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In reply please quote:

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## MEDIA RELEASE

### Liquor Licensing Enforcement Activity in NSW

Over the six-year period 1996 through 2001, less than two percent of all licensed premises in NSW were prosecuted in the Licensing Court for serving alcohol to an intoxicated person or allowing an intoxicated person to remain on their premises.

In 2001, only about four per cent of the infringement notices issued by police for liquor offences were against licensed premises for serving alcohol to an intoxicated person or allowing an intoxicated person to remain on their premises.

Much of the enforcement activity associated with the NSW liquor laws focuses on patrons rather than on the owners, managers or staff of licensed venues.

These are the key findings to emerge from a joint study of licensing enforcement in NSW by the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research and the National Drug Research Institute at Curtin University (WA).

The study found that over 4,000 actions were initiated by NSW liquor licensing enforcement agencies during 2001. More than one-quarter of these liquor breaches involved patrons who refused to leave licensed premises, while 14 per cent involved persons under the age of 18 who had committed liquor-related offences.

Where action was taken against a licensee, manager or secretary of a licensed premises it was mostly for technical breaches of the liquor laws, such as failing to display a licence or a prescribed sign.

The results were very surprising in light of earlier research carried out by the Bureau, which showed that large numbers of young people are being served alcohol on licensed premises when they are plainly intoxicated.

They are also very surprising in light of recent research showing that 85 per cent of the Australian adult population favour tougher laws against serving drunk customers on licensed premises.

'The public is right on this issue', Dr Weatherburn said. 'Stricter enforcement of liquor licensing laws is critically important if we want to reduce levels of alcohol-related crime and violence'.

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