

Young People, Alcohol and Safer Public Spaces

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Executive Summary

The aim of this report is to consolidate a range of information on the relationship between young people's drinking, alcohol related violence and safety in public spaces through a case study approach. It is intended that this study will be used as a resource for the development of strategies that both enable young people's access to, and safety in, public spaces and increase the safety and comfort of other people using those public spaces.

To provide a more in depth understanding of these relationships between alcohol, violence and young people and public spaces in the Auckland region, a number of additional analyses were undertaken of existing data bases as well as new data generated from specific research undertaken in the course of this study. Anonymous quantitative data about young people, alcohol consumption and incidents in public spaces has been extracted from a range of sources including, Police databases, Statistics New Zealand, New Zealand National Alcohol Survey, and local and central government reports. New data was generated from a regional media analysis and in-depth observational study and interviews conducted on weekend nights in downtown Auckland City.

As noted above, this study canvasses a wide range of research on young people's drinking behaviour. The following areas are analysed; the connections between alcohol consumption and violence; various strategies aimed at reducing the level of alcohol-related violence; the location of violent offences and under age drinking committed by young people in the Auckland region; local government responses to the "problem" of young people drinking in public spaces; media coverage of young people's drinking and violent incidents, and; the behaviour and opinions of young people who are "hanging out" or "out on the town" in inner city Auckland.

This report begins with an introduction of the case study approach used and outlines general trends in relation to the drinking patterns and violence offences of young people and the links between these. It also describes recent changes to the Sale of Liquor Act, namely the lowering of the drinking age and gives a brief overview of what appear to be the main impacts to date.

The first section contains a review of the relevant literature concerning the relationship between young people's alcohol consumption and the risk of alcohol-related harm, including the potential for violent offending. This section provides background information on both overseas and local trends and possible responses to young people's drinking and use of public spaces. Specific strategies that have been employed to reduce the levels of alcohol-related harm are also reviewed.

The focus of the report is directed specifically to the Auckland region in the second section. Brief demographic information is given on the proportions and ethnicity of young people in the Auckland region. The available data on young people's drinking behaviour in the Auckland region is presented. This data shows that there has been a consistent increase in the amount of alcohol consumed by young Aucklanders over the last twelve years. Also, the existing research on perceptions of safety in public spaces in the Auckland region is summarised. Whilst most people do feel safe in

Auckland's public places a sizable number reported that they found the behaviour of young people intimidating.

In the third section the Auckland region is examined in even closer detail. Responses made by the four cities of the Auckland region to the issues related to young people's consumption of alcohol are examined. A review of their current strategies such as Alcohol Accords, provision of security personnel, alcohol bans and other community initiatives to address public safety is undertaken in relation to key strategies identified in the literature. and grouped under; monitoring, management; regulation; safety and youth strategies.

In the fourth section, data from police records is analysed. In particular, this study focuses on the location of alcohol-related violent offences committed by young people. The location and numbers of infringement notices for under-age drinking are also examined. This data has been mapped using ArcView GIS software to give accurate information on the areas where alcohol-related offences committed by young people are occurring. This section also gives demographic characteristics of those people committing (or being apprehended for) these offences. However, this section does not cover alcohol-related incidents that do not come to the attention of the police.

The fifth section of this report analyses the data that was collected specifically for the purposes of this study. Media reports of the relationship between young people's alcohol consumption and violence are examined. The analysis indicates that the coverage of issues and incidents involving young people and alcohol-related violence tends to receive an inordinate amount of attention and often sensationalised portrayals in media coverage. Key police personnel were also interviewed for this study. They described the most common problems they deal with in relation to young people and alcohol consumption. In order to gain information about the behaviour of young people that does not necessarily come to the attention of the media or the police, an in-depth study of the inner city area of Auckland City was conducted. The case study approach was also designed to gain insight into the perspectives of young people themselves. Observational data on the behaviour of young people was collected. Also 114 young people were interviewed about their behaviours and perceptions of safety in the inner city.

The final section of this report offers a discussion of key findings and the implications for the consultation with stakeholders to be undertaken after July 2002.

This report summaries existing demographic and contextual information on the relationships between young people's drinking, alcohol-related violence and incidents in public spaces, reports on the findings of new research relating to young people and alcohol in the downtown Auckland from the perspectives of young people themselves, the media and the police.

Introduction

Young people and alcohol in New Zealand

Changes in the drinking patterns of young New Zealanders, along with considerable media and police comment on perceived threats to public safety and increasing violent crime levels, have led to a focus on the relationship between alcohol, violence, young people and public places.

In New Zealand, there is little statistical information on the relationship between alcohol and violent crime, particularly in relation to incidents that occur in public locations. In order to improve the information available on the relationship between alcohol and violent crime, committed by young people, this study analyses existing statistical information on alcohol-related violence offences and also includes information from the most recent alcohol consumption surveys. This analysis is undertaken as part of a case study of the Auckland region, New Zealand's largest population base.

The case study methodology used allows an investigation of the unique environs of each city in a multi-dimensional manner that will then be further developed in strategic consultation with stakeholders in the second year of this study. Issues, policies, and activities can be reviewed alongside evidence-based harm reduction strategies, regional and city-specific data and in the context of their own particular community. Not only can specific local issues be considered, but also the complexity of factors explored that shape the development and implementation of effective environmental strategies. Additionally, insights can be gained from comparison of similarities and differences between the neighbouring cities.

“Because case studies are holistic, they facilitate theoretical/logical thinking [...] Their utility rests upon their capacity to explain” (Crompton and Sanderson, 1990)

The data on which this case study is based has been collated from multiple sources in order to be able to address the following questions;

1. What are the patterns of alcohol consumption by young people in the Auckland area?
2. How do the general public (and young people) perceive the safety of public spaces?
3. What types of alcohol-related incidents occur that involve young people in public spaces and what are the characteristics of young people involved?
4. Where, when and how often do these occur?
5. How does the media report alcohol-related issues involving young people?
6. What strategies are there for reducing alcohol-related violence in public spaces and creating inclusive safer public spaces for young people and how are cities in the Auckland region using these currently?

An in-depth study of the inner Auckland *City* area has also been conducted. In the year prior to this study, extensive local Council and media attention had been devoted to perceived problems with drinking by young people in the inner city public spaces

and associated public safety. It is intended that both the data analysis and qualitative research undertaken about young people's drinking and risk of violence in public locations in Auckland City will help inform the development of generic strategies for increasing safety in public spaces with a focus on the consumption of alcohol by young people.

Young people, alcohol and violence in New Zealand

In recent years, heavy drinking and harmful drinking patterns have been increasing among younger people in many western industrialised countries (Hibell et al., 2000, DOXA Institute, 1998, Goddard, 1996, Ahlstrom et al., 1994, Johnston et al., 1997). There have been similar increases in New Zealand. The average annual amounts consumed by teenagers have increased, as have the proportions of young people that are drinking larger annual amounts. Younger drinkers are drinking more often and the average amount being consumed in a drinking session has also increased. Trends analysis of annual Auckland alcohol surveys data showed more 14-19 year old drinkers consuming increasingly large amounts of alcohol per drinking occasion between 1990 and 2000 (Alcohol & Public Health Research Unit, 1998). Younger men continue to be the heaviest consumers of alcohol, although there has also been a significant increase in consumption among younger women (Habgood et al., 2001).

The links between alcohol consumption and violence are complex. Although crime statistics shed little light on the role of alcohol, alcohol consumption surveys gather some data about location of drinking and alcohol related harm, such as getting into a fight. These statistics show that young drinkers are most likely to drink at levels and in situations that place them at risk of violence. Young males aged 18 to 24 are the group most likely to drink heavily and, compared with older age groups, to experience disproportionate problems from their drinking, such as fighting or having serious arguments (Dacey, 1997, Field and Casswell, 1999, Wyllie et al., 1996). Heavy drinking young men in this age group do most of their drinking in licensed environments such as hotels, taverns and clubs. Research has shown that the place of drinking is an important predictor of alcohol related harm (Wyllie, 1989, Casswell et al., 1993). Research on injuries has associated drinking in pubs, hotels and clubs with fights and assaults involving young males, particularly Maori. Negative outcomes include head injuries, hospitalisations and deaths. These fights and assaults frequently occur in public spaces in the vicinity of licensed premises. Alcohol is also often a significant factor in homicides (Chalmers et al., 1995, Fanslow et al., 1995, Langley et al., 1996).

'Alcohol the Aggravator' is acknowledged in crime prevention reports as a significant factor that increases the risk of offending (Crime Prevention Action Group, 1993, Crime Prevention Unit, 2000, New Zealand Police, 1992). Police charge sheets for all offences allow recording of alcohol involvement, but no analysis of the presence of alcohol in crime or by type of crime have yet been published. Over the decade to 1999, convictions for violence offences have increased, particularly in the early 1990s, and in 1999 were 77% higher than in 1990; New Zealand Police, 1992; Spier, 2000). Convictions for disorderly behaviour have also increased through the 1990s, with the 1999 figure the highest ever recorded (New Zealand Police, 2000). A similar pattern has been noted in Auckland City, and is of continuing concern to the Council (Auckland City Council, 1995, Shirley et al., 1998, Skelton and Eccles, 2000).

Twenty percent of all convictions in 1999 involved teenagers; another 40% of convictions involved people in their twenties (Spier, 2000). Apprehensions of 14-16 year olds for violence more than doubled between 1990 and 1999, with a quarter or more of all proved cases being for violence each year since 1994 (Spier, 2000). The increase for this young age group was higher than the increase in violent offending among adults (Ministry of Justice, 1999).

The international research literature suggests that the earlier young people start drinking alcohol the more likely they are to drink hazardously and experience problems with alcohol (Grant and Dawson, 1997, Hingson et al., 2000, Pedersen and Skrondal, 1998, Chou and Pickering, 1992, Fillmore et al., 1991).

New Zealand research has also shown an association between adolescent alcohol misuse and increased risk of violent offending (Fergusson et al., 1996). By age 21, alcohol misuse was linked to increased rates of violence and property crime (Fergusson and Horwood, 2000).

Changes to the Sale of Liquor Act

The Sale of Liquor Amendment Act (SOLA) introduced a number of significant changes in 1999. Two of these changes, which came into effect on 1 December 1999, pertained to the minimum age at which people may legally drink alcohol. The legal age was lowered from 20 years old to 18 years old. The second change involved the introduction of infringement notices. Police could now issue minors (under 18 year olds) in possession of or, consuming alcohol without parental supervision, with a statutory fine notification.

Recently, the Ministry of Justice (Lash, 2002) undertook a review of existing research data available post 1999, in an attempt to assess possible indicators of the impact of lowering the drinking age. Although it was concluded that there was not sufficient data to present a full picture of the impact of lowering the drinking age, their analysis, based on New Zealand National Alcohol Survey data showed that there was an increase in the frequency and typical quantity drunk by young people. There has been a marked increase in the number of under 18 year olds apprehended for drinking or possessing alcohol for consumption in a public place from 1999 to 2000 (not surprisingly given the new legislation) but a decrease in 2001. The report noted the rapidly increasing number of disorderly behaviour apprehensions and convictions for those aged 18-19 years through the decade, which was in line with increases in other age groups. There was also a substantial increase in alcohol intoxication admissions recorded in the largest regional Emergency department, in the 12 month period following the lowering of the drinking age. They found that the number of intoxicated 18-19 year olds increased from 66 to 107 and for 15-17 year olds, an increase from 72 to 95.

In its report published in May of this year, ALAC (2002) analysed the health impact of the lowering of the drinking age. They found, in accordance with other studies, that young people who do drink are drinking more heavily, more often, and are beginning to drink at an earlier age.

ALAC used overseas empirical evidence in this report (2002) to estimate that 16 young people aged 18 and 19 years may have died per annum due to the lowered

alcohol purchase age in New Zealand, at a cost of \$41.940 million per annum. Also, the lowered drinking age may have contributed an additional 145 non-fatal adverse outcomes, including injuries and self-harm, at a cost of between \$1.604 million and \$38.505 million, depending on the injuries sustained.

Background: a Literature Review

Association between alcohol, aggression and violence.

There are complex but strong statistical relationships between alcohol consumption and crimes of violence in most western countries (WHO, 1989, Casselman and Moorthamer, 1988). Researchers have explored these through a variety of disciplines and methodologies. The conclusion of a now extensive body of research is that alcohol consumption increases the risk of violence (Pernanen, 1993, Bushman and Cooper, 1990, Parker, 1993, Parker and Rebhun, 1995, Fergusson et al., 1996). Alcohol is a link in a causal chain resulting in violence (Pernanen, 1993, Lenke, 1990), but, importantly, one that is amenable to policy intervention (Holder et al., 1997a, Holder et al., 1997b, Holder and Reynolds, 1997, Hauritz, 1998; Stockwell 1994a; 1994b(Stockwell and Gruenewald, 2001).

The effects of alcohol are pharmacological, depressing the higher brain centres involved in judgement, and psychological, often described as 'dis-inhibiting'. The effects of moderate intoxication on cognition combines with situational factors to prompt impulsive behaviour, aggressive reactions and violence, rather than prudence, avoidance tactics or acceptance. In situations that arouse feelings of frustration, loss of control or confrontation, intoxication increases risk of violent incidents (Casswell, 2000a, Casselman and Moorthamer, 1988, Gustafson, 1991).

Alcohol-related violence has been recognised by the World Health Organisation as a significant contributor to death, disability and public health costs (WHO, 1999, Global Burden of Disease Unit, 1996). Research in English-speaking and Scandinavian countries shows a strong relationship between alcohol and violence among young males, the group with highest alcohol consumption levels as well as highest rates of criminal offending (Deehan, 1999, Edwards et al., 1994, Milgram, 1993, Shepherd et al., 1988, Shepherd, 1994, WHO, 1995, Lenke, 1984).

In the U.S., more violent crime is committed under the influence of alcohol than all other drugs (Drug Strategies, 1999, Riches, 1999) and alcohol is a factor in high homicide rates (Parker and Rebhun, 1995). In both Australia and Sweden, homicide rates have increased in years when there was higher alcohol consumption (Lenke, 1990, Lester, 1992). Time series data for England and Wales has also shown alcohol consumption levels to be a determinant in a wide range of crime (Ensor and Godfrey, 1993). Stockwell (1994a) found in one study that 77% of public order incidents (assaults, offensive behaviour and offensive language) were 'alcohol-related'.

In the 2000 British Crime Survey, 40% of respondents involved in a violent crime in the past 12 months reported that the offender had been under the influence of alcohol. This was most likely for non-theft assaults by strangers (53%), although researchers noted that violence by acquaintances may have been underreported if fights between friends were not thought considered sufficiently 'criminal' to mention (Kershaw et al., 2000).

Findings on youth crime from the 1998-99 Youth Lifestyles Survey (Campbell and Harrington, 2000) in Britain led to reports and policy concerns about both underage alcohol consumption and juvenile offending. Public drunkenness is particularly

associated with young males, where offending involves aggression (Deehan, 1999). Public anxiety about violent crime is augmented by concerns about anti-social behaviour that impacts on the quality of daily life (Bland and Read, 2000).

Patterns of drinking are gendered, as are patterns of violence (Casswell, 2000a). However, intoxicated behaviour varies between different cultures, and social contexts within these cultures also shapes the likelihood of violent actions (Holder and Edwards, 1995, MacAndrew and Edgerton, 1969). Situational and cultural factors are in play, for example, in domestic violence and in violence associated with drinking on licensed premises (Scribner et al., 1995, Casswell et al., 1993, Homel et al., 1992, Ireland and Thomenny, 1993, Tuck, 1989). The volume of alcohol sales in a particular locality have been linked to levels of assault, public disorder and property damage (Stevenson et al., 1999b, Stevenson et al., 1999a). Outlet density has also been linked to youth violence (Alaniz, 1999) and correlated with a broad range of alcohol-related problems (Gruenewald et al., 1993).

Situational factors in the relationship between public drinking and violence

In a study on situational factors in the relationship between public drinking environments (in and around licensed premises) and violence, Homel et al (1992) found that there is a complex relationship between the key situational variables of patron type, social atmosphere, drinking patterns, and behaviour of doormen and security staff. Although this study examined violent incidents involving patrons on and around licensed premises and not young people on the streets *per se* the findings can potentially be extrapolated to the street scene. Many of the same characteristics occur in street drinking and the research literature also indicates that a high percentage of violent incidents occur in the vicinity of licensed premises, particularly clustered around the closing time of bars (Stockwell 1994a). Homel's study found that violent incidents in public drinking locations are characterised by the combinations of subtle interactions of variables such as groups of male strangers, low comfort, high boredom, high drunkenness (frequently fuelled by cheap spirits), as well as aggressive and unreasonable behaviour by bouncers or floor staff. There is often a climate of indifference to violence and a tendency to describe violent incidents as fights or brawls when they are clearly assaults, usually on quite intoxicated victims. Homel recommended improved management and regulatory practices particularly in the non-promotion of cheap drinks, training of door staff and tight enforcement including licence cancellation of premises that are associated with violent incidents.

Young people and risk-taking behaviour

Some researchers conclude that violence has functional value for young men. For thrill-seeking young men, risk of violence can add an exciting component of a 'top night out' (Tomsen, 1997). Drunken, rowdy behaviour and violence may also represent rebellion by young, disempowered males against the prevalent social order varying in form and meaning between peer group contexts (Fagan and Wilkinson, 1998, Tomsen, 1989). Such findings may also be relevant in considering gatherings of young drinkers in public places in New Zealand.

Risk-taking is an integral aspect of youth developmental behaviour. Chang et al (2001) identified the main risk-taking behaviours amongst youth as drug and alcohol consumption, unsafe sex, unsafe driving in cars, violence and graffiti. In relation to

young people and public space, Chang et al (2001) found that young people were highly visible and that a lack of facilities for young people led to them congregating in public spaces. This high visibility in turn attracted negative community attention, public anxiety, and an obvious focus for police intervention.

Some research looks at the interplay between social structure, location and culture in shaping young people's behaviour as they move into adulthood: some argue 'binge drinking' is normative behaviour for many adolescents, which is less frequent in adulthood; others argue that drinking is a rite of passage, or a response to peer pressure, or an indication of individualism (Pavis et al, 1998; cf. Lincoln and Homel, 2001).

In their Auckland based study, Bennett and Coggan (2000) investigated young people's perceptions of risk taking behaviours, with a particular focus on underage alcohol use. The participants (largely Pakeha 13-17 year olds) perceived alcohol consumption to be a core aspect of life in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Binge drinking was seen as an inevitable part of adolescent development and underage drinking viewed as 'normal'. Young people saw the lowering of the drinking age as recognition of their position as 'maturing adults' in New Zealand and there was evidence of more liberal norms around alcohol use among both participants and their parents as a consequence of the change in the minimum purchase age.

Pavis et al (1998) studied 106 Scottish young people (15/16 and 16/17 years old) at two points in time in order to understand the experiences of and explanations for changes in their key health related behaviours. They found that the vast majority of alcohol consumption of the interviewees at 15/16 took place either on the streets (i.e. in public places) or at friends' houses and was more popular with males; by 16/17 they had moved to drinking regularly in pubs and clubs. The period of 16/17 years old was viewed as a time when young people are constructing their identities: a time of change, decision making, and new social settings. They found that respondents' smoking and drinking behaviour was strongly associated with the behaviour of friends, the use of leisure time, and changes in disposable income.

In a later study related to the socio-economic context of 'marginalised' young people, Pavis and Cunningham-Burley (1999) found that young people's use of alcohol was closely related to their desire to create excitement and fun during their time on the streets. The young men they researched were generally more boisterous and confident while drinking. Although most remained orderly they appeared intimidating. The use of alcohol, alongside illicit drugs and tobacco, were integral parts of these young men's street culture. The young men in their study were 'alienated and marginalized'; the streets were the places where they experimented and explored.

There are parallels with the work of O'Neill (O' Neill, 2002) who highlights issues of marginalization and the importance of enhancing young peoples' access to public spaces. With reference to the United States context, she argues that young, poor, urban, people of colour are more likely to use public spaces for leisure activities because they do not have access to basements, backyards and other private spaces for their leisure activities. O'Neill also suggests that attempts to limit young people's access to public space may have a detrimental affect because:

Public spaces provide the possibility for young people to rehearse, re-develop, and affirm identities and communities of their own; identities and communities that may violate the approved hierarchical order (O' Neill, 2002) p.65).

There are implications from both these studies that that the high involvement of marginalised groups in public spaces (creating their own street culture) may put them more at risk of being involved in incidents and further marginalize them from the rest of the community.

Young people and public spaces—Strategies for reducing harm

Crane and Dee (2001; cf. White, 2001; Crane, 2001) offer four recommendations for addressing issues surrounding young people and public spaces:

- (a) recognise the need for youth-friendly public spaces and urban development
- (b) directly involve diverse groups of young people
- (c) adopt a multi-level and multi-dimensional approach
- (d) develop multiple uses for under-used urban spaces.

The Australian National Crime Prevention's report on young people's use of public space (1999) suggests that in developing a strategy for crime prevention, it should be recognised that different groups of young people use public space for different reasons. Furthermore:

[t]he terms 'inclusive' and 'youth-friendly' spaces points not simply to the needs of young people per se, but to the relationship between young people, the institutional arrangements which characterise particular spaces, and the broader economic, social and cultural contexts of their lives (Crane, 1999).

Urban development processes are having a profound impact on public spaces, particularly the increasing privatisation of public space management through the use of private security guards, the location of semi-public facilities in privately owned spaces, and the 'cleaning up' of public spaces. This risk management approach has two aims: to control movement and the segregation of some groups (Crane and Dee, 2001; cf. Australian National Crime Prevention, 1999).

However, in (apparently) reducing feelings of risk, the result is that the underlying tensions around public spaces are never addressed and the views of the marginalised, in particular, young people, are never acknowledged. Young people are 'designed out': seating is removed and the landscape for informal 'hanging out' is eliminated (Crane and Dee, 2001). Young people's relationships with these 'risk-managers', such as private security guards, is also problematic (Australian National Crime Prevention, 1999). A study in Adelaide City in 1997 found that the major safety issues for young people were:

- (a) harassment and/or violence, often prompted by issues of race/ethnicity;
- (b) feelings of vulnerability and fears of sexual harassment and/or violence in public spaces among young women;
- (c) sometimes inappropriate and/or inadequate intervention by police and security guards (National Crime Prevention, Australia [NCP], 1999).

Other options such as 'Street Angels' street monitoring services and 'Chill Out' zones have been successfully deployed in Australian cities to prevent street disorder, provide youth outreach and safety net services to intoxicated young people (Hollis & Zulpo, 2001; McIlwain 1998). In the Australian National Crime Prevention Strategy (1999), the following aspects of juvenile offending were found to relate directly to how young people use public space:

- (a) young people tend to socialise in groups and youth crime tends to be committed in groups;
- (b) the public congregation of young people makes them highly visible and therefore youth crime is both more apparent and detectable;
- (c) young people tend to commit crime in their own neighbourhood, where they are more likely to be identified by observers;
- (d) the social dynamics of the offence means it is often gregarious, public and attention-seeking;
- (e) youth crime is often unplanned, episodic, and opportunistic (NCP, 1999, p.7).

The responses to youth offending and conflict over the use of public spaces fall into three main groups (NCP, 1999). These are described as coercive, developmental and accommodating. Coercive approaches include the use of heavy street policing and curfews. Young people are perceived as a threat and the emphasis is on crime control. In contrast developmental approaches encourage youth participation and inclusion. The emphasis is on dealing with social problems. Similarly, the focus of accommodating approaches is on addressing immediate conflicts by involving a range of affected parties. This approach would include the establishment of accords or protocols for the management of public spaces. The NCP suggest that developmental and accommodating approaches are the most appropriate ways of approaching youth crime prevention.

White (1998) suggests that the best approaches to youth-related issues are ones that are holistic, community-based and which involve young people directly in the process. He argues that the successful components of a youth crime prevention framework include: the adoption of a broad social development approach, which seeks to enhance the opportunities of young people and involves them in the negotiation and decision-making processes; the creation of a constellation of activities and programmes, which cater to a wide variety of situations and interests; the importance of community ownership, which takes into consideration local conditions; the necessity of adopting a holistic approach to youth issues, recognising the intersection of various groups (family, school etc.); the importance of multi-agency involvement; the necessity of research and auditing processes; the importance of evaluation of existing projects, and the need for greater information about the effectiveness of different types of intervention; and the necessity of being flexible in approach, modifying programmes where necessary and as required.

White (1998) argues that the rights of young people in public spaces not only need to be the strategic base for improving existing relationships, but must also become concrete measures at a practical level. These measures include: the provision of a diverse range of options for young people; the provision of youth outreach services; the provision of youth-oriented public transport systems; the provision of spaces and

facilities which take into account the social differences between young people; the need to adopt a range of communication strategies; the guaranteeing of safe, confidential methods of consultation; allowing for both informal and formal means of partnership; the development of competencies; the development of clear guidelines; the provision of space for the exclusive use by young people; and the undertaking of proactive campaigns which attempt to breakdown stereotypes and barriers. In conclusion, White (1998) comments:

creating positive public spaces for young people is a process [...] successful projects and initiatives present a challenge to prevailing practices and ideas about the nature of public space, and the nature of social regulation (p.146).

Environmental strategies to reduce alcohol-related offences in public spaces

The renegotiation and redevelopment of public spaces needs to take place alongside other initiatives, such as reviewing alcohol policy and local liquor regulation. In an examination of the appropriateness and efficacy of liquor licensing laws to reduce alcohol misuse and violence in Australia, Stockwell (1994b) advocates the use of targeted control strategies to reduce alcohol-related harm, linking them to the main problems that society experiences. In the context of public drinking, this means addressing injury and litter caused by discarded alcohol containers such as broken bottles, incidents of crime and violence perpetrated by or experienced by people adversely affected by alcohol and alcohol poisoning due to excessive alcohol intake.

Drawing from the literature on the relationship between the availability of alcohol and alcohol-related problems, Stockwell identifies seven common themes. These themes are summarised below:

- (a) the level of alcohol consumption in a community is a good predictor of levels of alcohol problems;
- (b) dramatic changes in the availability of alcohol strongly influence levels of problems;
- (c) general measures of the overall availability of alcohol are usually strongly associated with levels of consumption and harm;
- (d) the price of alcohol is the best single predictor of levels of consumption and problems;
- (e) the most recent and advanced research suggests that outlet density stimulates increased consumption and problems rather than the converse;
- (f) raising the legal-drinking age is an effective method of reducing some alcohol problems for young people; and
- (g) minor variations in the trading hours have little impact on overall levels of alcohol problems (Stockwell 1994b).

On the basis of extensive international research, Stockwell et al (1994b) suggests that liquor legislation should support positive and cooperative initiatives to reduce alcohol problems, such as involving local communities.

One local regulatory initiative that is used as a common response to disorder, violence and other problems arising from drinking in public spaces is an alcohol ban. In countries with comparable legal and administrative traditions, and comparable

drinking cultures to New Zealand, alcohol bans or alcohol free zones are extensively used as local community control measures. These are variously permitted under liquor laws or the powers of local government. Declaration of a local liquor ban or alcohol free zone generally covers a prescribed area - in some cases, the whole local government jurisdiction - for a set period of time and in some cases there are permitted circumstances to have alcohol such as at a barbeque or picnic. In all cases, time periods are set by councils, following community consultation although in some jurisdictions a maximum period is set by law. The premise that local authorities have adopted is that the public should have the right to enjoy public spaces without threat to their person or property or to the public environment. Bans have been shown to be effective in breaking patterns of public disorder in public spaces, without merely displacing it to other locations (Conway, 1998).

A case study evaluation of the Piha beach liquor bans, enacted by Waitakere City Council for specified dates during 1995-1997, demonstrated that perceptions of public safety increased and there was significant decrease in alcohol-related disorder and injuries, the local crime rate and fire service call-outs to vehicle incidents compared to previous years without bans (Conway, 2002).

Other research has also recognised the multi-factorial, multi-site changes that need to take place in order to address community problems associated with alcohol and violence (Holder et al., 2000)(Holder 1997a; cf. Treno and Holder, 1997; Holder and Treno, 1997)(Saltz, 1997)(Grube, 1997; Reynolds et al, 1997; Holder and Reynolds, 1997; Holder et al, 1997b). Holder et al note that previous community prevention programmes emphasized knowledge about alcohol, attitudes and practices at the expense of changing structural features of the community (cf. Casswell, 1995). Previous initiatives in New Zealand have effectively used the mass media and community organization programmes in local communities as means of increasing environmentally based interventions (Casswell et al, 1989).

In their Community Projects Trial, Holder et al (1997a) sought to determine, through an efficacy trial (that is, demonstrating what changes can be achieved in the target dependent variables under ideal conditions) whether a comprehensive series of interventions could produce statistically significant reductions in sales to minors and alcohol-related trauma. The variables of this trial included: alcohol intoxication and impairment; retail alcohol availability; local regulation; alcohol serving and sales practices; social access to alcohol; local awareness and concern about drinking; local news media; local law enforcement; non-traffic risk activity; and alcohol-involved injury and death.

In their component of 'underage drinking', their goal was to reduce alcohol-involved trauma amongst underage youth (Holder et al, 1997a; cf. Grube, 1997; Holder and Reynolds, 1997). Findings from this study indicated that a combination of enforcement, responsible beverage service training, media advocacy and other community activities led to reductions in underage sales of alcohol and alcohol-related trauma. Essential aspects of their Community Trials project included: the incorporation of previous research; coalition formation and development; actively viewing key leaders as mechanisms for policy change and; the importance of using the media strategically to mobilize support (Treno and Holder, 1997).

The strategies implemented in this project, at three separate sites, are significant for three reasons: they represent a comprehensive and multi-faceted environmentally-based prevention; as a result of local planning and commitment; they have successfully implemented a number of the environmental interventions; and they were implemented in diverse, mid-size communities, which allows for research replication elsewhere (Holder et al, 1997). A major community action study in Swedish cities is currently replicating these strategies and has reported, over a five year period, a significant decrease in violent crime since the introduction of a comprehensive server intervention programme that has substantially reduced service to intoxicated patrons, along with increased police enforcement and Council alcohol policies (Wallin et al 2002).

Other effective community interventions to reduce alcohol-related violence in public spaces have also centred on specific initiatives to improve the management of licensed premises. A community action research project undertaken in three cities in Queensland used licensed premise risk assessment/safety audits for violence with a particular focus on reducing intoxication. Licensed premises in these cities were observed to have significant declines in aggressive and violent incidents (Hauritz 1998). Targeting licensed premises through development of an Alcohol Accord in Geelong reduced the movement of 'pub hopping' by intoxicated patrons and reduced assault rates in the city (Felson et al in Hauritz et al. 1998).

A study was undertaken by Hill (Hill, 2001) into the roles that local government play in Auckland in shaping the local contexts in which young people socialise. Findings indicated that there was widespread concern about young people's hazardous drinking and behaviour in public spaces. There was considerable variation on whether problematic youth drinking and behaviour was considered a matter for the community and Council, or an issue for parents. However there was growing local government recognition of the particular needs of young people and a willingness to listen to and address their concerns. Hill concluded that a cross-sectoral approach using an integrated set of local harm reduction strategies has been shown to be most cost-effective in influencing the behaviour of young people. (Casswell, 2000b, Moewaka Barnes, 2000, Moewaka Barnes et al., 1996, Mosher, 1999, Mosher and Jernigan, 2000, Holder et al., 1997b, Holder et al., 2000). Hill's findings indicate that this is a role many Councils already play through the decisions they make about spaces and facilities, through regulatory powers in regard to liquor licensing, underage access and alcohol free spaces, and through Safer Community Councils. Potential for partnership was also identified with local business groups that provide commercial entertainment or sports facilities attracting young people and of course the potential, through youth councils and youth forums, for partnerships with young people themselves.

Key Findings

- Alcohol consumption is viewed as a 'normal' part of adolescent culture
Alcohol consumption increases the risk of violence
- Situational and cultural factors also influence levels of violent crime
- Developmental and inclusive, rather than punitive measures, are more effective for addressing the needs of both young people and other people using public spaces
- Young people need to be involved in the development of community strategies aimed at reducing levels of alcohol-related harm

- A comprehensive range of environmental strategies as well as specific initiatives targeting licensed premise management can be effectively deployed to reduce violence in and around licensed premises and public spaces

Auckland Regional Perspective

The following section summarises information available in existing reports and data bases pertaining to alcohol, young people and public spaces in the Auckland region and within the four major cities within the Auckland region. It will be followed by:

- A discussion of the research undertaken as part of this study;
- New analyses of existing databases,
- A review of media reports relating to alcohol, violence and young people from the Auckland region,
- Analysis of data gathered through interviews with police, observational data on the activities of young people in public spaces in downtown Auckland City
- Analysis of interviews undertaken with young people in the streets of Auckland on Friday and Saturday nights.

Young people in the Auckland Region: a demographic profile

Auckland is New Zealand's largest and most ethnically diverse city. The 2001 Census of Population and Dwellings shows that the Auckland Region (comprised of North Shore, Waitakere, Auckland and Manukau cities along with Rodney, Papakura and Franklin districts) has a population of over one million which constitutes almost a third of the total population of New Zealand. In the 2001 Census, 11.2 % of people in the Auckland region identified their ethnic group as Maori, 13.3% identified as Pacific Peoples, 13 % as Asian and 65.6% as European. Those identifying as belonging to other ethnic groups constituted 1.2% of the population (Statistics New Zealand, 2002). Young people, aged between 10 -24 years, comprised 22% of the total population in the Auckland region (Statistics New Zealand, 2002).

Patterns of alcohol consumption for young people in the Auckland region

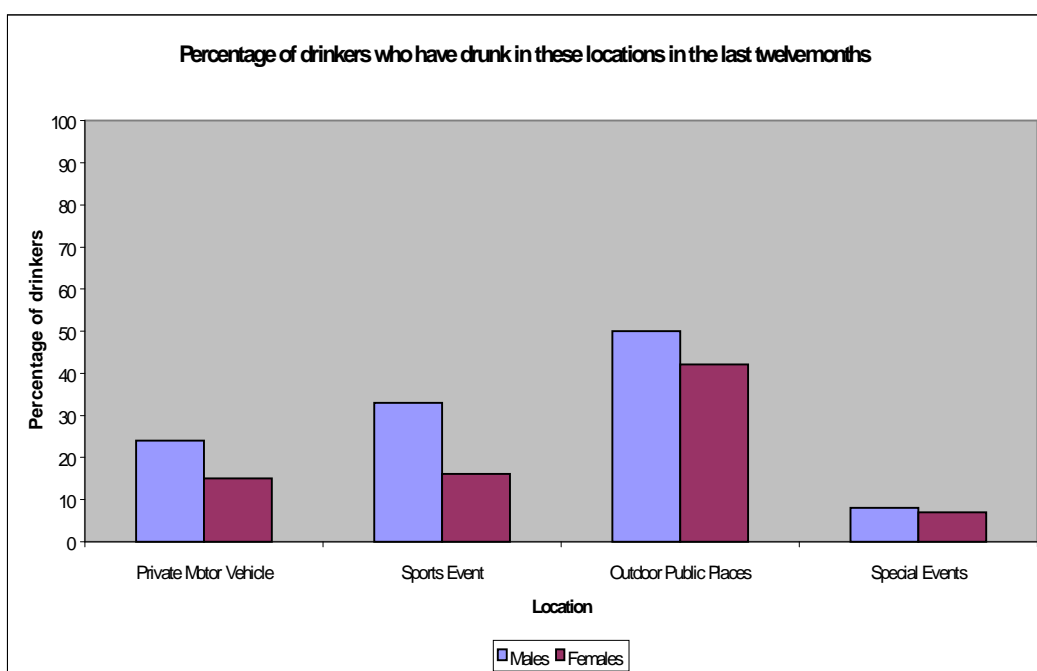
There are two main sources of information on the drinking patterns of young people in the Auckland region. *A Decade of Drinking* (Casswell and Bhatta, 2001) compares the results of annual alcohol surveys conducted in the Auckland region between 1990 and 1999. *Drinking in New Zealand: National Surveys Comparison* (Habgood et al., 2001) compares the results of the 1995 National Survey with the National Alcohol Survey conducted in 2000. Although *Drinking in New Zealand* focuses on national rather than regional data, an over-sampling of young people in this survey has allowed information on the drinking patterns of young Aucklanders to be extracted. This information can be used to identify important trends or patterns in the drinking behaviour of young people in the Auckland region.

The most obvious trend in the drinking patterns of young people is that alcohol consumption has been increasing for both young men and young women. For example, the comparison of Auckland survey data from 1990 through to 1999 shows that the quantity of alcohol consumed increased more rapidly among youth drinkers than adult drinkers (Casswell and Bhatta, 2001). In 1990, 14-19 year olds consumed an average of 3-4 drinks on a typical occasion. By 1999 the average number of drinks had increased to 5-6 drinks. The major increase in this group was due to changes in

the consumption patterns of 14-17 year olds who had increased from an average of 2-3 drinks in 1990 to an average of 5-6 drinks in 1999. Similarly, there was a marked increase in the frequency of consuming enough alcohol to feel drunk by 14-19 year olds. Whilst drinkers of all ages reported an increase in the number of occasions they got drunk, the increase amongst younger people (14-19 year olds) was greater (Casswell and Bhatta, 2001). Furthermore, the percentage of 14-19 year olds who were drinking more than 6 drinks on a typical drinking occasion had increased from 12% in 1990 to 25 % in 1999 (Casswell and Bhatta, 2001). The 14-19 year old group also reported an increase in alcohol-related problems (Casswell and Bhatta, 2001).

The *Decade of Drinking* report notes that whilst drinking at home and at other people's homes were the most typical locations for young people to drink, over the decade more 14-19 year olds drank in outdoor public places and fewer drank in nightclubs and restaurants. The typical quantities consumed had increased in outdoor public places and in cars.

The most recent data shows that amongst 14-24 year olds 50 % of male drinkers and 42% of female drinkers had consumed alcohol in an outdoor public place on a number of occasions. The table below represents data from the Auckland sample of 14-24 year olds in the 2000 National Alcohol Survey.



It is interesting to note that both young men and young women reported drinking large quantities in outdoor public places. Young males reported drinking approximately 8 drinks on a typical occasion drinking outdoors and, young women reported drinking approximately 6-7 drinks on a typical occasion. These figures suggest that there are young people drinking to the point of intoxication when in public spaces.

Clearly, a significant finding of the *Decade* survey was the pronounced increase in drinking – in both quantity and frequency – by those aged 14-19 years old. As the *Decade* survey identifies, there is cause for concern:

Such increases in consumption among the younger group in the population are of concern from a public health perspective in terms of the increases in acute harm experienced by that group. They are also of concern given the evidence that heavier drinking cohorts of young people go on to be heavier drinkers in later life and to experience more alcohol-related harm. These trends therefore suggest accumulated problems as this cohort moves through into adulthood (Casswell and Bhatta, 2001:45-6).

The *Drinking in New Zealand* report also identifies an increase in the consumption of alcohol by young people. Drinkers in the youngest age group, 14-15 years old, had increased their frequency since the 1995 survey. They had increased from 42 to 64 occasions per year, whereas those aged 16-17 had increased from 76 to 100 occasions per year (almost twice-weekly on average). Not only had the number of occasions increased for 14-15 year olds, so had the typical quantity of alcohol they consumed. 14-15 year olds increased from 3 to 5 drinks on one occasion, while 16-17 year olds increased from 4 to 7 drinks and 18-19 year olds from 5 to 7 drinks.

There were also marked increases amongst young males, particularly those aged 14-15 and 16-17. The average amount consumed by males aged 14-15 on a typical occasion increased from 3 drinks in 1995 to 5 drinks in 2000. For males aged 16-17 there was an increase from 5 drinks to 8 drinks. Only 18-19 year olds, who were the heaviest drinkers in 2000, drinking 8+ drinks on a typical occasion, exceeded these amounts. Notably, the consumption by both the 16-17 and 18-19 year old groups surpassed that of the heaviest drinkers in 1995.

Clearly, alcohol consumption amongst young people has increased over the last decade. The evidence suggests an increase in both the numbers of younger people drinking and the typical quantities consumed in outdoor public places.

Young people and alcohol-related harm in the Auckland region

The New Zealand National Alcohol Survey also asked about alcohol-related problems. There was a strong increase in the proportion of 16-17 year old women experiencing seven or more problems, from 2% in 1995 to 13% in 2000.

In contrast to the newspaper headlines and stories that tend to focus on criminal *offending* by young people using alcohol, research in New Zealand National Alcohol Survey highlights the *victimisation* of young people using alcohol. According to the survey, almost one in five men aged 14-19 and more than one in ten women in the same age group reported that they had been physically assaulted, in the previous 12 months, by someone who had been drinking. One in five women reported that they had been assaulted in the previous 12 months by someone who had been drinking and one in five women aged 14-19 reported that they had been sexually harassed by drinkers.

The table below illustrates the most common problems experienced by 14-24 year olds reporting more than 5 problems from their own drinking in the Auckland Region. Once again this data is drawn from the Auckland sample of the 2000 National Alcohol Survey.

Most common problems experienced by 14-24 year olds reporting more than 5 problems (2000)

Type of Problems	Percentage Reporting Problem
Felt the effects of alcohol after drinking the night before	19%
Been ashamed of something you did after drinking	17%
Unable to remember some of the things you had done whilst drinking	16%
Felt the effects of alcohol while at work, study, or engaged in housework duties	14%
Been involved in a serious argument after drinking	11%
Got drunk when there was an important reason to stay sober	10%
Felt your performance in a paid job was reduced by drinking or it's after effects	10%
Got into a physical fight because of your drinking	9%
Taken an alcoholic drink first thing when you get up in the morning	7%

International research indicates between 10 and 20 % of injuries treated at emergency departments are alcohol-related and that young people and males are highly represented in these figures (Humphrey and Casswell, 2001; cf. Everitt and Jones, 2002). Humphrey and Casswell (2001) found in their Auckland study that two-thirds of ED injuries were experienced by males and almost half of all injuries were experienced by those under 30 years of age. Young people were also over-represented in alcohol-related attendances to the ED. These figures correspond with data from the New Zealand Land Transport and Safety Authority indicating that males in the 18-30 years bracket represent 50% of all the drink-drivers apprehended.

In a study of 166 admissions to an Emergency Department during the first three weeks in December 2000, 58 of the admissions were aged between 16-25 years old (Humphrey and Casswell, 2002 in press). Within this sample, 36.2% (21) were admitted for alcohol-related injuries. Although the sample size is small, it does provide an insight into a growing public health problem.

Other Auckland-based research (Everitt and Jones, 2002) examined changes in admissions for alcohol poisoning before and after the 1999 Sale of Liquor Amendment Act. They found that the number of intoxicated 18 and 19 year olds increased in the twelve months after the law change (December 1999 – December 2000) from 66 to 107. This represented a 50% increase. For 15-17 year olds, there was an increase from 72 to 95, and proportionately they increased from 5% to 6.7% of admissions. Everitt and Jones (2002) conclude that the lowering of the drinking age from 20 to 18 has resulted in increased presentations to the ED of intoxicated 15-17 and 18 and 19 year olds. Recent research from Australia (Matthews et al, 2002) shows that of 8,661 hospital admissions due to alcohol-caused assaults in Australia in

1998/99, 74% were male and two thirds were aged 15 to 34 years. About one-third were aged 15 to 24 years.

Perceptions of safety in the Auckland region

Perceptions of safety in New Zealand's six biggest cities (Auckland, Christchurch, Manukau, North Shore, Waitakere, and Wellington) can be gauged by the *Quality of Life* report (Big Cities, 2001). Significantly, four of these cities are within the greater Auckland region.

Half of those surveyed¹ on the North Shore felt reasonably safe after dark in the city centre, while only a quarter felt somewhat unsafe. Manukau respondents were similar to those on the North shore, 47% felt either safe or very safe and 26% felt either unsafe or very unsafe, notably the numbers of women who felt safe or very safe was just slightly higher than men. More Auckland City respondents appear to feel safer in their city centre after dark with 69% of respondents feeling reasonably or very safe. However, this is offset by the 29% that felt somewhat or very unsafe. The survey for Waitakere City asked residents if they felt safe in town but did not specify between day and night, consequently 72% of respondents said they felt very safe or reasonably safe and 25% said they felt unsafe or very unsafe in town. The Quality of Life survey also breaks down the responses by age group. Over half of 15-19 year olds surveyed in Auckland and Manukau felt safe or very safe in their city centres at night. This breakdown was not available for North Shore City.

The Quality of Life survey found that perceptions of safety across all four cities were linked to environmental factors, such as the look and 'feel' of a city, the level of graffiti, and the perceived safety of public transport. The media reportage of crime rates also had a significant influence on perceptions of safety.

Alcohol Healthwatch's *Report on the Survey of Safety in Downtown Auckland* (Skelton and Eccles, 2000) also gives an indication of perceptions of safety. They surveyed 100 people in downtown Auckland, aged between 10 and 80, 54% females and 46% males. In contrast to the 'Quality of Life survey' only 33% of respondents felt safe or very safe in this area at night. Most respondents, 86 % considered it to be less safe after 10pm in downtown Auckland. The safest areas were considered to be Queen Street and the Imax and Civic Centre areas, while Fort Street, the Bus Terminal area and side streets were reported as unsafe, because of insufficient lighting, less people, and more intoxicated people.

Auckland City Council surveyed 632 of its residents and working population in the year 2000. This survey (Auckland City, 2000) identified that there was a pronounced increase in perceptions of safety in the Central Area between 1989 and 1999. However, there were still marked differences between female and male perceptions of safety after dark: 64% of females perceived the city was unsafe after dark compared with 31% of males. The aspects of the city after dark that led to these perceptions included aggressive people, drunks, drug addicts and the homeless. The areas

¹ This analysis comes from the data gathered in the 'Quality of Life in New Zealand's Six Largest Cities Survey'. We are most grateful to Alison Reid from North Shore City Council for making this data available to us. It is important to note that the questions asked in each city were slightly different so comparisons across the cities is limited by this.

perceived to be unsafe included public toilets, car parks, the Britomart Bus Terminal (which has now been demolished), and Customs and Fort Streets. Interestingly, most respondents in this survey perceived Queen Street to be safe. Feeling unsafe was a major reason for not coming into the city after dark, although 44% of the respondents said that it was safe to be in the city after dark. The report recommended that these safety concerns could be addressed through more police, better lighting, more security patrols, and better traffic and pedestrian safety (Auckland City, 2000).

Key Findings

- Levels of alcohol consumption and drinking to the point of intoxication by young people in the Auckland region has increased significantly over the last twelve years
- The level of alcohol-related harm experienced by young people is also increasing
- Although, there are many people who do feel safe in public places there is also a significant number who do not feel comfortable in public places after dark.

Perspectives from Auckland's Four Cities

The Auckland region incorporates four large cities, North Shore City, Auckland City, Waitakere City and Manukau City, plus the three smaller districts of Franklin, Papakura and Rodney (see Map 1).

A four city case study (Hill 2001) of local Government responses to youth was undertaken in 2000 to ascertain the extent to which local authorities in the Auckland region play a role in community health and well-being, and help shape the local contexts in which young people socialise. The study indicated that problematic public drinking by teenagers was occurring in all four cities, and the need for safer socialising opportunities was an important Auckland-wide issue.

In all the local authority areas, a good deal of support for community initiatives and for youth activities did occur, but this was not necessarily reflected in the public documents and policies of Councils. The needs and interests of young people have only very recently been taken up in the policies and strategies of some of the cities (Hill, 2001).

The following sections look at the four cities in Auckland to examine recent initiatives addressing issues related to young people and alcohol use in public spaces. The people involved in these initiatives were the key stakeholders consulted whilst undertaking this research. Their involvement will be crucial in organising the next phase of this project; the implementation of strategies for creating safer public spaces.

Auckland City

The Downtown and Aotea Alcohol Accords

In 1999 Safer Auckland City (the Safer Community Council linked to Auckland City Council) initiated and took responsibility for the creation of a Downtown Accord, in Downtown Auckland. This was modelled on a framework provided by the Crime Prevention Unit (Ministry of Justice). The focus of the accord is on responsible alcohol management practices in the Viaduct Basin area. This accord is a written agreement between local alcohol related agencies/industries, government/ regulatory bodies and residents in the area, stating how they will work together to manage alcohol related practices.

The accord has been seen to benefit the community by reducing alcohol related violence, crime and disorder in the Viaduct Basin. Retailers report a reduction in the damage to their properties and improvements in both their relationships with police plus their compliance with legal requirements. The council has been seen to be taking responsibility more directly for alcohol related issues as well as facilitating effective working relations with a variety of stakeholders.

Over time the accord has begun to shift its focus to include a wider range of issues using the same collaborative approach. Accord members have been involved in the recent Volvo celebrations, noise control (from boats and bars) and issues of traffic congestion caused by taxis around the wharf (MacLaren, B. 18 April 2002. *Update on Downtown and Aotea Accords: Report to the Law and Order Committee, Auckland City.*).

Following the perceived success of the Downtown accord an Aotea Accord has also been initiated. This has been targeted as a key component of the Inner City Safety Strategy, which directs the work of Safer Auckland City. This accord is still in a developmental stage with plans being made to focus on safe practices around alcohol consumption and perceptions of safety in the area. Further research is planned to identify key safety needs, and public consultation will be undertaken to do this, see MacLaren, B. 18 April 2002. *Update on Downtown and Aotea Accords: Report to the Law and Order Committee, Auckland City.* Safer Auckland City.

Heart of the City – provision of Security

In December 2000 the 'Heart of the City Business Association' contracted 'First Security' to provide security in the Queen St vicinity on Thursday through to Saturday nights. This initiative named "City Watch" is designed to provide security for businesses in this area and to encourage the general public to feel safer in the city at night. This security service is provided from 9pm – 1am. Since the security service is funded by retailers, their immediate focus is on the retail environment on Queen Street, this includes Aotea Square and Queen Elizabeth square.

The role of security guards in this area is to show a strong presence so that people know the activities in the area are being watched, and to step in when and if an incident arises. The police state that they have a close and supportive working arrangement with the security guards providing extra eyes and ears. The security service cannot fulfil the same functions as the police but have nevertheless created a strong presence in town at night. However, the line between what the security service can do and what the police solely can do appears to be blurred at times. If a violent incident occurs security staff will often detain the offenders until the police arrive. They have also been known to confiscate alcohol from minors as well as asking people to move on from a public place. In October 2002 the First Security staff were filmed for a Television New Zealand programme 'City Beat'. Coincidentally this was also the time our researchers were observing downtown Auckland at night. This programme highlights how the increased role that security staff are playing in the community is at present blurring the distinction between law enforcement and property security.

Heart of the City and Auckland City Councillors uphold the presence of a security service on the streets in central Auckland as having had a definite impact on the incidence of crime in the area. However in order to create this impact the security staff involved have often faced burnout from the constant repetition of events that occur in town on Friday and Saturday nights. The greatest proportion of incidents that security staff deal with are reported to involve young people and alcohol (pers comm., Police and Security Interviews).

In response to demands from Heart of the City and Auckland City the Minister of Justice announced in March 2002 an increase of \$2.5 Million for the Auckland policing budget, in order to create a "safer Auckland" (Hon Judith Tizard, 27 March 2002 *Media Statement: New police package means a safer Auckland*).

Auckland City Council – future initiatives

The change of council at the end of 2001 raised the public profile of incidents involving young people and issues arising from alcohol being consumed in public

spaces in Auckland City. The new council has established a Law and Order committee for whom addressing young people's drinking in public spaces is a high priority. In order to address incidents involving young people and alcohol this committee is exploring the use of an alcohol ban down Queen St, council employment of security staff to support the Heart of the City initiative, enabling police use of council's Closed Circuit Television, use of the Auckland *City* Ambassadors (people employed by the council who traverse Queen St during the day and can direct people who are lost or require information about the inner city) as eyes on the street (who can gain 'intelligence' which will assist police work), the introduction of an Alcohol Policy plus initiatives to meet young peoples needs in the city.

In a report to the April Law and Order Committee meeting, Safer Auckland City presented a proposal for a Safety Framework for Auckland. This framework will provide a way of linking the various initiatives the council is undertaking to create a safer city under one framework with a common set of goals and objectives. This framework will incorporate safer city projects, youth safety initiatives (including an existing youth safety audit project, and plans for a youth venue) the employment of Maori wardens, Ambassadors and security staff.

Clear tensions are apparent in the stance that Auckland *City* is presently taking to manage violent and criminal incidents involving young people in public spaces. These reflect the practices of inclusion or exclusion that have been highlighted in the literature review. There is a tension between wanting to provide a high profile of law enforcement that puts boundaries around what is permissible behaviour whilst also not wanting to exclude young people from the city at night, "councillors are concerned but also aware that youth bring vibrancy to the city" (City Scene Sunday March 3 2002). At present it is Auckland *City's* call for law and order and a representation of young people as troublemakers that is getting greatest media attention. However, the Youth Strategy (www.akcity.govt.nz/youthaction) of the council takes a much more inclusive approach, which recognises that young people are also major consumers in town at night, as well as key stakeholders in the development of Auckland as a vibrant, safe (and healthy) city. Amidst this tension there is a clear role here for alcohol and public health promoters to continue to work with the council to shape strategies and projects that will reduce harm associated with young people drinking alcohol in public spaces.

Along with the police, First Security, Auckland *City* and Safer Auckland City, other stakeholders presently working on these issues in the Auckland City vicinity include Youthtown, Youthline, Alcohol Healthwatch, Maori wardens and ALAC. These stakeholders have been critical in progressing initiatives with the Council such as the youth strategy and alcohol policy.

There are also current joint initiatives between Auckland City Council (ACC) licensing staff, the Auckland city police licensing section, Alcohol Healthwatch and A+ Health Protection to improve age verification practices. The (ACC) District Licensing Authority recently made it a condition of granting a new liquor licence or licence renewal that licensees must have age verification policies and practices in place. A special campaign was mounted with inner city area off-licence outlets to improve their compliance.

Waitakere City

Waitakere City Council

This Council has always been fairly proactive on alcohol issues and produced New Zealand's first 'model' Sale of Liquor Policy after extensive community consultation in 1992. They have also put alcohol bans in place at Piha beach over successive summers since 1995. The first Piha alcohol ban was introduced very effectively as part of a comprehensive community action strategy to address community safety and reduce problems associated with young people's disorderly behaviour in public spaces (Conway 2002). In 1999 the Council conducted several Well-being Summits for community consultation purposes. Hill (2001) cites the Youth workshop attended by young people and youth workers, as identifying particular leisure and safety needs such as more places to hang out with friends and socialise that were safe and that would enable them to have a good time with their friends and not be hassled or find themselves in unsafe situations. Findings from a West Auckland school survey undertaken at the same time revealed similar needs with nearly 70% saying there were not enough places to go or things to do in Waitakere City. A participant at the Waitakere City Secondary Schools Youth Council meeting in early 2001 recorded that the meeting had made a number of suggestions in response to widely publicised recent public drinking disturbances by young people.

They want a venue that is safe, possibly alcohol free, good music, with maybe some people around who will keep an eye on things, like youth workers and people like that who can spot people who might need a little bit more support and help. They want it to be really casual so that they can come and go. They want it to be safe. The word safe was just peppered through the whole discussion (Hill 2001).

Although WCC resources did not stretch to provision of a Youth Centre in 2001, the Council did organise a series of successful concerts (gigs) showcasing local bands for young people. These were held in conjunction with local music promoters in a WCC recreation centre venue.

The Safe Waitakere Alcohol Project (SWAP)

This project was proposed as a response by Waitakere City Council (WCC) to address local alcohol concerns, including 1997 police data that indicated Waitakere had the highest rate of alcohol related fatal vehicle crashes in the Auckland region, and an over-representation of alcohol as a factor in local offence data. It was initiated by the Waitakere City Council in 1998 and funded by the Ministry of Health with a brief to develop an intersectoral, co-ordinated strategy to address and minimise alcohol related harm in Waitakere City. The project is part of the Safer Waitakere Injury Prevention programme and has a paid coordinator and an intersectoral project group.

Alcohol and young people have been a priority since SWAP's inception. An initial needs assessment indicated that access to alcohol, binge drinking, drinking in public places and parties were common concerns. Safety issues, the lack of tolerance shown by society towards the activities of young people, limited involvement of parents, whanau and the wider community in supporting, guiding and leading young people and apathy about the provision of services and amenities for young people were also raised as concerns.

The project groups meet regularly, chaired by the northern regional Alcohol Advisory Council manager and are made up of representatives from different sectors such as the police, Pasifika Health, Alcohol Healthwatch, the Waitakere Liquor Licensing Trust, the Regional Alcohol and Drug Service, the WCC Youth Council, the local District Licensing Authority and A+ Health Promotion. Activities involving young people that SWAP have worked on in the past 18 months include local collaborative initiatives such as After-Ball Party packs “Safe Summer Campaigns”, and a national ALAC Youth Access to Alcohol project. Young people were also recruited and assisted by SWAP to develop and carry out a Photovoice project to document weekend leisure/social activities of young people in Waitakere City. This project focused on using photographs as a visual means for advocacy in addressing safety issues from a young person’s perspective. An overall report and visual presentation on findings and subsequent recommendation are being prepared for WCC and other interested parties. This is planned to coincide with Youth Week in September 2002. The main focus is ‘looking at what young people do when they go out’ with a sub-theme of ‘looking after each other’. Four priority areas have been identified: Alcohol, Marijuana, Sex and Transport.

Future initiatives

SWAP are presently engaged with the WCC in a review process of the WCC Sale of Liquor Act policy as well as discussions regarding the development of a WCC alcohol policy for public spaces. A public forum to discuss alcohol, safety and public spaces is planned for July/August 2002 as a joint initiative involving SWAP, and the WCC. The findings of this report will be considered at the forum.

Waitakere City is one of the last regions in the country with a licensing trust monopoly. This means alcohol can only be sold through trust outlets other than through on-licensed premises such as restaurants and clubs. Currently the local supermarket chains are organising a campaign to gain support for a referendum on whether the trust status should remain or be abolished.

Both of these initiatives are of considerable interest to many parts of the community and they present opportunities for informed debate on many related issues such as Council alcohol policies, age verification practices, social supply of alcohol and proactive youth strategies.

Manukau City

Manukau City Council

Hill (2001) records that the Manukau City Council has been very proactive in youth issues, probably due to its extremely youthful population and community concern about youth unemployment and alcohol and other drug use. It has recently developed a Youth Policy that requires the needs of young people to be reflected in all Council policies and strategies. The overall policy goal is ‘to provide opportunities for young people to mature and be healthy, while respecting cultural/ethnic beliefs and values’. The Council has adopted a community development approach to youth policy, providing information and advisory services to assist young people to develop their own initiatives. The main vehicle for encouraging participation and giving young people a voice are the annual Youth Forums held as two day hui in each of the six wards for young people aged 10 to 26. Here, young people identify their priority

issues and with the help of tutors and performers, use different media to communicate these to an audience that includes councillors and government agencies. Two projects from each hui are adopted annually and carried out by a working group of young people with Council support. The Otara Youth Sports Festival, the Youth Embassy and the graffiti murals project are examples of Youth Forum projects. All the youth centres and programmes supported by the MCC are encouraged by Council community advisors to impose clear standards for behaviour expected of young people. A recommended strategy is to enlist rather than exclude any troublemakers:

The Otara Alcohol Network

This network was formed in 2000 following a petition to the Manukau City Council for an alcohol ban and a march organized by Maori wardens and other community groups in support of an alcohol-free town centre. The action was supported by the Otara town centre manager, and by local police who reported that there were currently 35 liquor outlets in Otara, for a population of 30,000, 38% of whom were under 18. There were perceived health and safety issues in the Otara town centre with disruptive and offensive behaviour by groups of men (usually unemployed) sitting around drinking in the town centre. They were also seen as poor role models, attracting younger males who began hanging around behaving in similar fashion. The MCC manager called an initial meeting of concerned organizations to discuss alcohol-related issues in the area. At the time, the Minister of Justice Phil Goff was also invited in to view the situation. An immediate practical response from Manukau City Council was to put in a drain so that urine wouldn't flow directly under shop doors into town centre premises. The *Otara Alcohol Network* was formed out of the first meeting called. It includes people involved in two Otara development projects, Enterprise Otara and Mainstreet Otara, Otara city centre community ambassadors, MCC staff from Community Development and the Liquor Licensing areas, local police, Alcohol Healthwatch and concerned community residents.

The network operates as a vehicle for information-sharing and action covering issues such as incidents involving minors, identifying liquor outlets serving minors and selling outside their hours as well as public place hotspots where harassment, violence and youth drinking are occurring and the social impact of casino bars. Current actions have centered on supporting submissions made to the Local Government Act to allow local Councils greater discretionary powers for alcohol bans, monitor the role of community ambassadors in the management of local alcohol-free youth events (where there have been problems with young people both drinking outside and carrying weapons), and approaching MCC regarding Council policy on the proliferation of licensed premises particularly casino bars and off-licence outlets. Many residents in other parts of Manukau City, as well as Otara apparently don't want any more of these in their areas but have been unable to stop them because planning permission has already been given by Council at the resource consent stage where minimal community notification or consultation has occurred. Residents from other areas such as Mangere have also voiced community concerns about public drinking and safety in the Mangere town centre carpark and attended Otara network meetings as well as organizing their own meetings in Mangere.

Following similar disquiet by local residents in another part of Otara in 2001, the MCC Safer Community section undertook a safety audit in the Chapel Downs shopping centre environs. This highlighted public health and safety issues as of major

concern in an area where a liquor outlet, gambling facilities (casino bar/TAB) and public toilets were located together in a dark, dirty and congested area of the shopping centre and antisocial public drinking and prostitution were in evidence. The findings were presented at a public meeting chaired by the MCC manager in May 2002.

The Youth Access to Alcohol project

Three years ago ALAC initiated a trial project with 11 communities from around the country, including one based in the Manurewa area of Manukau City. The overall aim of this project is to reduce the harm experienced by young people associated with excess alcohol consumption by reducing the inappropriate and/or illegal supply of alcohol to minors. The approach taken by the project team in this area, spearheaded by local police, an Alcohol Healthwatch staff member, licensing inspector, Safer communities coordinator and staff and students of a local high school was to provide more local events for young people and include them in developing alcohol safety messages. So far they have assisted a local high school with an After-Ball function and organised a successful 'Interschool Song, Dance and Street Art Festival, focused around alcohol health promotion messages. Three of the winning street art entries have been made into posters for wide distribution and it is intended to make one of these into billboards to be strategically placed in prime localities in the area.

Future initiatives

The MCC has acknowledged the level of community concern both at the public and Community Board level over the increase in liquor licences, lack of community consultation at the planning stage and the increase in public drinking. A Council team is currently working on the development of a broad-based strategy for addressing alcohol problems in Manukau. Recent events such as the situation in Chapel Downs have provided a further impetus and the MCC manager has instigated a special Action group at the bequest of local community members to focus on both alcohol and gambling issues in the area.

North Shore City

Community and police concern over increased youth (often involving minors) public drinking and incidents on beachfronts, in car-park areas and spilling out onto streets from private parties featured regularly in media items through the late 1990s. The Council, apart from calling for better parental supervision, largely adopted a hands-off approach, though were indirectly involved through supporting a Safer Community Council 'Youth Against Crime' group, (which helped organise some social events) and funding two youth advisor positions employed by the intersectoral Safer Community and Community Services Councils. The police however conducted a special education initiative targeting North Shore secondary schools in 2000/2001. Police visited schools and discussed current laws pertaining to drinking, responsible behaviour and warned students that they would be cracking down on any incidents. They reported that this was received well by students, welcomed by parents and schools and had resulted in fewer call-outs (pers. comm. Police Interviews). During the same period the Parent Packs developed by the North Shore Safer Community Council, initially in the late 1990's as a parent education resource to address adolescent drinking issues, were updated and have continued to be distributed widely throughout the North Shore suburbs. Police currently continue to visit schools prior to School Balls and night patrols informally visit parties they are made aware of. They

do this early in the evening as a prevention strategy to ensure the people present are aware that they do have a monitoring role and are available to assist if required.

Future Initiatives

The North Shore City Council do not presently have any initiatives on their agenda addressing alcohol issues but are planning to develop a Youth Strategy. Staff involved with this strategy indicate that this would be an opportune time to provide input aimed at reducing alcohol-related harm.

Key Findings

- All four cities have attempted to address issues related to young people alcohol use and violence and through a mix of measures developed according to their particular circumstances and perspectives. Most of the strategies can be categorized as Monitoring: Management: Regulatory: Safety focus: Youth focus.
- In both Manukau City and Waitakere City there have been recent efforts to introduce/review alcohol policies as well as support for specific community and youth initiatives to reduce alcohol-related harm
- Auckland City's response spans the continuum of measures but they are not integrated into a comprehensive strategy. Increased use of private security and a law and order approach has the potential to exclude young people. Inclusive measures are strongly advocated by the Youth Strategy section of Council and community organizations working with young people.
- North Shore City has taken a number of informal measures but do not have any specific initiatives planned in relation to alcohol, however a Youth Strategy will be developed.

Analysis from Existing Databases

Alcohol-related police incident data

This section draws on available police data in order to present an overview of alcohol-related violent incidents where a young person has been arrested for a violent offence and alcohol was seen to be a factor in the offence, in the Auckland region. The violent incidents for the region as a whole are described initially. A detailed discussion then follows of offences where it was possible to identify the licensed premise at which the alleged offender was drinking. This analysis includes a geographic illustration of where these arrests were made, linked to the location where the person had been drinking. In the detailed discussions of the police offence data police districts have been used to represent the data most effectively. A demographic profile is given for each district so that the description of young people's offending can be understood within its demographic context.

Violence offence data relating to licensed premises

In 2001, there were a total of 950 alleged alcohol-related violence offences (that came to the attention of the police) in the wider Auckland region, among people aged 16 to 24 years. These offences were primarily acts of assault, fighting, wilful damage, offensive and disorderly behaviour, and possession of a weapon.

All alcohol related police data contained information detailing if the place where alcohol was last consumed was a licensed premise, such as a bar, or a non-licensed premise, such as in a public place or at a party at someone's home. However, a considerable proportion of all non-licensed premise data could not be assigned even an approximate location, either because the alleged offender was too drunk to answer or because the data was not recorded; 39% of non-licensed premise information appeared in this form.

It was also possible for police to record whether the alleged offences took place in a public place. However, this information appears to be under-reported – only 3% of information on offence location noted that the offences occurred in public places (4% of data related to non-licensed premises and less than 1% of licensed premises data). Such figures are at odds with police accounts that indicate a considerable proportion of arrests take place in public areas.

For these reasons, further analysis of alcohol-related violence offence data will be limited to data that indicates that the place where the alleged offender was drinking a licensed premise, a total of 245 cases.

Methodology

New Zealand Police supplied data on all recorded alleged offences in the Auckland Region in which alcohol was involved. From within this database, all alleged violent offences involving young people (who had been drinking at a licensed premise prior to their arrest) aged 16-24 years in 2001 were selected (245 cases) and analysed.

Using ArcView GIS software, the arrest locations for these incidents were assigned a map reference, through a process known as geocoding. Also geocoded were the

licensed premises where alleged offenders had last consumed an alcoholic beverage in the period leading up to the violent incidents. Licensed premises were matched to their appropriate location using an Auckland roads database. The majority of points were coded in this stage. Premises that were not initially matched from the available address data were investigated to find and assign the closest corresponding address on the street database, or to manually assign a map location. A 10 metre road indent was used for each point. This accounts for road and footpath width and gives a more accurate indication of premise locations.

Although this dataset included the location of alleged offences, the full street address was not supplied for reasons of confidentiality. However, in some cases, where the alleged offence took place at a licensed premise, the name of the premise was recorded. In these cases, alleged offences could be geocoded at their location by obtaining the address of the licensed premise and geocoding the premise's location. These however comprised only 7% of total alleged offences.

In other cases that occurred away from licensed premises, the street name and/or suburb was supplied which allowed an approximation of the location of alleged offences. These approximate locations were geocoded at the midpoint of the road within the specified suburb, for data containing street information; and at the centre of the appropriate Census area unit corresponding to the specified suburb, for data which detailed suburb only.

The final geocoded dataset contained the approximate location of 241 alleged violent offences, equating to a match rate of 98.4%. The accuracy of geocoding varied, depending on the length of the road where the incidents occurred. The mean accuracy of geocoded offence data (among those that took place on specified roads away from licensed premises) was 571m either side of the points assigned as offence location.

Geographic analysis of violence offences

Map 2 is a spider diagram, which displays the approximate locations where young people (aged 16-24) were arrested for alleged alcohol-related violence offences in 2001. The arrest locations are represented by a red triangle. As discussed in the methodology, for most arrest locations, these are only approximate locations, owing to a lack of specificity in the supplied data.

Most of the points that indicate where an arrest took place are connected by a line to another part of the region, which is the location of the licensed premise where the last alcoholic beverage was consumed before the arrest for each case represented on the map.

In order to ensure that individual premises cannot be identified, no symbology is used for the premises where alcohol was consumed prior to arrest. The origin points of lines connecting to the arrest locations indicate the general vicinity of the alcohol outlets, but not the premise name, road name or licence type.

A considerable proportion of licensed premises were in the central Auckland area, and many alleged violent incidents took place some distance from the place where the person had been drinking. The main implication that can be drawn from the data is

that some migration is evident between places where alcohol was consumed and where alleged violent incidents took place. This however is not evident in all cases. The average straight line distance (“as the crow flies”, rather than via road networks) between where the person had been drinking and the alleged incident location was 2.6km. Distances varied from 5m to 41km.

In some cases, points stand alone, and are not connected to other parts of the region (45 out of the 245 arrest locations). In these cases, a licensed premise could not be identified, either because police did not collect the data, or the person arrested did not provide sufficient information, or the premise could not be assigned a mapped location. In some other cases, a connection line is not apparent; these are incidents where the alleged offence took place at the same licensed premise in which the drinking occurred.

As noted in the methodology, some incidents were geocoded to the centre of the appropriate Census area unit corresponding to the specified suburb. This means that where two or more offences occurred in the same suburb, the points will be located on top of each other and appear as a single point on the map.

Alleged Offences in the Auckland Region

As noted earlier, in 2001, there were a total of 950 alleged alcohol-related violence offences (that came to the attention of the police) in the wider Auckland region, among people aged 16 to 24 years. The majority of these offences (75%) occurred during the weekend, from Friday evening to Sunday morning. Over half of all violence offences (53%) occurred between midnight and 4am. Most offences (61%) occurred in the Auckland City police district, a further 27% occurred in the North Shore-Waitakere police district², and 12% occurred in the Counties-Manukau police district. People in the 18-21 year age group committed half of all alleged offences (52%), 19% were aged 16-17 years, and 29% were aged 22-24 years. Almost all offenders were male (92%).

Auckland City

In the 2001 Census, those aged between 10-24 (inclusive) numbered 79,638, or 22% of the general population of Auckland City. At the time of writing, 2001 Census data was not available for correlating age and ethnicity so 1996 Census figures have been used to give an indication of the relationship between age in Auckland City. In 1996, 22% of the Auckland City population were between the ages of 10-24 inclusive. A slight majority, 51%, were female, with 49% male.

Offences relating to Licensed Premises

There was a total of 164 alleged alcohol related violence offences (where alcohol had previously been consumed at a licensed premise) in the Auckland City police district in the year 2001. These incidents primarily involved fighting, wilful damage, assault and offensive behaviour. Notably a high proportion of alleged offences occurred on Karangahape Road, Queen Street and surrounding streets in the central business district. Most of these incidents (65%) occurred after midnight and before 4am, and the majority were on a Saturday or Sunday (69%). Just 13 % occurred on a Friday.

² The North Shore-Waitakere police district includes North Shore City, Waitakere City and Rodney District.

There were 30 incidents that occurred on a weekday between Monday and Thursday. Ninety one percent of the alleged offenders were male, 47% of them were Pakeha, 32% were Pacific peoples and 18% were Maori. The Auckland City police district reflects the pattern found for the wider Auckland region, with most (52%) of alleged alcohol related violence offences by a young person in the year 2001 committed by young people in the 18-21 age bracket. Forty two percent of the alleged offenders were 22-24 years old, and 6% were 16 or 17 years old.

Total Violence Offences

More than three-quarters (77%) of total alleged offences in the Auckland City police district occurred on the weekend. Over half of all offences (57%) occurred between midnight and 4am. Half of all alleged offences (53%) were committed by people aged 18-21 years, 30% were committed by 22-24 year olds, and 17% were committed by 16-17 year olds. Nine out of ten offenders (92%) were male.

There is a sizeable number of under 18 year olds involved in alcohol-related violent offences (17% of the total offences for the Auckland City Police district). These figures tend to support the conclusion that there is a problem with alcohol-related violence committed by young people in Auckland City.

North Shore/Waitakere

In the 2001 Census for Waitakere City, those aged between 10-24 (inclusive) numbered 36,936, which was 22% of the general population of Waitakere City (167,211). According to the 2001 Census, the population in Waitakere City is mainly European (65%).

For North Shore, those aged 10-24 numbered 39,990, which was also 22% of the general population of North Shore City (182,367).

Offences relating to Licensed Premises

In the year 2001 there were 30 alleged alcohol related violence offences in the North Shore/Waitakere police district (where alcohol had previously been consumed at a licensed premise). Ninety percent of these offences occurred on a weekend and most took place between midnight and 4am (73%). Most incidents were on a Saturday 46% or Sunday 33%. The majority of incidents took place on a main road in a shopping area, and a number of incidents were located near a licensed premise. All alleged offenders were male. All of these alleged offenders were over 18. Most were 18-21 (63%), whilst 37% were 22-24 years old.

Total Violence Offences

Slightly under three-quarters of all alcohol-related violence offences in the North Shore/Waitakere police district occurred on the weekend (74%), and 52% of all violence offences occurred between midnight and 4am. Slightly over half of all alleged offences (52%) were committed by people aged 18-21 years, one quarter (26%) were committed by 16-17 year olds, and 22% were committed by 22-24 year olds. 93% of offenders were male and 40% were Pakeha. A further 30% were Maori, 23% were Pacific peoples, and 2% were Asian.

Most of the offences, where the alleged offender was previously drinking at a licensed premise, were committed by 18-21 year olds.

Counties Manukau

According to the 2001 Census, the combined general population of Manukau City and the Franklin and Papakura districts, which make up the Counties Manukau police district, was 373,110. Those aged 10-24 (inclusive) constituted 23% of this combined general population. In 1996, almost a quarter of the Counties Manukau population were between the ages of 10-24 inclusive (24%). Auckland and Manukau/Counties police districts have a higher youth population compared to other areas. Manukau also has the highest level of social deprivation compared to other areas.

Offences relating to Licensed Premises

There were 51 arrests made for alleged alcohol related violent incidents in the Counties Manukau district in the year 2001 (where alcohol had previously been consumed at a licensed premise). As we have seen with the other districts the majority of these incidents occurred on a weekend. However, in this district there were a slightly higher proportion (29%) of incidents that took place on a weekday, this includes 16% on a Thursday. Also this district had more incidents occur on a Friday at 33%, with Saturday following behind at 24%. Most (61%) of the alleged offences occurred between midnight and 4am, 39% were between 2am and 4am. Ninety two percent of the alleged offenders were male. Fifty five percent of these people were aged between 18 and 21 and 43% were between 22 and 24, just one alleged offender was under 18 years of age.

Total Violence Offences

In 2001, 67% of all alleged alcohol-related violence offences in Counties-Manukau occurred on the weekend. Unlike other areas, only 40% of alleged offences occurred between midnight and 4am, and a further 22% occurred between 10pm and midnight. Slightly under half of all offences (49%) were committed by people aged 18-21 years, 35% were aged 22-24 years, and 16% were aged 16-17 years. 91% of offenders were male.

Ethnicity and Violent Offending

When the ethnicity of alleged violent offenders is compared with the demographic information for the four cities it is clear that Maori and Pacific peoples are over-represented in the alcohol-related violent offence data. Whether this over-representation relates to rates of actual offending or whether it is due to other factors (such as drinking in locations where they are likely to come to the attention of the police). However it is probable that factors other than demographics are in play. In the youth justice system in general, Maori youth are significantly over-represented (comprising about half of all offenders) and it would be simplistic to take these findings at face value without considering a range of factors that might lead up to this over representation. Jackson (2000), for example, discusses the role that the institutional culture of the police plays in the practices of the organization and the individuals who belong to it. He also notes that tensions that exist between Maori and other police shape both the attitudes of police to Maori and Maori attitudes towards the police. This also links to the research on the marginalisation of ethnic groups referred to earlier (O'Neil, Pavis), . Pacific youth, on the other hand, are not over-represented, except for violence offences (Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Social Development, 2002).

Discussion of Violence Offences Data

The analysis of police records presented above, suggests that the patterns of alcohol-related violence committed by young people in the Auckland region are consistent with other research findings. For instance, the pattern of offending is gendered with an overwhelming majority of offences committed by males.

Not surprisingly, only a small proportion of violence offences were allegedly committed by under 18 year olds when they had previously been drinking at a licensed premise. There were more violence offences allegedly committed by under 18 year olds when they had been drinking in an unlicensed location. This data tends to confirm the data gathered from alcohol consumption surveys where young people reported that the most typical drinking locations were at home, or other people's homes or in outdoor public places. The 18-21 year old group comprised the majority of alleged violent offenders who had been previously drinking at licensed premises.

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, the number of youth aged 10-16 will increase, which may lead to an associated increase in youth offending. This increase may be more pronounced among Maori and Pacific youth in the Auckland urban area. By 2016, Maori are projected to constitute 27% of all New Zealanders under 17. Combined with other factors, such as social disadvantage and educational achievement, Maori youth may remain over-represented in youth offending statistics.

By 2016, Pacific peoples are projected to constitute 13% of all New Zealanders under 17 and as with young Maori, the combination of this with socio-economic disadvantage and educational achievement could see an ongoing over-representation in youth offending, in particular violent offending (Ministry of Justice & Ministry of Social Development, 2002).

Alcohol infringement data

Methodology

A second dataset was developed, based on all alcohol infringements recorded by police in 2001. Alcohol infringement offences are violations of the Sale of Liquor Act 1999, committed by minors, and notices are given for any of the following five offence categories:

1. Under 18, purchased liquor from licensed premises
2. Under 18, restricted area on licensed premises
3. Under 18, supervised area on licensed premises without parent etc.
4. Under 18, without guardian, in public place drinking intoxicating liquor
5. Under 18, without guardian, in public place in possession/control of intoxicating liquor for consumption there.

Given the focus of this study on public spaces, only notices issued in relation to offences 4 and 5 were analysed. This dataset comprised 409 offences.

Issuing of alcohol infringement notices by police is discretionary, and therefore the data represents police practice in different areas rather than the extent of alcohol infringements that actually occurred.

Infringements that occurred in public places were geocoded either according to the address if specified; to the midpoint of the road within the specified suburb, where full address data was not supplied; and at the centre of the appropriate Census area unit corresponding to the specified suburb, for data which detailed suburb only. In the final dataset 408 out of a total 409 alcohol infringements were geocoded. The mean accuracy of geocoded offence data (among those that took place on specified roads) was estimated as 434m either side of the points assigned as infringement location.

Findings

Since the changes to the Sale of Liquor Act in 1999 police are able to fine a person who is under the age of 18, in a public place and possessing or consuming alcohol without a guardian present. Infringement notices are issued for these offences. As noted above the use of infringement notices is varied, thus the data below needs to be understood in this context and not taken as indicative of total numbers of young people engaging in these practices in the Auckland region.

Map 3 displays the approximate locations of alcohol infringement notices issued within the Auckland region in 2001. As noted in the methodology, issuing of alcohol infringement notices by police is discretionary, and therefore the data represents police practice in different areas rather than the extent of alcohol infringements that actually occurred.

In general, the notices were issued within the main business districts of the region. Of particular note are the Auckland CBD, and also Parnell, Orewa, Manukau and Pukekohe. It is notable that in North Shore City, notices were issued in locations across the city, rather than concentrated in a few areas. It should be noted that the locations where many alcohol infringement notices were issued are approximate only.

Over half of the 401 infringement notices issued in the Auckland region in the year 2001 to people under the age of 18 possessing or drinking alcohol in a public place, were issued before midnight (60%). Twenty five percent were issued between midnight and 4am. The majority (83%) of notices were issued on a weekend, 37% on Saturdays and 33% on Fridays. Saturdays had the highest number of notices issued because this day includes two popular socialising periods, the early hours of Saturday morning and the late hours of Saturday night. Seventeen year olds made up 41% of the young people issued notices, 16 year olds 35%, and 15 year olds 20%. Most infringement notices in Auckland were issued to a young person in a park or square (21%) or on a footpath - usually in a main shopping centre (14%).

Half of all infringement notices for the Auckland region were issued in Auckland City. These 207 notices were primarily issued to young people under the age of 18 who were drinking or possessing alcohol on a footpath (often Queen St), in or around Aotea Square, outside a fast-food outlet or in Queen Elizabeth Square. These notices were mainly issued between 10 pm and 2am (70%) and on a Friday (33%) or a Saturday (43%). Nine percent of infringement notices in Auckland City were issued on a weekday, and most of these were on a Monday. Seventeen year olds featured most commonly as the recipients of infringement notices (43%), 16 year olds were issued 35%.

In the North Shore and Waitakere police district 145 infringement notices were issued to persons under the age of 18 in possession/control of or drinking intoxicating liquor with out the supervision of a guardian. However only 16 of these infringement notices were given in Waitakere City.

Seventy three percent of these notices were issued between 8pm and midnight and 80% were issued on a weekend, primarily Saturday 37%, then Friday 34% and Thursday 11%. Most of the recipients of these infringement notices were either 17 (40%) or 16 (35%). These notices were issued most commonly to people found in a public place such as a square or a park or on the footpath. Other locations, were car-parks and inside a parked motor vehicle.

Thirty-seven infringement notices were issued to people under the age of 18 in the Counties Manukau district in the year 2001. Forty nine percent of these were issued between 10 pm and 11:59 pm. Most were given on a Saturday (24%) or Friday (22%), 19% were issued on a Thursday. Although 59% were issued between 8pm and 4am, the other 41% of the infringement notices in this district appear to have been issued during the daytime. The notices were mainly given to young people found drinking or in possession of alcohol in a square or park, or on footpaths. Forty one percent of these young people were 16 years old, 27% were 17, and 24% were 15 years.

Discussion of Infringement Data

Over half of all infringement notices were issued in the Auckland City environs with the least in Waitakere City (16). Most infringement notices were issued on weekends mainly before midnight and over half of these in all the police districts were issued to 16 year olds and under. A high proportion of young people issued with infringement notices were reported as intoxicated. Most infringement notices were issued in the Auckland police district between 10pm and 2am with the majority of notices in the North Shore/Waitakere police district issued between 8pm and midnight. Although most infringement notices were issued during 8pm-4am in the Manukau police district, a high percentage appear to have been issued during daylight hours. It should be noted that his data represents only a very small proportion of underage drinkers in light of the discretionary practices reported by police and the alcohol survey data available.

Analysis of Data Gathered Specifically for this Study

To gain new understandings of the relationship between alcohol, young people and violence in public spaces the research team undertook a number of new data gathering activities. An in-depth study of alcohol related violence by young people in public spaces was developed in the Auckland region by the quantitative analysis of existing data bases augmenting analyses described earlier with observational data, data from interviews with stakeholders and young people and through an analysis of relevant media reports. Police and security officers from throughout the region were also interviewed. Local and national newspapers were monitored from Jan 2001 – June 2002. In addition the Auckland central business district provided the location for an in-depth study of young people's behaviour and perceptions of violence and safety in public spaces. It was originally proposed, and provisionally agreed by police that

police videotapes filmed through street security cameras on the same nights that the observations and interviews took place could be viewed and analysed. However this proved to not be possible due to police policy and privacy issues.

Media Review

Methodology

Auckland's suburban newspapers as well as the New Zealand Herald were monitored for articles relevant to this research. Articles were reviewed to identify reports of incidents as well as expressions of concern from, businesses, the public or police, plus new policy directions relating to young people and alcohol in public spaces. This analysis is useful to examine which incidents are reported plus how they are reported. Secondly this analysis reveals how concerns around young people and alcohol in public spaces are raised in the media and whose perspectives are represented in this media coverage. A recent television documentary series of the infotainment variety, featuring street security in downtown Auckland city was also examined.

Media Reports of Young People and Alcohol in Public Spaces.

Earlier sections have shown that there is a significant proportion of people living in Auckland that feel unsafe in their central shopping area at night. Previous reports indicate that media reporting of crime and young people's offending is highly influential in shaping peoples perceptions of safety (Big Cities, 2001; National Crime Prevention Strategy, 1999). Therefore, a review was undertaken in this research of newspaper reports of young people and alcohol and/or young people and violence in public spaces throughout Auckland. These newspapers reports were examined to identify how newspaper items on the general subject of young people, alcohol and violence in public spaces are generated and reported.

When reviewing media coverage it is important to recognise that because of the high visibility of their offending, young people not only receive more attention from the public and police, but also from the media. The media, which often presents young people's offending in sensationalised ways, is more likely to disproportionately highlight atypical, violent crimes; 'street crime', and the threat of crime to everybody because of its randomness (NCP, 1999). Marsh and Kibby (cited in Stockwell, 1994) identified that the media coverage of supposed alcohol-related incidents tended to be greatly exaggerated

For this report, key articles that deal with alcohol and young people have been identified from both suburban and regional newspapers in Auckland over the last year. While not necessarily representative, they are nevertheless indicative of general media reportage on this topic. These articles fall into the categories of reports of incidents involving young people in public spaces; reports of Police perceptions; reports of territorial local authority policies and reports of central government policies.

Reports of incidents involving young people in public spaces.

In the seventeen months from Jan 2001 – May 2002 seven incidents were reported in newspapers in Auckland, where there had been violence in a public space in the Auckland region involving a young person. The most recent incident occurred in May 2002 when young men between the ages of 17 and 20 were arrested for fighting on the street in the Waitakere suburb of Massey. These young men were reported to be

part of the 'Blood' and 'Kelston Outlaws' gangs and to be carrying baseball bats, machetes and a firearm (New Zealand Herald 8/5/02). On January 16th 2002 a 22 year old man died after a fight involving a number of young men in a suburban street in Owairaka. The men were reported to have been drinking at home when the fight broke out, (New Zealand Herald 18/1/2002). Another incident occurred on the corner of Wyndham and Queen Streets in downtown Auckland in the early hours of New Years Day 2002. A 21 year old male was involved in a fight, which resulted in his skull being fractured- (New Zealand Herald 2/1/02). In November 2001 a 22 year old was run over in East Street off Karangahape Road. This incident was reported in connection with a skirmish, which led to two other people being treated for head injuries in Auckland Hospital. Numerous glass bottles found at the site suggest that alcohol may have been a factor in this event (New Zealand Herald 21/11/01). A party that spilled out onto the street was the scene of another violent incident, this time on the North Shore, in April 2002. A 15 year old female was run over by a car amidst fights between clusters of young people (New Zealand Herald 16/4/01). Another event was the murder of a 23 year old man who had been out clubbing, on the corner of Gore and Queen Streets, Central Auckland in January 2001. This man was robbed and beaten to death, the accused aged between 18 and 21 years of age (New Zealand Herald, May 25 2001). Also in January 2001 a 20 year old woman was raped by a group of men in Tyler St, down town Auckland (New Zealand Herald 25/1/01).

Whilst the presence of alcohol as a factor in these incidents was not always clear these article do provide a picture of the types of violent incidents that have occurred in public places in the Auckland region involving young people. There were another three reports of incidents occurring in public spaces but the age of the people involved was not reported. There was a report of a brawl in Keegan Park Massey, in March 2001 (New Zealand Herald, 12/3/02), a fight on Woodside Road Ranui (New Zealand Herald, 10/12/01), and another brawl, on a main street in Otahuhu in February 2001 (New Zealand Herald 4/2/01).

Reports of police concerns.

Suburban newspapers ran reports of police concerns about teenage drinking binges in public spaces, teenagers fighting, and their general intimidating behaviour in central Auckland. In September 2001 the Eastern Area Police were reported to be dealing with the growing popularity of teenagers assembling in waterfront areas for drinking binges. In this article the Chief Inspector for this area was quoted as encouraging the liquor industry to work with schools and parents to create a combined effort to reduce teenage drinking (East and Bays Courier, Sept 7 2001). In January 2002, police support of Council initiatives to ban liquor in certain public spaces in Auckland City was reported. The Superintendent for Police in Auckland City, called for greater restrictions on the availability of alcohol to people in public places, as a way of curbing the excesses of intoxicated people (Auckland City Harbour News, January 30 2002). Another article in April 2002 tells of police increasing their presence in Mission Bay in response to young people fighting in the beachfront park (East and Bays Courier, April 5 2002).

Reports of business people's concerns.

In October and November of 2000 the Heart of the City Business Association's concerns regarding security in the downtown area of Auckland City were profiled in

the New Zealand Herald (see New Zealand Herald October 30, 2000). As discussed earlier in this report these concerns led to the employment of First Security guards on Thursday through to Saturday nights. Since the employment of Security Guards in the central business district the Heart of the City's concerns, reported in Auckland papers, have turned more to the issue of council funding of security and Closed Circuit Television operations. The Heart of the City has also given its support to Council initiatives to ban alcohol on Queen Street and to remove drag racing in the city (see New Zealand Herald 30/10/01; Central Leader 27/2/02).

In February 2002 retailers in Henderson's main Street were reported in the Western Leader to be frustrated by "fighting, vandalism, graffiti, drug use, alcohol abuse and general intimidation towards public and shopkeepers alike". One shop owner claimed "gang members and street kids" were congregating in large numbers on the street (21/2/02 Western Leader).

Reports of Territorial Local Authority policies

Over the last 17 months the majority of stories in Auckland newspapers about young people and alcohol or violence in public spaces were reports of council policy initiatives. In August 2001 the suburban newspaper *East and Bays Courier* ran a story about the Minister for Auckland Issues, Judith Tizard, exploring Queen St in the early hours of a Saturday morning with Police Inspector Brett England and the then Mayor of Auckland City Christine Fletcher. This article reported the ministers concerns about the number of people drinking in public places and the amount of glass littering the streets. This walkabout highlighted both council and police concerns about the limited police resources being put into the Auckland CBD. Later that year and with the change of Council in Auckland City, a *Herald* article (27/10/01) opened with: "High noon is approaching for hoons using central Auckland streets as a private drag strip" with the new Mayor, John Banks quoted as saying that his targets were "young men filled to the gills with booze struggling out of clubs and urinating in doorways and on cars." A fellow councillor, Noelene Raffills is quoted in another article as saying: "I think we have a whole different culture that happens after dark. I am astounded at the number of groups of young guys that just walk around" (Auckland City Harbour News 12/12/01). These comments reflect one area of significant concern for the newly created Law and Order Committee of Auckland City's Council, which focused on issues of alcohol consumption in public places and in doing so has captured a significant proportion of media attention. This committee has also recently discussed concerns about large groups of young people gathering in Mission Bay. This was reported in an article titled "Beachfront disorder spread regionwide" in the Auckland City Harbour News (April 26 2002, p5). In order to address some of these issues the council are exploring an alcohol ban along Queen St and in Aotea Square and in some parks, beaches and reserves. This was reported in the Auckland City Harbour News (May 3 2002 P 5) under the headline "Alcohol bans designed to curb misbehaviour", with the article presenting the council's "zero tolerance philosophy".

Manukau City Council's debates about banning alcohol in some public places were reported under the headline "Alcohol ban proposed for Manukau (Manukau Courier 7 Aug 2001). This article reported on debates arising from the council's submission to the Review of the Local Government Act. These debates eventuated in an

amendment to the Council's submission to include a statement in support of council's being able to create bylaws to ban alcohol in specific areas.

A review of Waitakere and North Shore papers reveals that articles about young people and alcohol tended to feature issues about drink driving and unsupervised parties, whilst violence in public places was not a prominent concern. Nevertheless the Western Leader did report the work that the Police, Waitakere City Council, Safer Community Council and the University of Auckland were doing into research into crime in Waitakere including the examination of alcohol related incidents in public places.

Reports of Central Government policies.

Alcohol bans featured strongly in the media during the New Year period, due to new legislation passed just before Christmas 2001 that granted Councils greater powers to invoke alcohol bans. The *Herald* announced: "Alcohol ban Xmas present to NZ" (20/12/01). However, this hastily conceived private member's legislation also inadvertently made it an offence to carry alcohol anywhere in a public place, thus also technically making it unenforceable. This legislation provided headlines in their own right, particularly in Auckland, which had pushed strongly since 2000 for greater discretionary powers for City Councils to invoke liquor bans.

Television: City-beat

City-beat is a television programme that featured in prime time on Thursday evenings during April-May 2002 on TV2, the 'youth' channel of the TVNZ network. It is billed on its website (tv2.nzzoom.com) as:

Want a wild night out on the town that you can actually remember in vivid detail afterwards? Join a team of security guards as they patrol the beat in central Auckland and see the city like you've never seen it before on the new local series **City Beat**.

With police resources thinly stretched, the 'Heart Of The City Business Association' hires these private security guards as a front line of defence against the vandals, drunks, thieves and thugs that plague the downtown area.

Queen Street is a magnet for street life in all its variety. On a busy Friday night the throng of shoppers and clubbers, boy racers, street musicians and down-and-outs can be a volatile mix. Nipping conflict in the bud is the name of the game for 'First Security', and when drugs, alcohol, and gang rivalries are added to the mix, the job can be unpredictable and dangerous.

Each episode of **City Beat** puts you right on the spot with guards Bill, Scott, Mark and T as all the action, humour and drama of an unforgettable night unfolds.

After pursuing a dodgy character who has bolted from a restaurant without paying, the boys are called to a burger bar, where an argument over littering is getting ugly. As insults fly, a punch is thrown- and the violence quickly escalates. Bill and Scott are forced to restrain one extremely aggressive woman before she can make hamburger meat of her opponent.

Complaints pour in from local retailers about a busker with an electric guitar so loud it's shredding eardrums for blocks around. Scott and Mark attempt to negotiate a reduction in volume with the Jimi Hendrix wannabe, but his unruly fans are cheering for him to go louder and it soon becomes a showdown.

Outside a nightclub on Albert St, two rival groups from South Auckland are facing off as T and other guards reach the scene. The tension immediately erupts into violence- a brawl involving at least twenty. As the security guards struggle to separate the main offenders, it's clear they're outnumbered and the situation is out of control. It's a relief when the police arrive, using pepper spray to subdue the mob - until they're sprayed in the face themselves.

Down by the waterfront, Bill's also dealing with a potentially explosive situation. A large crowd of underage drinkers are congregating near the derelict Britomart construction site. Spotting blue uniforms, the mob start throwing bottles. As police respond to Bill's call for backup, a riot breaks out.

It's all part of the job for the guys from First Security- but **City Beat** will change the way you see the street. Thursdays at 8.00pm on TV2.

City Beat might change the way one sees the street, but it doesn't necessarily represent in an impartial manner what actually occurs on the street. It suggests that crime in the city – and the attendant lack of safety aspects – is greater than it is in actuality. Also, the programme sensationalises what it shows: episodes billed as featuring brawls appear on viewing to be little more than scuffles. While portraying the security staff on Auckland's Queen Street, it also suggests that the City is amok with drunken and disorderly youths. Rather than encouraging people to come into the City – (what the Heart of the City Business Association tried to do by employing private security, amongst other things) it presents an image that may be keeping them away.

Perceptions of Safety and Violence in the Auckland Region

Police perceptions

Methodology

Interviews were undertaken with key police personnel from the Auckland City, Counties Manukau, and North Shore/ Waitakere/ Rodney District Head Quarters. Both the watch house officer (or equivalent position) and a licensing officer were interviewed for each district. These interviews were designed to gather information about incidents that occur, police strategies for dealing with these, plus the officers' general perceptions of violence and safety in public spaces, particularly relating to young people and alcohol

Findings

Police interviewed indicated that they regularly respond to incidents involving young people in public spaces. These incidents include verbal abuse, comatose people, property damage, bottle throwing, scuffles between friends, and occasionally violent fights between groups of people with weapons. Police report that there has been an increase in the involvement of under 18 year olds in these activities and frequently

that there are people as young as 11 in these places late at night. Alcohol is generally present when young people gather in these places and those engaging in disorderly behaviour are typically under the influence of alcohol.

Police throughout the region most commonly reported that they are dealing with groups of young people that cause trouble in public spaces. Police spoken to stated that some groups, in particular those who identify themselves by wearing coloured bandanas, have a 'culture of violence'. These young people were described as going looking for trouble in town. The police claimed that these groups often gather in a public space with the purpose of drinking till intoxicated and then going looking for another group of young people to have a fight with.

However, the police spoken to recognised that there are also groups that meet in public spaces that do not necessarily drink and who are just hanging out for a while before they move on to do something else, or as a way of being with other people near an attraction such as the movie theatre, skate board park or games parlour. Police noted that in some parts of Auckland there are groups of young people attached to groups of older people (20-50 year olds) who are also hanging out and drinking in car parks or shopping malls. The police respondents also acknowledged that their perception of young people hanging out in town is shaped by the fact that they deal most commonly with the extreme groups of young people, notably those that are highly intoxicated or are committing an offence.

The usual types of trouble the police deal with involving young people in public spaces are disorderly behaviour, minor theft, vandalism and fighting. The police also spend a lot of time tracking down the parents of extremely intoxicated young people. A major concern was the increasing numbers of young women the police were finding who are by themselves on the streets and so intoxicated that they are almost unconscious.

The police reported that the places where alcohol-related incidents most frequently occur are:

- Queen St, Quay St, plus Aotea and Queen Elizabeth squares in Auckland City,
- Browns Bay beach and shopping centre on the North Shore,
- West City and Te Pai skateboard park in Henderson, Waitakere City
- Otara, Mangere, Manukau and Howick Shopping Centres in Manukau City.

For all these places most of the trouble involving young people and alcohol will occur Thursday night through to Sunday morning primarily between the hours of 9:30pm and 3 am.

The majority of police spoken to stated that they believed the lowering of the drinking age had led to increased access to alcohol and increased numbers of young people drinking in public spaces and/or engaging in violent or criminal offences. They commented:

"...they'll get one of these 18 year olds to go and get it for them who has got no problem, or not too worried about, you know you don't need a licence to get a drinking certificate you don't have to learn about it being an offence to supply alcohol to minors, so you get the 16 or 17 year olds they are bound to

know somebody who is 18, give them the money and maybe give them a couple of bucks for themselves, they will go and get it for them.”

“The amount of disorder jobs that we attend now with young people drinking has increased substantially, it has increased our workload substantially, we get a lot of drunk juveniles in here.”

When asked about the use of infringement notices for minors, a number of the officers spoken to claimed that the notices were not used regularly for two reasons. Firstly, staff often did not carry the pad of notices with them when they were on the beat because the pad was too large to carry. This meant that the police were more likely to give an infringement notice if they came across the incident when they were in their car. Secondly, police thought infringement notices were not always the most useful way of discouraging people. Some thought the fine was often just another financial burden for a family that is already struggling. Other police officers thought that since it was the parents that most commonly pay the fine, it does not act as a deterrent for the young people.

I have to say that I have had an infringement notice book and I think I have written out 2 tickets. I don't think they are used enough, but in saying that you give a juvenile a ticket for \$200 for drinking in a public place, he can't afford it, and so who pays it, the parents, so I don't think that it's punishing the correct people, it is punishing the parents, so we have this thing called the attitude test and if they fail the attitude test well then they probably will get a ticket. And so if they are smart and mouthy and not co-operative, then where as they might have got a warning, they will get a ticket issued for it.

Well you know I talk to them, and see how they were about it, but you know you sort of think when you were 16 and how would you like a \$200 fine, but at the end of the day if that's the only way of getting the message across I don't have any trouble giving them one, just for the reason that they really can't see where they have gone wrong, so no I have certainly dished plenty out, and some people I certainly know have got more than one.

It is apparent when looking at the infringement data that the number of notices given out varies considerably from city to city.

Police were concerned that there needed to be some consistency in the strategies used to deal with young people in public spaces There were varied responses regarding alcohol bans:

Because then basically the only place you could drink would be, and I presume it is just a CBD thing, would be in a bar and the bar would be responsible for doing their job right, and therefore nobody should get too intoxicated and if they did, the police should be notified early, and there would be nobody of any age walking up and down the street with potential missiles [...]but if there was a by-law or whatever it is that they get that says nobody is to be consuming alcohol in a public place, I just think the whole inner city area would look a lot more tidy, and I'd imagine that it would reduce disorder

in town and some serious violence by quite a lot. We won't know until it happens".

We have got a new Mayor in Auckland now who wants to clear up the hoons, and this has happened one or two times in the past: our hoons just roll over, and the police get pressured to target these kids and move them on, and you get them all out of town and all of a sudden the council will put on some sort of outdoor thing to get them all back in town again. And this is going back a bit, but the Aotea Square riots is a prime example where the police and everybody are being pushed because of problems in the street and the safety issues, so the police have come down hard on everybody, basically thinning them all out and these kids would be back in their own areas again so the council then probably turns around and puts on a pop concert which turns to custard, but attracts them all back in again, so I am just a bit cynical.

In-depth Study of Auckland City's Central Business District

An in-depth study of downtown Auckland was undertaken to both observe young people's behaviour in town and gain some insights through their voices into their behaviours and perspectives on drinking, levels of violence and safety in public spaces. This study occurred after the private security staff had been hired to patrol downtown Auckland so public space safety could have been expected to improve during this period.

Throughout the period of Nov 2001 - Feb 2002 a team of four observers traversed downtown Auckland observing activities in public spaces. Observations occurred on five weekends over this period. The observers were on the streets from 9pm – 5am on the Friday and Saturday nights. The observers moved between key locations such as Queen Elizabeth Square, the Viaduct Basin, Myers Park and Aotea Square, each location was observed at least twice in the night.

The observers were trained to note what activities were happening on the footpaths or in squares or parks that involved people who looked under the age of 25. They noted if alcohol appeared to be present, they described the bottles or cans they could see in people's possession or lying on the ground. They also described people's behaviour, the physical environment, plus how comfortable they felt in that location at that time. Observers were asked to note how groups of people interacted and whether people were passing through an area or appeared to be staying in the one place for more than 10 minutes. The team of observers ranged in ages from 19 – 30 and were from a diverse range of backgrounds.

On two weekends at the end of November and beginning of December (while observations were also happening) 114 young people between the ages of 16 and 25, who were hanging out in downtown Auckland on Friday and Saturday nights, were interviewed. Just over half of those interviewed were male, 19 % were Maori, 33% were Pakeha, 21% Pacific, 16 % were Asian. Maori, Pacific peoples and Asians were over-sampled in the interviews, with Pakeha young people under-represented. Out of these 114 young people, 25% were aged between 16-17, 44% between 18-20 and, 31% between 20-25.

The interviews were designed to gather data about young people's perceptions and experiences of hanging out in public spaces. The semi-structured interview lasted between 5 and 10 minutes. Questions ranged from what motivated the person to come into town, how frequently they came, what they did in town, if they drank alcohol, what they drank, how much and where they got it from, plus the person's ideas for what else they'd do if they didn't come into town and their ideas for making the city safer. The interviewees ranged in age from 19- 25 and came from diverse ethnic backgrounds. People who were sitting or standing around in parks, squares or on Queen St were approached for an interview following the University of Auckland's ethics guidelines. All interviews were audio taped.

On the whole the interviewers found people to be more than willing to be interviewed and enjoyed telling their stories. Often the interviewee showed signs of having recently consumed alcohol. In cases where the person appeared to be heavily intoxicated and not comprehensible, the interview was cut short. The social setting plus the presence of alcohol may have possibly led to some interviewees exaggerating their claims. However, according to the researchers' assessment of this, it has not unduly influenced the research findings.

The following sections reveal the information gathered from five weeks observing public spaces in downtown Auckland plus information from interviews with 114 young people. These interviews provide an indication of the range and complexity of young people's perspectives. They are not presented as a conclusive study of young people's activities in public spaces.

Observations

Being in town on Friday and Saturday nights has a long history of being an important part of young Aucklanders' socialisation and self-identification. Downtown Auckland is attractive to young people for a multitude of reasons. The most common attraction is its choice of clubs and venues plus its centrality makes it an accessible place to meet friends travelling across the city.

A striking feature of Queen Street on Friday and Saturday nights is the heavy flow of people carrying bottles down the street as they head to nightclubs. The interviewees reported that it is common practice for people to keep drinking right up to the door of a club aiming to get as drunk as possible before going in because alcohol costs so much more in the clubs. As a result, empty glass bottles are evident throughout the streets and squares, particularly after 1am.

On all of the five weekends of observation, the downtown area was on the whole, busy, vibrant, well lit and filled with gregarious people. There were almost always groups of people hanging out in Aotea Square and Queen Street was constantly busy. Only a very few of the activities observed by the researchers involved incidents of violence, although many unsafe behaviours were observed. These were never consistently in the same place or situation. The observers recorded the presence frequently of young people yelling at each other, the presence of young people who appeared to be drinking large amounts of alcohol and who appeared to be heavily intoxicated. Often these were young women who were alone.

The observers noted environmental factors such as lighting, litter, location of telephones, and taxi stands plus the facilities that were open. Most of the locations observed were consistently well lit. The exceptions were, the tree lined perimeter of Myers park, the Market Square in the Viaduct basin, the old post office corner of Queen Elizabeth Square and the back of Beresford Square. As previously noted glass bottles littered the pavements down Queen Street and were frequently present in the squares. Taxis were very visible throughout the nights and could frequently be found in large numbers along Queen Street, Karangahape Road and at the Viaduct Basin. Games parlours, Internet cafes, convenience stores and fast food outlets are open 24 hours along the length of Queen Street and Karangahape Road. These provide a constant source of activity, noise and lighting, plus many have security guards present as well. The vibrant atmosphere in downtown Auckland is also further enhanced by street buskers who perform until the early hours, stalls selling hot dogs both on Queen Street and in the Viaduct Basin. Large groups of gospel singers and evangelists, plus hawkers sell their crafts into the early hours of the morning. The now infamous midnight traffic jams on Queen Street also provide a constant rumble of cars, loud music and engagement between people in cars and people on the street.

The range of activities occurring in public spaces involving young people observed includes; people having intercourse in the park, skateboarding, people talking in groups, people sitting alone, a person sleeping on a bench, people smoking cannabis, people vomiting, people dancing, people stumbling, watching buskers, eating food, calling out to people in cars, people waiting outside the clubs.

The activities observed that were potentially illegal, violent or unsafe included; people throwing bottles at passers-by, people with alcohol who appeared to be under the age of 18, people who appeared heavily intoxicated lying or sitting alone in the gutters or on park benches, people carrying knives and baseball bats, young women walking alone being accosted by older men, tagging and vandalism, a person having their wallet stolen, individuals fighting. Of particular concern was a middle aged looking man who, on two weekends, was observed sitting in a car outside McDonalds Restaurant. He was observed pouring Jim Beam into the coke bottles of young people who appeared to be under the age of 18.

On three occasions a fight involving young people was observed. Two of these were in Aotea Square, one on a Friday night and one on a Saturday night. The other incident was in the Viaduct Basin on a Friday night. On all occasions the fights were between two people, on one occasion it was between a man and a woman. Groupings of approximately 8-10 young people were also frequently present. These groups are often referred to by other young people and police as 'gangs' and are identified by both as key troublemakers. On four occasions, groups of young people carrying weapons, such as baseball bats and knives were observed.

The observers noted that police interactions with young people most commonly included taking alcohol off them and pouring it down a drain, chatting with very young looking teenagers, or intervening in a fight. Security were also observed mediating arguments, getting young people to clear up their bottles, and on one occasion detaining a person accused of theft.

Street interviews

On the weekends that street interviews took place, the majority (72%) of people interviewed had been drinking that night. Of these drinkers, just over 50% had been drinking before coming into town, as well as whilst in town. The most popular beverage was spirits, with beer well behind in second place. The alcohol was most commonly sourced from bottle store purchases, with additional drinks purchased in bars or clubs. Friends and family were the next most common source of alcohol.

Fifty seven percent of those interviewed claimed to come into town most Friday and/or Saturday nights. The majority of people interviewed (52%) lived in the Auckland City area. People living in Manukau City comprised 18% of the interviewees, North Shore residents 15% and Waitakere residents 7%. Five of the people interviewed lived outside of the Auckland region, but they came to town regularly on their weekends. The reasons given for coming into town were multiple, ranging from the attraction of formal activities such as movies, clubs, cafes and bars to the informal attractions of drag racing, tagging, hassling people, evangelism and 'cruising'. Other reasons given reflected more enviro-social motivations, such as town being close to home or work, or town having lots of boys/girls. A common response was that downtown is where you've got to be because everything is happening there.

The young people interviewed in downtown Auckland relayed differing experiences of town. There were a core group of people who regularly 'hang out' in town who are often known to the police. These young people reported frequent interactions with the police. People who solely 'hang out' (that is, just being around in a group of peers) in town were a small part of the people present there. Most 'hanging out' occurs between activities and in order to meet people.

Perspectives of violence/trouble in public places

Just under half (47%) of all interviewees had been involved in some sort of trouble in town. This trouble ranged from people eyeballing them to violent fights and arrest by the police. Notably a higher proportion of 16-17 year olds had been involved in trouble than other age groups.

Hell yeah. Last year all the time. I had a hiding last year. My head was just about to get hit by a power pole and this guy saved my life. Yeah they chucked me out of a car. And this dude just picked me up and ran with me, they had my hair, my hair was all out. They were about to smash me into a power pole but this guy he just jumped up and grabbed me. There were about 50 people watching and no one did anything apart from one guy. (Female, 16-17, Pakeha)

I got hospitalised by eight little bastards, they all kicked my head in and put me in hospital. We have big fights, and we end up on top. (Male, 24, Pakeha)

A friend of mine got punched in the face, by some guy. Her bag got stolen, she knew it was them; everyone knew it was them. So she questioned them about it and so the guy punched her in the face. So everyone else was like "fuck that we're going to get him". It was quite an aggressive night. (Female, 17, Pakeha/Maori)

There was a loose uniformity to the respondents' perceptions of the causes of trouble in town. People who were drunk, on drugs, underage and or in a group 'looking for trouble' were seen to be the source of incidents in town; these people were also most commonly thought to be male. Notably the police and security also rated highly as instigators of trouble. These responses also match the comments made when interviewees were asked what would put them off coming into town. People felt put off by men's sexual approaches, drunk people, people yelling, too many queues in clubs, people staring at each other, gangs, and fights. One respondent also noted that they would stop coming if there were less people in town.

Perceptions of Safety

. When asked if they thought it was safe to be in town at the time of night they were there, the majority felt it was very safe or fairly safe depending on their actions, and the specific places they went to. The vast majority of people (89%) felt either as safe or safer than they did a year ago. Increased feelings of safety were reported to be related to personal changes, such as their getting older and becoming more familiar with town, rather than because of environmental changes within the city, such as extra policing or more lighting. Some of the responses, below, indicate these feelings of safety. What is noteworthy about these responses is what these feelings of safety are based on.

Very safe, cos we' re the ones to be scared of

I feel safe ' cos I' m huge

Pretty safe. I can see heaps of policemen

Safe, I'm drunk so I don' t care about any people

Guys are ok, girls by themselves are not safe

It depends who your friends are and if they look after you

Pretty safe, especially for women

It's fairly safe for people my age. The older people are more in danger cos there are a lot of younger people around.

Others did not feel the environment was so safe:

Nobody's safe - something always happens

If you are under sixteen you should be at home. Don' t come to town by yourself

There's some fucking dick heads out there that can' t handle drinking that walk around thinking they're tough guys and pick a fight.

There are a lot of freaks out tonight. There are also a lot of young people who don' t know much about the real world.

Perceptions of Police and Security

There is a consistent police and security presence and regular interventions are made. The police and security proved to be highly visible: 71% of people interviewed had noticed them at some point during the night. People's perceptions of the police and security vary greatly but most people (75%) interviewed thought there were more police and security than a year ago. However, police and security presence didn't necessarily make people feel safer. Those interviewed were very vocal about police and security practices. Those who regularly 'hang out' were more likely to resent police/ security presence, and report 'unjustified' interventions/abuse.

We used to come in every single weekend. Now this is the first time in two months. There' s heaps more police. It's fucking up everything 'cos we can't drink. We were sweet as 'cos we were able to drink heaps and heaps. But now there's way too many pigs. I used to be a town rat. I used to come every Friday and Saturday.

There are so many more police now with the new council. And it makes everyone more rowdy than usual. Because they don' t like authority and it does not work. They haven' t figured out that young people don' t like authority. If they said things like maybe you should cut down on what you're drinking – that would work a lot better than just taking the alcohol off us – we'll always get more.

I got spat in the face by the bouncer at xxxx. There was a fight in the street and we were trying to stop it. The bouncer came down and spat in my face and pushed her into the curb. So I ran up to him and smacked him in the side of his head, he turned around and threw me about four metres. I had the biggest bruise on my back. I called the police and the police were like "you're drunk" and we said, "no we're pretty much sober now". And they were like "it must have been your fault". What's worse is that my friend who was the one caught in the fight was covered in blood, head to toe. I wouldn't normally smack someone but he spat in my face and was rude to my friend – that's just like – that's wrong.

They make the streets feel safe. They're doing their job.

Cops, they always check me and then give me a lift home for no reason. And then my mum doesn' t trust me and she thinks I' ve done something wrong. I get a big growling and a smack on the head. Cops think that just because e they' re in uniform they can treat kids like shit.

I've noticed a high increase in security and police surveillance. I think they make a scary difference.

They're sexy in uniforms. As long as they do realise that people will get drunk. If there' s a totally fucked up intoxicated bitch they should take her away but nah have respect its Friday/ Saturday night so have respect that

there will be people drinking or doing drugs. Look out for other people's safety, not trying to force shit for people

I think the security are doing an excellent job in Auckland City. Especially with the tourists around. Because the police, their resources are stretched, they can't get to everything. It's like 6 or 7 hours response time to a call for a burglary in Auckland. Keep the security on the streets. It will keep all the young ones away, and everyone will have a good night.

Changes to behaviour in town

A large proportion of the young people interviewed claimed to be coming into town more often than they were a year ago. The reasons for this change were primarily to do with the person getting older, changing their social group or their financial position. A common response was that they were 18 or their friend was 18 so they were coming in more often.

The majority of those people under the age of 20 said that the change in the drinking age had not affected them. A lot of these young people claimed to have always found it easy to access alcohol as revealed below.

No, I've been buying alcohol since I was 16 (18 year old)

No, when we were 16 we had fake IDs (18 year old)

No, I still get into clubs (17 year old)

No, maybe it's affected my parents – they think it's younger (16 year old)

Other young people who had previously felt some constraints with the previous drinking age commented;

Yes, its made getting into clubs easier. But in some places they didn't used to ask for ID but now they do. But we can get in anywhere now (18 year old).

Yes, definitely, we don't drink as much anymore. Because we don't need to. We can go into clubs now and enjoy ourselves there (18 year old).

Yes, I'm more likely to go drinking in town (18 year old).

Yes, I guess it has because I can go out now. But I could always get other people to buy me drinks before (18 year old).

Where else to go?

The majority of young people interviewed (69%) indicated that they would go to local venues/activities in their areas if they were there (and able to match the attractions of the CBD).

I'm at that horrible in between age, where you're not old enough to go clubbing, but too young to just sort of you know. So I'm at that age where you just wander round town or whatever.

They could cut down on boredom by providing good bands and good venues. Provide safe places.

It depends what would be happening. It would be hard to create a clubbing scene out there. Because its non existent right now. They' ve got xxxxxxxx down in the Albany industrial area. So if it could be built around that area, maybe I' d hang around there.

The attractions of downtown over their own city were clear for one person

Nah it will never happen aye. You're talking about Mangere and Otara and stuff. You're lucky if Manukau can get – I don't mean to put South Auckland down – but you just get a lot of nothing ya know. When you come to Auckland you get a lot of class, you get a lot of difference you get a lot of variation. You only get one taste when you go to Mangere – all PI and Maori. Come to town you get it all. You even get foreigners, and that's cool to hang out with foreigners. A guy doesn't like going to parties with his family. It' s good for something different.

Another young person was very positive about what was happening in Waitakere City

There's a lot of things been happening in Ranui. Like Waitakere City, we're trying to make a better living for more people out west. Ranui is like far out. We're trying to make a new communication between the people there in that community.

Key findings

These observations and interviews provide a series of snapshot views of weekend night life in the Auckland city central business district. They suggest that drinking in public spaces is commonplace amongst all age groups of young people. Almost half were from other cities and had brought their alcohol into town with them, generally obtained from local off-licence outlets and most were drinking spirits. They represented a diverse range of young people who were there for different reasons. Two of the main groupings were 18 year olds and older drinking prior to going on to clubs and bars (because it was cheaper to drink outside than inside) and under 18 year olds who were just 'hanging out' in the squares or main thoroughfares near licensed premises or fast food outlets. There also appeared to be a small street gang element that came courting trouble who were often known to the police and other city regulars. Although most felt very safe, just about half had experienced trouble of some kind, often reporting violent incidents. Perceptions of safety seemed to be largely based on their ability to handle themselves (getting older) though many reported that they thought other young people were not so safe (women on their own, intoxicated people, under 16 year olds). The majority had noticed a very visible security and police presence but there were mixed comments overall about their interactions that resonates with the research literature on sometimes inappropriate and/or inadequate intervention by police and security guards. Approximately half of those in the downtown area came from other cities and though the downtown area obviously has certain special appeal a significant number indicated that if there was more happening in areas closer to home they would go there.

Discussion: Creating Safer Public Spaces

Alcohol-related Harm in Public Spaces

The indications from all the data sources in this study are that there are links between young peoples' drinking in public spaces and increased risk of violence. The patterns of drinking reported in the Auckland surveys and picture painted from the late night weekend observations and interviews with people in downtown Auckland suggest that drinking to intoxication and experiencing problems often involving violence is fairly common for many young people. Police interviews and data suggest that a large proportion of their work involves alcohol-related incidents on weekend nights, particularly in Auckland city. Although media portrayals have often tended to sensationalise incidents and negatively feature young people as the sole source of the problems they are a reflection of police, Council and local business concerns. Safety is an important concern for all parts of the community including young people. The difference appears to be that when some young people are out drinking they feel bullet-proof. However their perceptions of safety may be clouded by their state of intoxication. The findings of the survey, police data and the interview self-reporting of trouble experienced would appear to indicate that the potential for harm is underestimated by young people.

It is noteworthy that there are a sizeable number of younger people out drinking with over half of all infringement notices issued to young people aged 16 and under in public spaces. Minors are also more likely to be involved in alcohol-related violent incidents before midnight. Most of the incidents in public spaces that related to offenders who had been previously drinking in licensing premises occurred between midnight and 4am. The practise of drinking to intoxication before entering licensing premises poses concern for the management of these premises and also has implications for the condition of intoxication people leave in. There is a clear evidence-based relationship between management practices (including serving of intoxicated patrons and behaviour of security staff) in licensed premises and violence in the literature.

Some groups may be more prone to be involved in incidents in public spaces than others, as indicated by the literature and police data. Young people who spend a lot of time on the streets are very visible and more marginalised groups such as Maori and Pacific peoples may have less access to alternative leisure activities and places to gather and socialise.

Environmental Strategies

The Auckland cities are increasingly adopting more of an intersectoral partnership approach addressing community issues. Many Councils are currently engaged in a range of activities to address alcohol issues but these are often occurring in an ad hoc manner rather than adopting a range of integrated strategies that could be applied to specific city contexts. There are identified differences in these cities that do need further investigation and use of specific initiatives drawn from key strategies outlined in the literature i.e. monitoring and enforcement, regulation, and addressing the leisure needs of young people.

Monitoring

Traditionally the police have always played a frontline monitoring role in public spaces but serious under-staffing problems in the Auckland region (until recently) has meant there have been less police available. The use of other personnel in monitoring situations is already evident in two of the Auckland cities but the scope of monitoring could be investigated further to include more youth-friendly options such as roving youth ambassadors/street angels and chill-out zones.

Management

There is a strong case for comprehensive introduction of improved management practices for licensed premises. This could involve violence risk audits, training and monitoring of servers and security staff, as well as adoption of robust Alcohol Accords. These have been shown to work effectively in other places in the context of police enforcement and reduce violent crime accordingly.

Regulation

The implementation of any Alcohol Policy would appear to be most useful when synchronised with other key policies such as Safety and Youth policies and frameworks. City planning and liquor licensing regulations that address licensed premise density, conditions of licence, licensing hours and host responsibility practices along with strategic use of alcohol bans are other effective elements to reduce the incidence of alcohol -related violence.

Social and Leisure Needs of Young People

Many different groups of young people use public spaces and this suggests that urban planning needs to take into account strategies to accommodate young people on a variety of levels. The emphasis on safety in public spaces has to heed young people's needs for public spaces to gather in and socialize. Young people and service providers commented on the validating of 'hanging out' as a normal activity in city centres. Providing facilities and events closer to where young people live will help meet a range of needs but it is important not to ignore young people as key participants in the night life of vibrant city centres.

There are a complex range of factors to be addressed and balanced in creating safer public spaces, from the responsibilities of liquor outlets, to monitoring and enforcement issues, the role of regulatory activities and meeting the social and leisure needs of young people. This report has identified some of the major elements through bringing together relevant data to inform the development of future collaborative strategies.

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