



NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research
NSW Attorney General's Department

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Media Release

Liquor outlet concentrations and alcohol-related neighbourhood problems

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The more licensed premises there are in an area, the more likely people are to encounter problems of drunkenness and property damage, according to a new report released today by the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research.

The research, funded by the Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation, found that problems of drunkenness and property damage are also more of a problem for people who live closer to licensed premises than for people who live some distance away from such premises.

Almost one quarter of the respondents who lived within half a kilometre of the five closest licensed premises reported problems with drunkenness in their neighbourhood, while less than 10 per cent of those who lived further away than 1.6kms away reported such problems.

Further, almost 36 per cent of respondents who lived within half a kilometre of the five closest liquor outlets reported that there were problems with property damage in their neighbourhood, while just 23 per cent of those who lived further than 1.6kms away reported such problems.

Importantly, these effects were found to be independent of the socioeconomic status and demographic profile of the area in which people live.

Commenting on the findings, the Director of the Bureau, Dr Don Weatherburn, said that the results of the study had significant implications for national competition policy.

'Attempts to restrict the number of liquor licences have been criticised as anti-competitive and against National Competition Policy', he said.

'The current study, however, strongly suggests that placing limits on the number of licensed premises in a given area may be one very effective way of limiting problems associated with drunkenness and property damage.'

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