



Foundation for Alcohol
Research & Education

Level 1,
40 Thesiger Court
Deakin ACT 2600

PO Box 19
Deakin West ACT 2600

T 02 6122 8600
F 02 6232 4400

www.fare.org.au

ABN 91 096 854 385

4 September 2015

Mr Mike Sarquis
Executive Director
Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation
Locked Bag 180
CITY EAST QLD 4002

Dear Mr Sarquis

COMPLAINT REGARDING G&T CLOUD EXPERIENCE SHOW AT THE BRISBANE FESTIVAL

I am writing to lodge a complaint about the G&T Cloud Experience at the 2015 Brisbane Festival. The G&T Cloud Experience is billed as a gin and tonic immersible cloud and is part of the Fear and Delight dinner and stage show.ⁱ Patrons don protective clothing before entering the venue to be surrounded by a vapour that is infused with gin and tonic. Patrons breathe in the surrounding vapour.

This event at the Brisbane Festival is a concern. Little research has been conducted on the health effects of breathing in alcohol, however it is known that alcohol is a toxic and carcinogenic chemical. The alcohol vapour is absorbed through the mouth, nasal passages and eyeballs which means that the alcohol is absorbed directly into the blood stream. It is not metabolised by the stomach and by-passes the liver. As a result, the alcohol flows directly to the lungs and brain, increasing the speed with which it has an effect and increasing the concentration of the alcohol when it reaches the brain. This increases the risk of overdosing on alcohol, particularly if other alcohol is consumed.

Patrons are encouraged to attend the pre stage show banquet complete with artisan wines and after show party with its 'courageous cocktails and delicious drinks', increasing the risks for patrons who attend these activities. It appears that patrons are not allowed to drink alcohol while in the cloud and time spent in the cloud is limited, however these controls are subject to oversight by staff situated outside the cloud space.ⁱⁱ

The G&T Cloud Experience is an irresponsible promotional activity that trivialises the risks associated with alcohol and reinforces a culture where alcohol is glorified. It breaches the Liquor Act, painting alcohol as a benign product associated with having a good time and creates a dangerous precedent for other gimmicks associated with alcohol.

The G&T Cloud Experience should be withdrawn from the Brisbane Festival and steps undertaken to ensure that this type of activity is not approved in the future. I would be happy to discuss FARE's concerns with you.

Yours sincerely

MICHAEL THORN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

ⁱ Brisbane Festival 2015 *Fear and Delight* <http://www.brisbanefestival.com.au/whats-on/fear-delight>

ⁱⁱ Davies, H 2015 Get drunk to the eyeballs but there's not a drop to drink in the alcohol vapour bar *The Courier-Mail* September 2, 2015 <http://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/get-drunk-to-the-eyeballs-but-theres-not-a-drop-to-drink-in-the-alcohol-vapour-bar/story-fnihsrf2-1227508272446>