

National Liquor News October 2013

A new government will end uncertainty and re-start consumer confidence

DSICA, like most in the industry I suspect, welcomed the end of the Federal election and the start of a new Australian government. The new government ends a long period of uncertainty dogging Australian consumers and businesses, and has apparently already boosted business and consumer confidence. More confident consumers are more likely to spend a bit extra than to save for a rainy day. This can only be of help considering the very difficult trading conditions our industry has endured this year.

The entire industry should be mindful that whichever government had been elected, that government is now facing several years of deficits and ever-growing demands for spending. The more that alcohol is regarded as a 'problem to be solved', the easier it is to increase its level of taxation.

The Coalition parties promised that their new government will start a process of tax reform in its first term, alongside a similar process for the federal state relationship. DSICA looks forward to seeing that tax reform process unfold and to taking part in the consultation.

Another area of new government policy that DSICA welcomes is the Coalition's promise to reduce business regulation and red tape. Queensland has certainly taken a similar attack in regards to licensing policy, and hopefully the New South Wales and Western Australia governments' reviews of their licensing laws will show similar results.

We also noticed the Shadow Health Minister's comments in the election campaign that a Coalition government was not looking to be heavy-handed in regulating the alcohol industry. DSICA believes that arguments by the anti-alcohol movement for more regulation of advertising and marketing are completely demolished by the clearly evident downward trends in underage drinking. That very welcome trend has existed for over a decade here in Australia. Similar trends are in the United Kingdom and United States.

There are also some very good downward trends in the percentages of pregnant women who are drinking at all, and in the amounts that they are drinking.

To conclude, DSICA congratulates the incoming government on their victory and we look forward to working with them.