

# 42nd APS Annual Conference



## Media Release

25 – 29 September 2007: Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre

### Study reveals motivations for drink spiking

A nationwide study into drink spiking found 43 per cent of drink spikers had added alcoholic shots or substances to beverages 'for fun.'

According to the RMIT study, respondents were also motivated to increase their chances of engaging in consensual sexual activity.

"Most perpetrators reported that they did not drink spike to gain control of a person, but 29 per cent thought it would 'put people in the mood' for consensual sex," said psychologist and study author, Bridget McPherson.

"In addition, 21 per cent stated it was easier for them to approach people for sex if the victim was drunk or drug-affected."

The study, which was undertaken with 805 Australian's aged 18 to 35, also found respondents who spiked drinks shared similar beliefs.

"People who spiked drinks tended to believe that it's acceptable to cause intoxication in others and that alcohol consumption increases interest in casual sexual activity," said Ms McPherson.

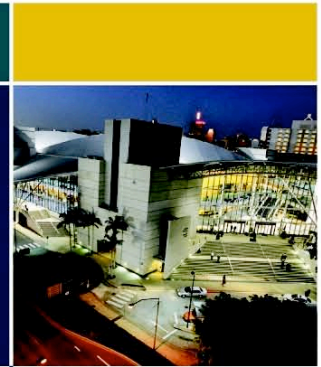
"They also failed to accept responsibility for other people's safety, and didn't seem to care or think about the consequences of what could happen."

The study also found 46 per cent of victim's drinks were spiked at a nightclub and 25 per cent at a bar.

Ms McPherson said drink spiking is occurring to a significant degree in Australia.

"We live in a culture where alcohol is viewed as a fun, bonding experience and because of this mindset, people appear to be less likely to seriously think about the consequences of drink spiking in Australia.

<more>



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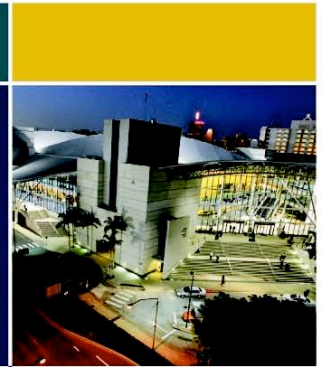
“To reduce this problem, we can use this research to develop prevention programs to potential perpetrators of drink spiking, emphasising the physical and psychological consequences,” she said.

Ms McPherson will present the study at the 42<sup>nd</sup> Australian Psychological Society national conference, *‘Psychology Making an Impact,’* at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre from 25 to 29 September.

<ends>

To coordinate an interview with Ms McPherson please contact Elaine Grant on 0412 683 068.

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