*The Guardian 2016*

From savouring flavours in France to binge drinking in Australia - readers talk about the alcohol culture where they live

**Opinion: Lockout laws won't work due to Australian drinking culture**

**Drinking culture unacceptable, says NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell**

Lisa Davies, Sean Nicholls  
Published: September 10, 2013 - 6:37PM

*The Age 2013*

February 12, 2016 5:12pm  
Robert Cavallucci

*The Herald Sun 2016*

Australia's binge drinking culture puts mental health at risk, experts warn

By Kellie Scott  
Updated 30 Mar 2016, 9:54am

*Nine News 2016*

**We need to wake up and stop celebrating Australia's drinking culture** *news.com.au 2012*

James Horwill denies there is a drinking culture within Wallabies camp *The Age 2013*

# Australia's drinking culture

Google



Google #1

#aussieflag #beer #sport #skull



Google #2

#beer #sports #corksloouchat



Google #3

#aussieflag #skull

# Drinking culture

Government



## National Binge Drinking Strategy 2008

Aim: “to address Australia's harmful binge **drinking culture**”

## National Preventative Health Taskforce 2010

Target: “a safer **drinking culture** for Australia”

## Ministerial Council on Drugs Strategy 2011

Action: “creating safer **drinking cultures**”

**\*Reducing the alcohol and drug toll: Victoria's plan 2013-2017**

Victoria’s 15-point plan: #3 “**Changing drinking culture**”

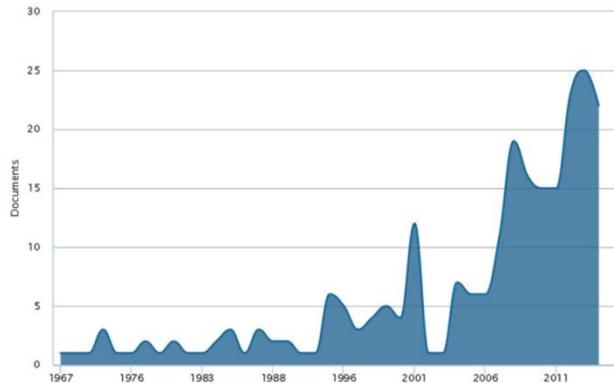
*\*under the previous Victorian State Government*



*Drinking culture?  
What do we  
mean?*

# Drinking culture literature review

## Key findings and recommendations



Articles in the SCOPUS database containing the term 'drinking culture/s' between 1967-2014

Savic et al (2016) Defining "drinking culture". A critical review of its meaning and connotation in social research on alcohol problems. *Drugs: Education, Prevention and Policy*

- > Little offered in defining what it meant by 'drinking culture' culture – although interest growing
- > Many meanings exist, with no single agreement – culture on its own has over 164 definitions
- > Society wide approach
- > Beneath the level of society as a whole = subpopulation approach (to support whole-of-society efforts)
- > Social norms approach
- > Rules and their enforcement – formal and informal
- > Allies or champions to drive change
- > Objective of culture change work?
- > **Further conceptual work required**
- > Evolves as learnings emerge
- > Changing culture = very slow process

# Stakeholder consultation

## Key findings and recommendations



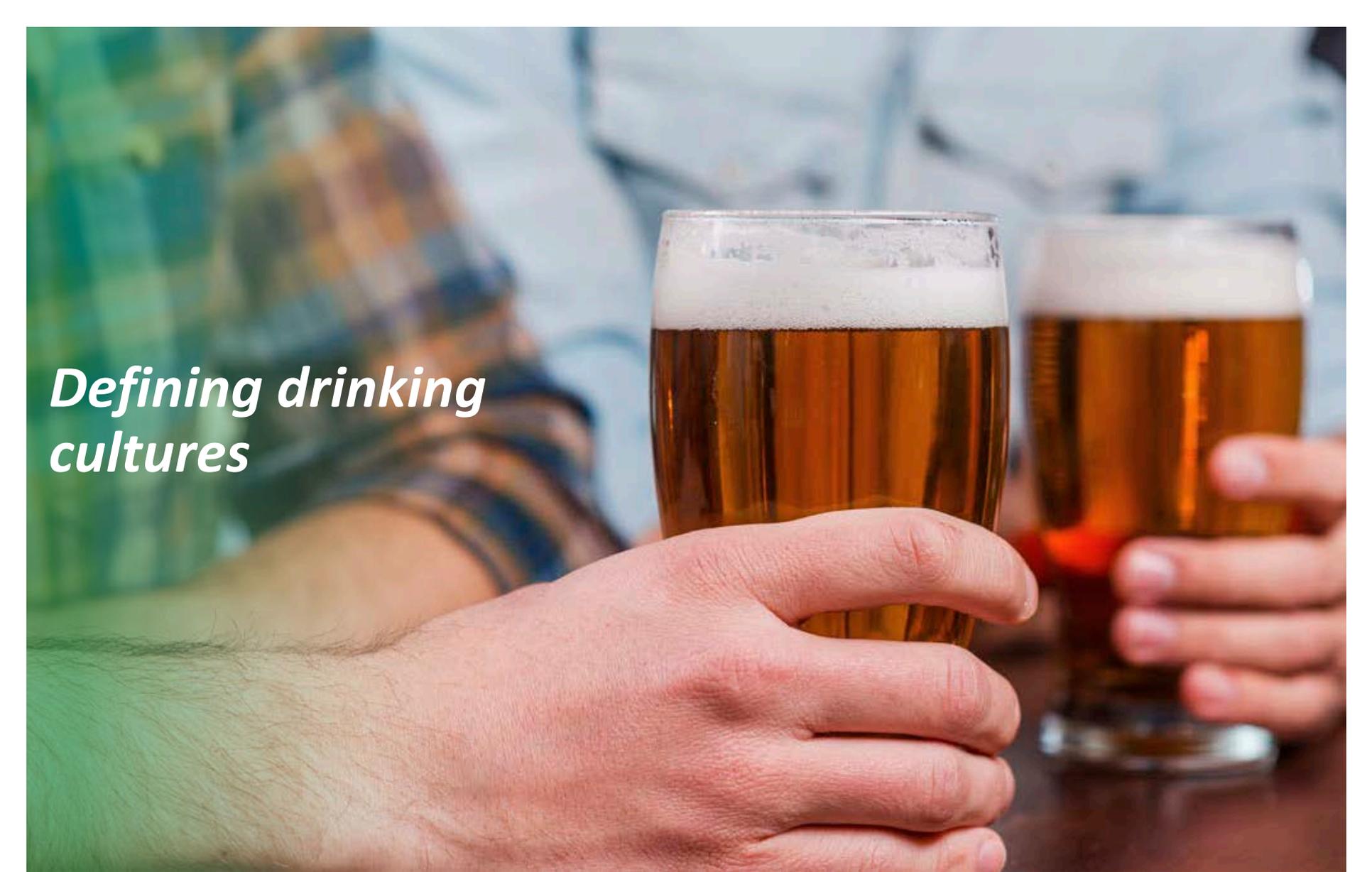
### Partnerships

- > Centre for Alcohol Policy Research
- > Australian Drug Foundation

### Contractor

- > Qualitative interviews with 20 stakeholders
- > Version 1 of the Framework
- > Workshop with 30 stakeholders

- > **Confirmation** of need to define drinking cultures and ideas on how to intervene from a public health perspective
- > Discussion on the **definition** of alcohol culture
- > **Vision** on what an “ideal/safer/better” drinking culture looks like
- > Efforts to influence culture can come from **both** societal level (e.g. through regulation) and subpopulation approaches (e.g. through health promotion projects)
- > Focus on understanding **social norms, beliefs, perceptions, values** etc. around alcohol and related behaviours
- > First attempt at collectively identifying the **factors that influence** alcohol culture
- > **Social determinants** of health and inequity
- > **Background paper** showcasing academia leading to the Framework

A close-up photograph of two hands holding glasses of beer. The beer is a golden-brown color with a thick, white head of foam. The background is blurred, showing a person wearing a plaid shirt. The text "Defining drinking cultures" is overlaid on the left side of the image in a white, italicized font.

*Defining drinking cultures*

***We define alcohol culture as,***

***“the way people drink including the social norms, attitudes and beliefs around what is and what is not socially acceptable for a group of people before, during and after drinking.”***

*VicHealth  
Centre for Alcohol Policy Research  
Australian Drug Foundation*

# Vision

What are we looking for?

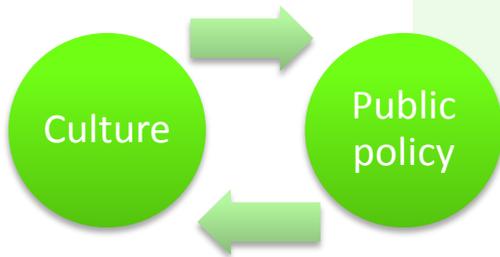
- > a **supportive** physical and/or social environment where people do NOT feel pressure to drink
- > when alcohol is consumed it is done at levels of low risk
- > **social pressure supports** low risk drinking and discourages high risk drinking
- > **occurrences** of drinking are reduced, and
- > intoxication is **socially rejected**.

# The Framework

## Frames for intervention



Frame	Definition
<b>Societal</b>	whole-of-population drivers at a state, national or global level around alcohol
<b>Setting</b>	the physical and social environment where alcohol is consumed and consideration of the context of the occasion
<b>Subculture</b>	social groups or networks that share identity, values, beliefs and social norms. Identifying as a member of a subculture is often recognisable to those inside and outside of the group.
<b>Family and individual</b>	individuals have a unique combination of genetic and personal characteristics which interact with the configuration of structural, cultural, contextual and interpersonal factors in play in any given situation.



1. Societal
2. Settings
3. Subcultures
4. Family and individual

# The Framework

Frames for interventions, factors that influence

Frame	Examples	Factors that influence the way people drink
<b>Setting</b>	<p>Licensed venue e.g. bars, clubs, pubs</p> <p>Private residences e.g. home, friend's house</p> <p>Public places e.g. parks, beach, entertainment precincts, public transport</p> <p>Events e.g. weddings, birthdays, BBQs, sport, celebrations</p> <p>Festivals e.g. schoolies, music, comedy, arts, cultural</p> <p>Education e.g. primary, secondary, TAFE, tertiary</p> <p>Workplaces e.g. during work or after hours</p> <p>Sports events e.g. game days, racing, parades</p> <p>Technology e.g. social media, internet, online gamers</p>	<p>Availability and the role of alcohol</p> <p>Layout and design of the drinking environment</p> <p>Social context of the setting</p> <p>Link between alcohol and the setting</p> <p>Formal rules and enforcement</p> <p>Settings based advertising and promotions</p> <p>Subcultures that own/operate in the setting</p> <p>Role models, positive or negative influences</p> <p>Expectations about behaviour while drinking</p> <p>Acceptability of intoxication</p> <p>Peer influence and social pressure</p>
<b>Subculture</b>	<p>Self-expression groups e.g. hipsters, goths, bikers</p> <p>Occupations with a strong identity e.g. newspaper reporters, police, army</p> <p>Music fan groups or musicians e.g. country, punk, ravers, hip hop, garage bands</p> <p>Ethno-religious groups with strong identity e.g. Italian-Australians</p> <p>Sports groups and fans with strong commitment e.g. die hard football fans, jocks, skaters, golfers, cyclists</p> <p>Groups of commonality e.g. mothers group, class group, faculty students at university</p> <p>Technology-based groups e.g. gamers, blog followers, social media fans</p> <p>Groups with specific drink interests e.g. beer, cider, wine, spirits, non-drinkers</p>	<p>Shared social customs</p> <p>Use values</p> <p>Role models, positive and negative influences</p> <p>Modes of social control</p> <p>Cultural meanings of drunkenness</p> <p>Peer influence and social pressure</p> <p>Misperceptions around drinking</p> <p>Acceptability of intoxication</p> <p>Social norms</p> <p>Gendered norms</p> <p>Technology</p>

# The Framework

## Next steps



- > Publication – ETA June 2016 *coming soon*
  - > Alcohol Cultures Framework
  - > Background paper
- > VicHealth's next phase of the Alcohol Culture Change Program
  - > Testing the Framework in practice
  - > Subpopulation approach to support whole-of-society drivers
  - > Targeting the way people drink through social norms, attitudes and beliefs and the social acceptability of drinking
  - > Heavily grounded by ongoing research
  - > Funding for intervention projects

# Acknowledgments

In leading the development of The Alcohol Cultures Framework

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Organisations who provided representatives to contribute to refining The Framework.

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- Burnet Institute
- Cancer Council Victoria
- Deakin University
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Foundation for Alcohol Research (FARE)
- Hello Sunday Morning
- Melbourne University
- Monash University
- Municipal Association of Victoria
- National Drug Research Institute (NDRI)
- Public Health Association of Australia (Victoria)
- Victorian Alcohol & Drug Association
- Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation
- Victoria Police

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