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## **Alcohol Consumption Increasing? The ABS Doesn't Think So!**

Liquor Store Retailers & most other industry members recognise the harms inflicted by a minority of irresponsible consumers who apparently simply don't care about the harm they inflict on themselves or others. The Industry continue to work along with governments to develop strategies & campaigns to minimise the harms caused by those people.

However, to penalise the entire population including the vast majority of moderate alcohol consumers with more Nanny State restrictions or higher prices is not an effective way to target those few who won't control their own behaviour.

There seems to have been a campaign recently by some in the anti-alcohol advocacy industry to reinvent folklore, apparently to suit their tired, total population alcohol control policy theories. They need alcohol consumption to be rising to support those theories, without ever seeming to focus on the problem behaviours and inappropriate patterns of consumption by those causing the problems.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) clearly said in their Release of January 18, 2011 <sup>1</sup> that Australia's alcohol per capita consumption in 2008/2009 was significantly lower than it was in the mid 1970's:

***"In 1960-61 Australians consumed the equivalent of 9.3 litres of pure alcohol per person, climbing to a high of 13.1 litres in 1974-75. Consumption started to fall in the early 80's, hitting a low of 9.8 litres in 1995-96. Since then, it has crept up again to 10.4 litres in 2008-09, which is still a fifth lower than the 1974-75 peak."***

That statement – issued by the Commonwealth Government's Australian Bureau of Statistics, only a few months ago, seems to be pretty clear?

Also, the ABS data <sup>2</sup> demonstrate that over the previous two decades 1989 to 2009 there had been a per capita reduction in consumption of 7.6% and over the three decades 1979 to 2009 there was a reduction of 17.9%.

The ABS last month <sup>3</sup> again confirmed a further drop in per capita alcohol consumption in 2010 compared to the previous 2009 year down from 10.4 to 10.37 litres of pure alcohol / capita – a decline of over 18% since 1979!

This is again in direct contrast to recent claims in the media that *"there had been a big increase in alcohol consumption in the past two decades"* or that *"alcohol consumption was at an all-time high"*

It's amazing that the media or the ABS doesn't challenge the mis-information being pedalled by those with vested interest in promoting alcohol research funding.

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1. ABS: Media Release – Apparent Cons – Jan 18-2011 – 4307.0

2. ABS: 4307.0.55.002 – January 18, 2011 "Apparent Consumption of Alcohol: Extended Time Series, 1944-45 to 2008-09"

3. ABS: 4307.0.55.001 – June 3, 2011 "Apparent Consumption of Alcohol – Australia 2009-10"

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**For further information & ABS references:**

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