

Alcohol Awareness Study 2010

- Prepared for -

The Salvation Army

- Prepared by -

Roy Morgan Research
Level 1, 401 Collins Street,
Melbourne, VIC, 3000

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
2. METHODOLOGY	1
3. OUTLINE OF KEY FINDINGS	2
3.1 Australians' alcohol consumption	2
3.1.1 Average number of standard drinks each week.....	2
3.1.2 Greatest number of standard drinks per session in last month	5
3.1.3 Number of days alcohol consumed during last week.....	7
3.1.4 Average number of days alcohol consumed per week	8
3.2 Reasons or situations leading to consumption of alcohol	8
3.2.1 Celebrating	9
3.2.2 To stop feeling down or depressed.....	9
3.2.3 Being sociable	10
3.2.4 Just out of habit	10
3.2.5 Wanting to get drunk	11
3.2.6 Wanting to relax or wind down.....	11
3.2.7 To go with a meal	12
3.2.8 Because the people I'm with are drinking.....	12
3.2.9 In order to feel normal.....	13
3.2.10 Reasons for Drinking Alcohol: Summary Grid	13
3.3 Moderation of alcohol consumption behaviour.....	14
3.3.1 Attempts to moderate alcohol consumption.....	14
3.3.2 Reason/s for lack of success in moderating alcohol consumption	16
4. CONCLUSION	17

1. INTRODUCTION

In August 2010, Roy Morgan Research was commissioned by the Salvation Army to conduct its annual research into alcohol awareness amongst the Australian community.

In recent years this research has been conducted by Roy Morgan Research (except in 2007 when alcohol research was not undertaken by the Salvation Army). Each year the focus of the research is on different aspects of Australians' awareness of issues associated with the consumption of alcohol.

In 2010, the research questions examined the following key issues:

- The level and frequency of consumption of alcohol;
- The reasons or situations associated with consumption of alcohol; and
- Attempts to reduce the amount of alcohol consumed and/or the frequency of consumption.

2. METHODOLOGY

From August 25th to 26th 2010, Roy Morgan Research interviewed by telephone a nationally representative sample of 629 Australians aged 14 and over. The survey was a part of Roy Morgan Research's telephone omnibus survey, CATIBus.

The survey asked questions about alcohol, including:

- Respondents' alcohol consumption – the average number of standard drinks each week and the greatest number of standard drinks in one session in the last month (these questions are asked each year);
- Frequency of alcohol consumption – number of days per week on which alcohol was consumed, over the past 7 days and on average;
- How frequently (often, sometimes, never) a series of nominated reasons or situations were associated with respondents' consumption of alcohol;
- Respondents' success or otherwise in attempting to moderate their consumption of alcohol at some point over the last 12 months – by cutting down the amount of alcohol consumed at one time, going for at least a week without drinking alcohol and/or changing their drinking so that at least one day a week is alcohol free; and
- If unsuccessful in moderating their drinking (as outlined above), the reason/s why they were not successful.

The data were weighted to the Australian population aged 14 and over by age, sex and area.

This report outlines the key findings from these questions. It also considers some trend data collected over previous years regarding Australians' alcohol consumption.

While the following analysis includes discussion of results for 14-17 year olds, it should be noted that only 45 respondents were of this age group. As such, these results should be considered indicative rather than precise.

3. OUTLINE OF KEY FINDINGS

3.1 Australians' alcohol consumption

Almost every year since 2002, Roy Morgan Research has asked a nationally representative sample of Australians their alcohol consumption habits, including the average number of standard drinks they drink each week and the greatest number of standard drinks they have drunk in one session in the last month (asked since 2004).

This enables us to consider Australians' drinking behaviour in 2010 and the gradual trends unfolding.

3.1.1 Average number of standard drinks each week

In 2010, 38% of Australians aged 14 and over had between one and five standard drinks on average each week, 23% had six or more standard drinks each week, and some 28% reported not drinking in an average week.

There has been a gradual downward trend in the proportion of Australians who drink six or more standard drinks on average each week (31% in 2002 compared with 23% in 2010). This trend is almost entirely driven by males. In 2002, 43% of male Australians drank on average six or more standard drink per week, reducing to 31% in 2010. For females, however, the corresponding figures were 17% in 2002 and 15% in 2010.

The proportion of Australians aged 14 and over who do not drink any alcoholic drinks on average each week has remained relatively stable in recent years (30% in 2002 compared with 28% in 2010).

The proportion of people who claimed to have never consumed alcohol had remained constant at around 5% to 6% since 2004, but jumped to 10.5% in 2010. Much of the increase in 2010 was driven by women, where the proportion that had never drunk alcohol rose from 6% to 13%. Such an increase in a single year is counter-intuitive, and the explanation for much of it appears to be related to the way respondents interpreted and spontaneously answered the question. Both the ‘none’ and ‘have never drunk alcohol at all’ are unprompted response categories (not read out) and a person who had never drunk alcohol before could accurately answer this question with either response. The cumulative total of these two response categories is very similar to that of the previous survey (39% in 2010, 37% in 2009), indicating that the change (if any) is only moderate since the last survey.

The tables below/overleaf provide a more detailed break-down by total Australians, males and females.¹

Q1 On average, how many standard drinks do you drink each week?

Number of standard drinks	2002	2003	2004	Total	2006	2008	2009	2010
	n=614	n=609	n=1331	2005 n=1296	n=1332	n=653	n=687	n=629
Have Never Drunk Alcohol At All	2%	1%	6%	5%	5%	5%	6%	11%
None	30%	30%	29%	32%	30%	37%	31%	28%
1-5	38%	37%	35%	32%	36%	33%	37%	38%
6-10	15%	17%	15%	17%	15%	16%	14%	14%
11-15	9%	7%	7%	6%	6%	4%	6%	5%
16-20	3%	4%	4%	3%	3%	1%	1%	2%
21-25	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
26-30	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	-
More than 30	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
TOTAL 6+ DRINKS	31%	31%	29%	30%	28%	24%	24%	23%
Can't Say	-	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%

¹ Throughout this report ‘0%’ means some responses, rounded down to zero and ‘-’ means no responses.

Q1 On average, how many standard drinks do you drink each week?

Number of standard drinks	Male							
	2002 n=299	2003 n=302	2004 n=665	2005 n=644	2006 n=654	2008 n=328	2009 n=349	2010 n=303
Have Never Drunk Alcohol At All	-	0%	4%	5%	3%	5%	7%	9%
None	23%	24%	21%	25%	24%	31%	23%	21%
1-5	33%	32%	33%	31%	32%	28%	37%	40%
6-10	18%	20%	17%	20%	19%	20%	18%	17%
11-15	13%	10%	10%	7%	9%	7%	7%	8%
16-20	4%	6%	7%	5%	4%	2%	1%	3%
21-25	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%
26-30	2%	3%	2%	2%	4%	2%	1%	-
More than 30	4%	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	3%	2%
TOTAL 6+ DRINKS	43%	43%	40%	38%	41%	34%	32%	31%
Can't Say	1%	-	1%	1%	0%	2%	2%	1%

Q1 On average, how many standard drinks do you drink each week?

Number of standard drinks	Female							
	2002 n=315	2003 n=307	2004 n=666	2005 n=652	2006 n=678	2008 n=325	2009 n=338	2010 n=326
Have Never Drunk Alcohol At All	3%	2%	8%	5%	7%	5%	6%	13%
None	36%	36%	36%	39%	36%	43%	39%	36%
1-5	43%	41%	36%	34%	40%	38%	36%	36%
6-10	12%	15%	12%	14%	12%	12%	11%	11%
11-15	4%	4%	4%	5%	2%	1%	4%	2%
16-20	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%
21-25	-	-	1%	1%	0%	-	0%	1%
26-30	-	-	-	1%	0%	-	-	-
More than 30	-	0%	0%	0%	0%	-	-	-
TOTAL 6+ DRINKS	17%	20%	19%	23%	16%	14%	17%	15%
Can't Say	-	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%

3.1.2 Greatest number of standard drinks per session in last month

In 2010, about 35% of all Australians aged 14 and over reported that the greatest number of standard drinks that they had consumed in one session in the last month was between one and three drinks (10% reported a maximum of one standard drink, 14% reported a maximum of two standard drinks and 11% reported a maximum of three standard drinks).

There are indications that an apparent downward trend among men in this area has now leveled off. In 2004, 40% of Australian men consumed six or more standard drinks in one session in the last month, steadily reducing to 30% by 2008. In 2009, and now in 2010, the corresponding figure was 31%.

Q2. During the last month, what is the greatest number of standard drinks that you have had in one session?

Number of standard drinks	Total					
	2004 n=1331	2005 n=1296	2006 n=1332	2008 n=653	2009 n=687	2010 n=629
1	10%	10%	9%	8%	15%	10%
2	14%	13%	13%	16%	14%	14%
3	11%	11%	9%	10%	11%	11%
4	9%	8%	8%	10%	8%	9%
5	5%	7%	5%	4%	5%	5%
6	7%	6%	6%	5%	5%	5%
7	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%
8	3%	3%	3%	4%	3%	3%
9	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%
10	4%	6%	5%	3%	5%	4%
11-12	3%	3%	4%	3%	2%	3%
13-14	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	-
15-16	2%	3%	2%	1%	2%	2%
17-18	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
19-20	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%
21-25	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%
26-30	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
More than 30	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%
TOTAL 6+ DRINKS	26%	26%	26%	20%	23%	21%
Can't say/ Refused	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	2%
None	18%	20%	23%	25%	18%	18%
Total Have Never Drunk Alcohol	6%	5%	5%	5%	6%	11%

Q2. During the last month, what is the greatest number of standard drinks that you have had in one session?

Number of standard drinks	Male					
	2004 n=665	2005 n=644	2006 n=654	2008 n=328	2009 n=349	2010 n=303
1	7%	7%	8%	4%	13%	4%
2	11%	10%	11%	13%	15%	14%
3	9%	9%	10%	9%	9%	11%
4	10%	9%	8%	9%	8%	10%
5	5%	7%	6%	5%	5%	5%
6	10%	8%	6%	8%	6%	7%
7	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%
8	4%	3%	4%	6%	5%	4%
9	2%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%
10	5%	7%	7%	4%	5%	6%
11-12	5%	4%	5%	5%	2%	5%
13-14	1%	2%	1%	1%	0%	-
15-16	4%	3%	3%	2%	4%	3%
17-18	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%
19-20	3%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%
21-25	1%	2%	2%	0%	1%	1%
26-30	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
More than 30	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%	1%
TOTAL 6+ DRINKS	40%	35%	35%	30%	31%	31%
Can't say/ Refused	1%	1%	2%	3%	2%	2%
None	13%	16%	18%	21%	12%	15%
Total Have Never Drunk Alcohol	4%	5%	3%	5%	7%	9%

Q2. During the last month, what is the greatest number of standard drinks that you have had in one session?

Number of standard drinks	Female					
	2004 n=666	2005 n=652	2006 n=678	2008 n=325	2009 n=338	2010 n=326
1	13%	12%	10%	12%	16%	15%
2	17%	17%	16%	19%	14%	15%
3	12%	12%	9%	10%	13%	10%
4	8%	6%	8%	10%	8%	9%
5	6%	6%	5%	3%	6%	4%
6	4%	5%	6%	3%	4%	4%
7	2%	%	2%	2%	1%	1%
8	2%	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%
9	1%	1%	1%	-	1%	0%
10	2%	4%	3%	2%	4%	2%
11-12	1%	1%	2%	0%	1%	0%
13-14	0%	1%	-	-	-	-
15-16	1%	2%	1%	-	1%	1%
17-18	-	-	0%	-	-	-
19-20	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%
21-25	0%	1%	0%	-	-	1%
26-30	-	0%	0%	-	-	-
More than 30	-	0%	0%	1%	-	-
TOTAL 6+ DRINKS	13%	18%	17%	10%	14%	12%
Can't say/ Refused	1%	1%	2%	2%	-	1%
None	22%	24%	27%	30%	23%	22%
Total Have Never Drunk Alcohol	8%	5%	7%	5%	6%	13%

3.1.3 Number of days alcohol consumed during last week

The survey indicated that 7% of Australians aged 14 years and above consumed alcohol daily over the previous seven days. Men (9%) were more likely than women (5%) to have consumed alcohol daily over this period. On average, Australians aged 14 and over consumed alcohol on two days per week.

Fifty percent of Australians aged 14 and over had not consumed any alcohol in the previous seven days, including 11% who had never drunk alcohol at all. Men were more likely than women to have consumed alcohol in the last seven days. Among men, 47% had not consumed alcohol in the previous seven days, including 9% who had never consumed alcohol. Among women, 54% had not consumed alcohol in the previous seven days, including 13% who had never consumed alcohol.

Q3. In the last seven days, how many days have you had any alcohol at all to drink?

	Total n=629	Men n=303	Women n=326
0	39%	38%	41%
1	16%	14%	17%
2-3	16%	17%	15%
4-5	9%	10%	7%
6	1%	2%	0%
7	7%	9%	5%
Can't Say	2%	2%	2%
Total Never Drunk Alcohol	11%	9%	13%
Mean	1.7	2.0	1.5

3.1.4 Average number of days alcohol consumed per week

Almost two in five (39%) Australians aged 14 years said that, on average, they consume no alcohol at all in any given week (including 11% who have never consumed alcohol).

The survey indicated that 6% of Australians aged 14 years and above consume alcohol on a daily basis in an average week. Men (8%) were more likely than women (3%) to consume alcohol on a daily basis (on average).

Q3a. On average, how many days would you drink any alcohol at all?

	Total n=629	Men n=303	Women n=326
0	28%	21%	35%
1	23%	25%	21%
2-3	21%	25%	17%
4-5	8%	7%	9%
6	2%	3%	1%
7	6%	8%	3%
Can't Say	2%	3%	2%
Total Never Drunk Alcohol	11%	9%	13%
Mean	1.8	2.2	1.5

3.2 Reasons or situations leading to consumption of alcohol

This section of the survey asked respondents how frequently (often, sometimes, never) the following reasons or situations were associated with their consumption of alcohol:

- Celebrating
- To stop feeling down or depressed
- Being sociable
- Just out of habit
- Wanting to get drunk
- Wanting to relax or wind down
- To go with a meal
- Because the people I'm with are drinking
- In order to feel normal.

3.2.1 Celebrating

‘Celebrating’ was often a reason for consuming alcohol for 26% of those surveyed. People aged 18-24 were substantially more likely (47%) to often consume alcohol due to celebrating. There was no discernable difference by gender.

Q4a. Celebrating: How often a reason for drinking?

	SEX		AGE - SUMMARY						
	TOTAL	Men	Women	14-17	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65 And Over
	n=629	n=303	n=326	n=45	n=66	n=92	n=172	n=143	n=111
Often	26%	27%	26%	19%	47%	33%	25%	20%	19%
Sometimes	47%	48%	47%	23%	39%	46%	56%	54%	41%
Never	14%	15%	13%	23%	7%	9%	11%	15%	22%
Can't Say	2%	2%	2%	8%	-	-	1%	4%	3%
Total never drunk alcohol	11%	9%	13%	27%	7%	12%	7%	7%	16%

3.2.2 To stop feeling down or depressed

‘To stop feeling down or depressed’ was often (1%) or sometimes (7%) a reason for consuming alcohol for 8% of those surveyed. This figure was broadly similar across gender and age groups.

Q4b. To stop feeling down or depressed: How often a reason for drinking?

	SEX		AGE - SUMMARY						
	TOTAL	Men	Women	14-17	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65 And Over
	n=629	n=303	n=326	n=45	n=66	n=92	n=172	n=143	n=111
Often	1%	0%	2%	-	3%	-	1%	1%	-
Sometimes	7%	7%	8%	4%	7%	7%	8%	7%	8%
Never	79%	83%	76%	61%	83%	81%	83%	82%	74%
Can't Say	2%	2%	2%	8%	-	-	1%	3%	3%
Total never drunk alcohol	11%	9%	13%	27%	7%	12%	7%	7%	16%

3.2.3 Being sociable

‘Being sociable’ was often a reason for consuming alcohol for 24% of respondents. People aged 18-24 were substantially more likely (36%) to often consume alcohol for this reason. Men were somewhat more likely (27%) to consume alcohol for this reason than women (21%).

Q4c. Being sociable: How often a reason for drinking?

	SEX		AGE - SUMMARY						
	TOTAL n=629	Men n=303	Women n=326	14-17 n=45	18-24 n=66	25-34 n=92	35-49 n=172	50-64 n=143	65 And Over n=111
Often	24%	27%	21%	14%	36%	30%	24%	23%	16%
Sometimes	43%	43%	43%	28%	38%	41%	51%	50%	33%
Never	20%	19%	20%	23%	19%	18%	17%	17%	29%
Can't Say	3%	2%	3%	8%	-	-	1%	3%	7%
Total never drunk alcohol	11%	9%	13%	27%	7%	12%	7%	7%	16%

3.2.4 Just out of habit

Consuming alcohol ‘Just out of habit’ was often (8%) or sometimes (14%) a reason for drinking among 22% of survey respondents. People aged 50 to 64 were substantially more likely than other age groups to drink for this reason, with 11% doing so often, and a further 19% doing so sometimes.

Q4d. Just out of habit: How often a reason for drinking?

	SEX		AGE - SUMMARY						
	TOTAL n=629	Men n=303	Women n=326	14-17 n=45	18-24 n=66	25-34 n=92	35-49 n=172	50-64 n=143	65 And Over n=111
Often	8%	9%	7%	10%	10%	2%	6%	11%	9%
Sometimes	14%	18%	11%	2%	10%	10%	18%	19%	15%
Never	65%	63%	67%	54%	73%	76%	68%	58%	57%
Can't Say	3%	2%	3%	8%	-	1%	2%	5%	3%
Total never drunk alcohol	11%	9%	13%	27%	7%	12%	7%	7%	16%

3.2.5 Wanting to get drunk

‘Wanting to get drunk’ was often a reason for consuming alcohol for 2% of respondents, with a further 12% sometimes drinking for this reason. The age groups substantially over-represented in drinking for this reason were 14-17 year olds (9% often, 15% sometimes) and 18-24 year olds (5% often, 27% sometimes). While there was no significant difference by gender in terms of often drinking for this reason, men (15%) were more likely than women (9%) to sometimes consume alcohol in order to get drunk.

Q4e. Wanting to get drunk: How often a reason for drinking?

	SEX		AGE - SUMMARY						
	TOTAL n=629	Men n=303	Women n=326	14-17 n=45	18-24 n=66	25-34 n=92	35-49 n=172	50-64 n=143	65 And Over n=111
Often	2%	2%	1%	9%	5%	-	1%	1%	1%
Sometimes	12%	15%	9%	15%	27%	24%	10%	4%	3%
Never	74%	73%	75%	41%	61%	64%	82%	85%	78%
Can't Say	2%	2%	2%	8%	-	-	1%	3%	2%
Total never drunk alcohol	11%	9%	13%	27%	7%	12%	7%	7%	16%

3.2.6 Wanting to relax or wind down

‘Wanting to relax or wind down’ was often a reason for consuming alcohol for 17% of respondents, with a further 38% sometimes drinking for this reason. Men (19% often, 42% sometimes) were somewhat more likely to do so than women (16% often, 35% sometimes). The age groups most likely to often consume alcohol for this reason were 25-34 years (22%), 35-49 years (21%) and 50-64 years (21%).

Q4f. Wanting to relax or wind down: How often a reason for drinking?

	SEX		AGE - SUMMARY						
	TOTAL n=629	Men n=303	Women n=326	14-17 n=45	18-24 n=66	25-34 n=92	35-49 n=172	50-64 n=143	65 And Over n=111
Often	17%	19%	16%	2%	15%	22%	21%	21%	9%
Sometimes	38%	42%	35%	20%	44%	38%	44%	36%	35%
Never	32%	29%	34%	44%	34%	28%	26%	32%	38%
Can't Say	2%	2%	2%	8%	-	-	2%	3%	2%
Total never drunk alcohol	11%	9%	13%	27%	7%	12%	7%	7%	16%

3.2.7 To go with a meal

Consuming alcohol ‘To go with a meal’ was often (20%) or sometimes (37%) nominated as a reason for drinking by 57% of respondents. The incidence of this behaviour increased in reasonably linear fashion with age up to the 50-64 year age group (29% often, 34% sometimes). There was no notable difference in behaviour by gender.

Q4g. To go with a meal: How often a reason for drinking?

	SEX		AGE - SUMMARY						
	TOTAL n=629	Men n=303	Women n=326	14-17 n=45	18-24 n=66	25-34 n=92	35-49 n=172	50-64 n=143	65 And Over n=111
Often	20%	20%	21%	5%	16%	12%	23%	29%	24%
Sometimes	37%	40%	34%	10%	39%	47%	41%	34%	34%
Never	30%	30%	30%	50%	38%	30%	29%	26%	24%
Can't Say	2%	2%	2%	8%	-	-	1%	4%	3%
Total never drunk alcohol	11%	9%	13%	27%	7%	12%	7%	7%	16%

3.2.8 Because the people I'm with are drinking

Consuming alcohol ‘Because the people I'm with are drinking’ was often (11%) or sometimes (34%) a reason for drinking among 45% of survey respondents. Men (51%) were more likely than women (40%) to often or sometimes consume alcohol for this reason. This behaviour was more prevalent among 18-24 year olds, with 56% often (15%) or sometimes (41%) consuming alcohol for this reason. Those aged 25-34 were only moderately likely (9%) to often drink for this reason, but were substantially more likely (42%) to sometimes drink for this reason.

Q4h. Because the people I'm with are drinking: How often a reason for drinking?

	SEX		AGE - SUMMARY						
	TOTAL n=629	Men n=303	Women n=326	14-17 n=45	18-24 n=66	25-34 n=92	35-49 n=172	50-64 n=143	65 And Over n=111
Often	11%	14%	9%	16%	15%	9%	11%	11%	9%
Sometimes	34%	37%	31%	20%	41%	42%	35%	33%	27%
Never	42%	39%	44%	29%	37%	36%	45%	46%	45%
Can't Say	3%	2%	3%	8%	-	2%	2%	4%	3%
Total never drunk alcohol	11%	9%	13%	27%	7%	12%	7%	7%	16%

3.2.9 In order to feel normal

Drinking ‘in order to feel normal’ was often (2%) or sometimes (5%) a reason for consuming alcohol for 7% of survey respondents. The incidence of this behaviour was reasonably consistent across age groups, with the notable exception of 14-17 year olds, where 10% reported often drinking for this reason. This result should, however, be treated with caution due to the small sample size involved. There was no notable difference in behaviour by gender.

Q4i. In order to feel normal: How often a reason for drinking?

	SEX		AGE - SUMMARY						
	TOTAL n=629	Men n=303	Women n=326	14-17 n=45	18-24 n=66	25-34 n=92	35-49 n=172	50-64 n=143	65 And Over n=111
Often	2%	3%	2%	10%	3%	1%	1%	3%	1%
Sometimes	5%	5%	6%	5%	7%	4%	5%	6%	6%
Never	80%	82%	78%	51%	83%	84%	87%	82%	74%
Can't Say	2%	2%	2%	8%	-	-	1%	3%	3%
Total never drunk alcohol	11%	9%	13%	27%	7%	12%	7%	7%	16%

3.2.10 Reasons for Drinking Alcohol: Summary Grid

Q4. When you drink alcohol, how often do the following reasons apply to you?

	n	Often	Sometimes	Never	Can't Say	Never drunk alcohol
CELEBRATING	629	26%	47%	14%	2%	11%
BEING SOCIABLE	629	24%	43%	20%	3%	11%
TO GO WITH A MEAL	629	20%	37%	30%	2%	11%
WANT TO RELAX OR WIND DOWN	629	17%	38%	32%	2%	11%
BECAUSE THE PEOPLE I'M WITH ARE DRINKING	629	11%	34%	42%	3%	11%
JUST OUT OF HABIT	629	8%	14%	65%	3%	11%
IN ORDER TO FEEL NORMAL	629	2%	5%	80%	2%	11%
WANTING TO GET DRUNK	629	2%	12%	74%	2%	11%
TO STOP FEELING DOWN OR DEPRESSED	629	1%	7%	79%	2%	11%

3.3 Moderation of alcohol consumption behaviour

The survey asked respondents whether they had attempted to moderate their alcohol consumption in one or more of the manners listed below within the previous 12 months, and whether or not they were successful in that attempt:

- Deliberately cutting down the amount of alcohol they drink at the one time
- Deliberately going for at least a week without drinking any alcohol
- Deliberately changing their drinking so that at least one day a week is alcohol free

In addition, those who were unsuccessful in an attempt were asked to nominate the main reason or reasons for their lack of success.

3.3.1 Attempts to moderate alcohol consumption

More than one in three (37%) stated that they had successfully moderated their alcohol consumption in one or more of the manners specified. Men (40%) were more likely than women (35%) to have moderated their alcohol consumption at some point in the previous 12 months.

Only 6% of respondents reported that they were unsuccessful in an attempt to moderate their alcohol consumption. Detailed demographic examination of these respondents was not possible, due to the small sample size involved (34 individuals). However, the following table demonstrates that these 34 cases were spread across those aged 18 and over, and across both males and females.

	SEX			AGE - SUMMARY					
	TOTAL n= 629	Men n=303	Women n=326	14-17 n=45	18-24 n=66	25-34 n=92	35-49 n=172	50-64 n=143	65 And Over n=111
Total successfully cut down drinking in last 12 months	238	126	112	11	30	36	82	49	30
	37%	40%	35%	23%	45%	36%	47%	35%	27%
Total unsuccessfully cut down drinking in last 12 months	34	19	15	-	8	5	11	7	3
	6%	6%	5%		12%	5%	7%	5%	3%

Interestingly, among those who were unsuccessful in moderating their alcohol consumption, 92% (31 individuals) also reported successfully moderating their alcohol consumption at some point during the same period.

When examined by individual survey question, it emerged that the moderating behaviour that these individuals were least likely to have also been successful in achieving was changing their drinking to achieve at least one alcohol free day (only 61% of those unsuccessful in achieving an alcohol free day were also successful in achieving an alcohol free day at another attempt during the last 12 months.).

Q5. For each of the following, please say whether you have done any of these things in the last 12 months

	TOTAL	Tried Unsuccessfully To Cut Down On The Amount Of Alcohol You Drink At The One Time?	Tried Unsuccessfully To Go For At Least A Week Without Drinking Any Alcohol?	Tried Unsuccessfully To Change Your Drinking So That At Least One Day A Week Is Alcohol-Free?
	n=629	n=16	n=18	n=19
Deliberately Cut Down On The Amount Of Alcohol You Drink At The One Time?	27%	94%	76%	76%
Deliberately Gone For At Least A Week Without Drinking Any Alcohol?	28%	82%	84%	69%
Deliberately Changed Your Drinking So That At Least One Day A Week Is Alcohol-Free?	16%	72%	59%	61%

The degree to which respondents nominated both successful and unsuccessful attempts at moderating their drinking over the period is noteworthy, suggesting that the process of moderating drinking has many diverse steps, not all of which are successful. Given this pattern, future investigation in this area could include additional questions designed to gauge the relative proportion of successful/unsuccessful attempts over the period and/or the degree to which permanent/ongoing moderation of drinking behaviour had been achieved.

More than half (52%) of Australians aged 14 years and over had not attempted to moderate their alcohol consumption in the manners specified during the last 12 months. There was no significant difference in behaviour by gender (men 51%, women 52%). Older Australians were somewhat less likely than average to have attempted to moderate their alcohol consumption in the manners specified, with 59% of those aged 50-64 years, and 57% of those aged 65 or above, making no attempt to do so in the last 12 months.

Q5. For each of the following, please say whether you have done any of these things in the last 12 months.

	SEX			AGE - SUMMARY						65 And Over n=111
	TOTAL n= 629	Men n=303	Women n=326	14-17 n=45	18-24 n=66	25-34 n=92	35-49 n=172	50-64 n=143		
None of these (alcohol moderation approaches) attempted	52%	51%	52%	50%	48%	51%	45%	59%	57%	

3.3.2 Reason/s for lack of success in moderating alcohol consumption

The ability to examine the reasons for unsuccessful attempts at moderating alcohol consumption was limited by the small sample size involved (34 individuals). Percentages provided in this section of the report refer to a base of these 34 respondents, rather than the sample as a whole.

The most common reasons nominated were ‘Hard to break the habit’ (22%, 8 respondents) and ‘Was having a difficult time/Going through a stressful period’ (21%, 7 respondents).

Q6. You mentioned you have tried unsuccessfully to cut down your drinking. Why were you unsuccessful?

Filter: TOTAL UNSUCCESSFULLY CUT DOWN DRINKING

	TOTAL	
	n=34	%
Hard To Break The Habit	8	22%
Was Having A Difficult Time/ Going Through A Stressful Period	7	21%
I Forget/ Forgot About My Goal	3	9%
The Need To Conform Socially/ Fit In	3	8%
A Smaller/ Lesser Amount Of Alcohol Wasn't Enough	2	6%
Consciously Decided Would Prefer To Drink	2	6%
Pressure From Friend/ Peer Pressure	-	
Other	7	21%
Can't Say	4	11%

4. CONCLUSION

Consumption - and misuse - of alcohol remains a major element of the Australian way of life, but there are indications that some moderation of drinking behaviour is occurring.

There has been a gradual downward trend over the course of the Salvation Army's Alcohol Awareness Surveys – driven almost entirely by males - in the proportion of Australians drinking six or more standard drinks on average each week. This proportion is now 23% overall, and 31% for males (down from 31% and 43% respectively in 2002).

This encouraging statistic is mitigated by the finding that a downward trend among males in the greatest number of drinks per session has now leveled off. In 2010, 31% of Australian males aged 14 years and over report consuming more than six standard drinks in one session in the previous month.

The survey indicates that 7% of Australians aged 14 years and over consumed alcohol daily in the week prior to the survey period, with 9% of men drinking in this manner. This corresponded reasonably closely to the estimated frequency of consuming alcohol in an average week, where 6% of Australians aged 14 years and over, and 8% of men, reported that they usually consumed alcohol on a daily basis.

The integration of alcohol and social interaction remains very strong. 'Celebrating' (73%) and 'Being sociable' (67%) were often or sometimes a reason for consuming alcohol among those surveyed. More than half (55%) often or sometimes consume alcohol because the people they were with were drinking.

Disturbingly, 'Wanting to get drunk' was nominated as a reason for drinking by 14% of Australians aged 14 years and over. This statistic is higher in the younger age-brackets, where 24% of 14-17 year olds and 32% of 18-24 year olds reported that they often or sometimes consumed alcohol for this reason (though caution in relation to the small sample size of 14-17 year olds is essential). In addition, 8% of respondents – broadly consistent across gender and ages – reported often or sometimes drinking to stop feeling down or depressed and 7% (10% among 14-17 year olds) reported often or sometimes consuming alcohol in order to feel normal.

On the other hand, there is evidence that people appear to be recognising the negative impacts of over-consumption of alcohol and making changes – or at least attempting to make changes – to their drinking behaviour. More than a third (37%) of those surveyed reported successfully moderating their drinking at some point over the previous 12 months by cutting down the amount of alcohol they drink at the one time, going for at least a week without any alcohol or ensuring at least one day a week was alcohol free. Only 6% reported they were unsuccessful in such an attempt and, of these, 92% were also successful at another alcohol reduction attempt or attempts.