



**Senator Mathias Cormann  
Acting Shadow Minister for Health and Ageing**

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

---

### **Rudd Government in Hiding on Alcopops Tax**

It is time the Rudd Government came clean about the failure of its 70 per cent increase in the tax on 'alcopops' Acting Shadow Health Minister Mathias Cormann said.

"The increased tax on alcopops has now been in effect for more than 8 months, yet the Rudd Government continues to run for cover when it comes to answering questions about the effect of it," Senator Cormann said.

"A series of about 24 questions submitted to Treasury during the most recent Senate Estimates remain largely unanswered.

"Incredibly, the Government was not prepared to answer the key question of how much tax had been raised as a result of the increase in the excise on alcopops effective 27 April 2008.

"The Government's own evidence suggests that there has been substitution of so called 'alcopops' with other alcoholic beverages, including more potent alcoholic drinks. Yet, the Rudd Government continues in its refusal to release the relevant government data.

"This is Government secrecy at its worst.

"The Government tried to mislead Australians into believing this is a health measure, when all it is, is a bad old fashioned Labor tax grab with unintended consequences, such as the development of the so called 'malternatives' ," he said.

"Now when questions are being asked about how much the Government has raised, and what impact the tax has had on consumer behaviour, they've gone into hiding!

"At \$3.1 billion, we are talking about the biggest single revenue measure in the Rudd Government's first budget.

"More than eight months later this measure has still not been validated by the Parliament, because the Rudd Government so far has refused to introduce the necessary legislation to Parliament.

"We will be using all the available means and processes of the Senate to force the Government to come clean about the impact of this tax measure and reveal this information," Senator Cormann said.

Ends

Media Contact: - Senator Mathias Cormann – 08 9325 4227 – 0411 874 546