



## Spirits industry already leading with safe drinking labels – COAG discussions welcomed

The success of a simple but effective safe drinking message added to all spirit products last year should be considered by the Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) review of food labelling, according to the Distilled Spirits Industry Council of Australia.

The peak body for distillers has welcomed renewed debate on the introduction of safe drinking labels to all alcohol products and pointed to the inclusion by its members of the '*Is Your Drinking Harming Yourself or Others?*' message on all ready-to-drink (RTD) and full-strength spirits products in October 2009. (See attached graphic)

"COAG is examining the same issues we confronted last year. We recognised the need to include safe drinking messages on labels and took the lead on this issue," said Stephen Riden from the Distilled Spirits Industry Council of Australia, whose members market 80% of spirits sold in Australia.

"We decided it was time for people who consume our products to ask themselves whether their drinking is causing harm – either to themselves or those around them," Mr Riden said.

"*Is Your Drinking Harming Yourself or Others?*" is the fundamental question for anyone who chooses to drink. It makes people consider their drinking in the context of their own life and what is important to them as an individual," he said.

Mr Riden said, "We tested a range of warning messages and found people identified with the word 'harm' in the context of not just their health, but their relationships, lifestyle, work, self esteem and even finances. It encourages people to think about how irresponsible drinking affects not only themselves but also those around them."

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**SAMPLE:** '*Is Your Drinking Harming Yourself or Others?*' labelling on RTD and full-strength spirits products.

