



13 May 2004

Dear Retailer

Over the last six weeks there has been a lot going on, both inside Government and inside the dance pills industry, regarding our products and the controls around them.

This letter is to bring you up to date with these events, explain some current initiatives that are under way and to ask for your help in ensuring that only the highest quality products are responsibly used by adults.

Expert Advisory Committee on Drugs investigation into BZP and TFMPP

New Zealand's Expert Advisory Committee on Drugs recently undertook an investigation into these products and then prepared a paper making recommendations to the Minister responsible for Drug Policy, Hon Jim Anderton.

The report did not recommend the classification of these products as controlled drugs. The report can be downloaded at www.stanz.org.nz

Following the release of this report, Minister Anderton has suggested that "a sensible approach" would be to include these products in a new category under the Misuse of Drugs Act which would impose restrictions upon their sale, such as an 18 plus age limit.

The Minister has instructed the Ministry of Health to investigate options for new categories of classification to tighten controls around these products, and to conduct further research into the impacts of BZP.

Opportunity for input into BZP investigation

The Minister has also called for all people in the community who have experience with these products to provide feedback to the Expert Advisory Committee on Drugs to help it in the decision making process.

We encourage all retailers and consumers to send their feedback to:

The Secretariat
Expert Advisory Committee on Drugs
National Drug Policy Team
PO Box 5013
WELLINGTON

In order to facilitate this process, we are working with the Ministry of Health to develop a customer survey which will be available online. We encourage retailers to circulate it widely to their customers.

New industry association formed

Over the last couple of months the companies that manufacture, distribute and market these products across the country have banded together and are forming an industry-wide association to ensure the industry is seen to be responsibly and proactively looking out for people's health.

The Social Tonics Association of New Zealand (STANZ) has launched a website at www.stanz.org.nz/ On this website is a new draft code of practice for our member companies that sets out the best industry practice to ensure the utmost safety of our products. We welcome submissions from all retailers and members of the public on this code through our website.

The code of practice will ensure these products are clearly labelled, responsibly marketed and available only to adults.

Concern over poorer quality products

There is concern within the industry at lower quality, poorly labelled products beginning to enter the market. The regulatory code we are developing as an Association will set the highest standards in terms of product safety, clarity of labelling and will prohibit the sale to people under the age of 18.

We urge retailers to give careful thought to the products they stock.

Sale to under 18s

While most of our retailers do not sell these products to people under 18, we urge all retailers to be vigilant in this respect, and to continue requesting ID from any person who might be under 18.

We are continuing to work closely with the EACD and the Ministry of Health to ensure that an appropriate regulatory system is introduced to ensure the responsible production, marketing and retail of our products, while still ensuring these products are available as a safe alternative to illegal drugs.

The future of this industry is now in our hands. On behalf of STANZ I will keep you up to date with all developments. Please feel free to email me at matt@stanz.org.nz or call me on 021 77 23 23 if you have any questions or inquiries.

Yours sincerely



Matt Bowden
Chair
Steering Committee
Social Tonics Association of New Zealand