**Media Release** **27 May 2010**

# ABS data confirms DSICA's fears

The Distilled Spirits Industry Council of Australia (DSICA) described today's announcement of alcohol consumption data by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) as "official confirmation" of what DSICA has been warning about since the RTD tax was imposed.

"No-one should use the ABS data to claim that the RTD tax worked to reduce underage drinking. There was very slight (0.1%) decline in overall consumption in that year. The RTD category has declined but no evidence has shown that underage drinking has decreased in the two years since the tax was increased by 70%," said DSICA spokesman Stephen Riden.

"Today's announcement is simply official confirmation of what DSICA has known for a long time. The ABS data is not news to the industry. We have known about the 30% drop in RTD sales and the almost-complete substitution to other types of alcohol drinks for more than a year.

"The ABS has shown that – as DSICA warned – the RTD tax would simply cause substitution from RTDs into other products.

"The tax could only ever have been successful if there are underage drinkers who blankly refuse to drink any other type of alcohol product – including ones they mix themselves from bottled spirits. Those underage drinkers simply do not exist, no matter how much supporters of the tax might wish," he concluded.

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