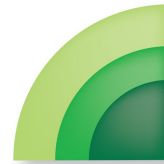


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## SPONSORSHIP

# Responsible use of alcohol: sports stars can spread the word

By **JACQUELIN MAGNAY**  
SYDNEY

AUSTRALIA'S professional sportsmen and women have told the Federal Government they can play a leading role in promoting the responsible use of alcohol.

And the Government's sports funding arm, the Australian Sports Commission, has recommended that alcohol companies continue to be allowed to sponsor sport, because a withdrawal of such significant monies could "compromise the ability of sporting organisations to deliver" at the professional and grassroots level.

The Government committee overseeing the future funding and structure of sport, chaired by David Crawford, is also looking at whether alcohol and gambling advertising is appropriate.

There is a push to have both industries banned from being associated with sport, similar to the ban on tobacco advertising.

And the Senate is considering limiting the number of times alcohol can be advertised on television and radio.

The Crawford panel has

received 143 submissions on the specific structures, programs and reforms required to ensure the continuing robustness of the sport system.

Clearly the sporting bodies and players benefiting from the alcohol and betting links are keen to have such a rich source of funding continue.

The Australian Athletes Alliance, comprising the elite players' associations of cricket, AFL, netball, swimming, rugby league, rugby union and soccer, said athletes could play a leading role in respon-

sible use of alcohol, as well as healthy bodies and curing eating disorders.

"Governments can leverage elite athletes to drive key messages in these areas," the alliance said.

The ASC said the number of sport stars who engaged in alcohol-related anti-social behaviour were in the vast minority.

The Crawford report will be presented to the Government early next year.