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## What is the Alcohol Industry Doing to Reduce Alcohol Damage ?

6 February 2008

The work of the alcohol industry to reduce the damage caused by alcohol is the focus of an event to be held at the Scottish Parliament tomorrow.

Alcohol industry leaders will be joined by a senior public health official and the chief executive of a charity committed to changing Scotland's drinking culture to debate how the industry can tackle alcohol misuse in Scottish society .

The event is being held as part of the Scotland Futures Forum project entitled, 'Fresh Perspectives on Alcohol and Drugs'. Alcohol industry leaders speaking at the event include Scotch Whiskey Association Chief Executive Gavin Hewitt CMG, Wine and Spirit Trade Association Chief Executive Jeremy Beadles and Benet Slay, Managing Director of Diageo GB.

Also speaking will be Mark Baird, Programme Director of the Scottish Government / Alcohol Industry Partnership, Robert Madelin, Director-General for Health and Consumer Protection at the European Commission and Jack Law, Chief Executive of Alcohol Focus Scotland – a national charity committed to improving the quality of people's lives by changing Scotland's drinking culture. The event will be chaired by Sunday Times columnist and feature writer Gillian Bowditch.

Scottish Futures Forum Director Robert Rae said:



*Mr Robert Madelin, Director-General for Health and Consumer Protection, European Commission speaking with Mark Baird, Programme Director, The Scottish Government/Alcohol Industry Partnership in background.*

“As part of the Forum’s project into drugs and alcohol misuse, it is important that the alcohol industry and public health professionals have a chance to debate what more can be done to reduce damage caused by alcohol and what steps the industry is already taking.”

### **Background information on the ‘Fresh Perspectives on Alcohol and Drugs’ project**

Holyrood’s think-tank, Scotland’s Futures Forum, is carrying out an innovative study into alcohol and drugs use in Scotland. The aim of the project is to look at the following question: “How can Scotland reduce the damage to its population through alcohol and drugs by half by the year 2025?”

The Forum seeks to stimulate open and honest debate on the causes and impacts of drug and alcohol misuse across Scottish society. The study will consider the views of local communities, a wide range of harm reduction measures, the role of poverty, and review international best practice. The project aims to inform public policy debate and challenge policy makers to consider new long-term approaches to problematic alcohol and drug use.

More information about the event can be found on the Futures Forum website at:  
<http://www.scotlandsfuturesforum.org/Lists/SFF%20Upcoming%20events/calendar.aspx>

### **Background information on Scotland’s Futures Forum**

Scotland’s Futures Forum was created by the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body in August 2005. The forum aims to identify key challenges facing the nation and stimulate debate between MSPs, academics, civic society, wealth creators and international organisations on the ways of meeting them.

For more information about Scotland’s Futures Forum see:  
[www.scotlandfutureforum.org](http://www.scotlandfutureforum.org)  
[www.scottish.parliament.uk/nmCentre/news/futuresforum\\_news.htm](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/nmCentre/news/futuresforum_news.htm)

### **Media attendance**

Members of the media are welcome to attend the event, which will run from 2pm until 5pm on Thursday 7 February in Committee Room 1 of the Scottish Parliament. A series of presentations will be followed by a panel session at 4.30pm involving all the day’s speakers. Media wishing to attend or wanting further information should contact Kallon Basham at the Scottish Parliament Media Relations Office on 0131 348 6088 or by email to:  
[kallon.basham@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:kallon.basham@scottish.parliament.uk)

### **Photography**

Photographs of the event will be available by contacting the Media Relations Office on 0131 348 6269 or  
[photography@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:photography@scottish.parliament.uk)

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### **The Scottish Parliament’s media contact is:**

Kallon Basham: 0131 348 6088 RNID Type talk calls welcome  
Email: [kallon.basham@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:kallon.basham@scottish.parliament.uk)

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