

Project



AFL Alcohol Policy –
Central Highlands
Football League

Partner



Year

2013

Purpose



In 2010 the Central Highlands Football League (CHFL) introduced a permanent series of alcohol management initiatives, which included a mid-strength alcohol policy (MSAP), selling only mid-strength alcohol on Grand Final days. AFL Victoria commissioned the Centre for Sport and Social Impact to examine the implementation of the mid-strength alcohol policy and its outcomes, with the view to presenting a case study on the Central Highlands Football League.

Method



The research design comprised iPad administered intercept surveys with football spectators at the 2013 CHFL Grand Final and in-depth interviews with key stakeholders within the CHFL. A total of 329 spectators were surveyed about their alcohol behaviour (purchasing habits and quantities) and their attitudes toward the policy. The research component that related to key stakeholders comprised 15 in-depth semi-structured interviews that elicited data about the culture of the Central Highlands Football League and Grand Final day in particular, the process of implementing the MSAP, perceptions of outcomes, and advice for other leagues considering implementing a similar policy.

Application



A number of conclusions were drawn from the research conducted as part of the case study into the Central Highlands Football League and its Grand Final day mid-strength alcohol policy. The research found that the MSAP has transformed the CHFL Grand Final from an event focused on alcohol for some spectators into a family friendly event for all spectators. In doing so it has also aligned the culture of the CHFL Grand Final day with the espoused community based and family orientated week-to-week culture of the League. Opinion was divided among key stakeholders regarding the need for the MSAP, but all agree that the action taken has benefitted the League and has transformed the culture of Grand Final day.

There was consensus among the stakeholders regarding the essential elements of a process that would lead to the successful implementation of a mid-strength alcohol policy.

