



**Jillian Skinner MP**

Minister for Health  
Minister for Medical Research

**Kevin Humphries MP**

Minister for Mental Health  
Minister for Healthy Lifestyles

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **NEW RESEARCH INTO ALCOHOL AND ENERGY DRINK CONSUMPTION**

Health and Medical Research Minister Jillian Skinner and Mental Health and Healthy Lifestyles Minister Kevin Humphries today announced the commissioning of a research program to investigate the effects of mixing alcohol with energy drinks.

Mrs Skinner said a number of research institutes led by the Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre will be investigating potential adverse effects of combining alcohol with energy drinks.

The institutes include Deakin University, the University of Tasmania, the University of Western Sydney and the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre of the University of NSW.

“It’s clear that alcohol and energy drink consumption has become a popular practice for many in NSW and particularly amongst young people. It’s for this reason that the NSW Government wants to ensure any possible adverse impacts are investigated,” Mrs Skinner said.

“The outcomes of the research will help us determine if there are any risks and the best approach going forward to tackle this issue.

“We know that the evidence base on this issue is still emerging, however there is existing research which suggests there may be significant health risks arising from mixing alcohol with caffeinated energy drinks.

“There are reports that combined alcohol and energy drink consumption may mask the perception of intoxication and lead to increased risky drinking and behaviours, even to dangerous levels.

“This is why the NSW Government is investing in this kind of research. The researchers will be looking at what people do, what they think and also testing what the physiological impacts might be of combining alcohol and energy drinks consumption,” Mrs Skinner said.

Last weekend, an online survey commenced targeting NSW residents aged 16 – 35 years to investigate how commonly combined alcohol and energy drink consumption happens, the target group most affected, characteristics of use and also the harms of use.

Over the coming weeks, a street intercept face-to-face survey of 16-35 year olds in NSW will be conducted at night in several Sydney metropolitan sites and at Newcastle.

Mr Humphries said the Government was not targeting energy drink products but trying to better understand what impacts there might be when these products are consumed with alcohol.

“Harmful consumption of alcohol is clearly associated with serious social and public health issues including crime, violence, road accidents (including drink driving and drink walking), and alcohol-related injury and disease,” Mr Humphries said.

“We want people to enjoy themselves when out socialising particularly in the upcoming Christmas and New Year festive season but we all need to consider the potential effects of mixing alcohol with energy drinks now and in the future.”

The community is welcome to contribute to this research and is encouraged to visit [www.surveymonkey.com/s/DeakinAED](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/DeakinAED) to complete a survey on the topic.

The research surveys will conclude in February with results of the study expected to be available in mid-2013.