

LICENSING, REGULATION AND ALCOHOL STRATEGY

Drink Spiking

Drink Spiking or Drug and Alcohol Facilitated Sexual Assault describes a situation where a person's ability to consent to or refuse sexual activity is impaired as a result of consuming too much alcohol and/or other drugs, either by the victim's own choice or because of drink spiking. Women and particularly young women are more commonly targeted.

Drugs and/or alcohol used to spike drinks can have unexpected effects. Persons displaying behaviour that is 'out of character' or inconsistent with the amount of alcohol or non-alcoholic drink consumed should be taken to hospital for medical attention.

Many drink spiking information publications make claims that drugs used are colourless and tasteless so that patrons might not realise that anything has been added. However, recent evidence from the large forensic studies clearly indicate that alcohol is the single most commonly used drug to spike other people's drinks, with up to 75% of victims testing positive to high levels of alcohol. The same studies indicate that there is no 'typical' incident of drink spiking.

Licensees should be mindful of the potential for drink spiking occurring at their venue and not encourage the pouring of double and triple shots. In addition they should encourage patrons to:

- Always get their own drink and watch it being poured;
- Not leave their drink unattended;
- Not accept drinks from others;
- Never assume a friend is merely drunk – ensure they get home safely

Licensees have a legal responsibility for the duty of care of all patrons. You are required to be vigilant, and treat all complaints of spiking seriously. Ensure staff are aware that drink spiking (including adding of additional alcohol to standard drinks) can occur and ask them to be alert at all times.

A guide for addressing drug & alcohol facilitated sexual assault, issued by the Department of Health and Community Services, is attached.

Remember, your vigilance may prevent an assault from occurring

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