

Background information on Serve It Right Saskatchewan (SIRS) for the Special Committee on Traffic Safety - May 21 or 22, 2013 Regina Saskatchewan

In 1990, Health Canada called all the jurisdictions across the country together to develop a program on the service of alcohol. The primary objectives were to identify liabilities attached to the service of alcohol and to provide strategies for managing that liability appropriately. Subsequently, the “Serve It Right” and “Its Good Business” programs were developed. These programs provided information on the responsible service of alcohol to stakeholders in the industry.

Every Province in Canada has a responsible service of alcohol program. Responsible service of alcohol programs are required by legislation for commercial permittees in British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia.

The Saskatchewan “Its Good Business” program was delivered from 1991 to 2006 as a three hour, in-class delivery. This program was available on a regular basis in Regina and Saskatoon, and delivered on demand in cities and towns across the province. Growth in the industry coupled with advancements in technology led to development of an enhanced online responsible service of alcohol program, launched in January, 2007, as “Serve It Right Saskatchewan (SIRS)”. This program was developed in partnership with the liquor industry and government, based on a commitment to ensuring liquor activities are conducted with integrity and in a socially responsible manner. **The ultimate goal of SIRS is to promote responsible liquor service in Saskatchewan.**

SIRS was created to provide responsible alcohol service training to those who serve and sell alcohol in Saskatchewan. It is applicable whether staff or volunteers work on-premises (e.g., in a restaurant, bar, private club, sports stadium, retail establishment) or are involved in other activities surrounding alcohol service (e.g., liquor sampling, or a permitted public special event).

This program is designed to:

- Help permittees and their staff fulfill social responsibilities.
  - Social awareness of liquor-related problems is growing and there is less tolerance for over-consumption. This program provides tools to help fulfill responsibilities to keep customers and the public safe from harm caused by liquor-related incidents or accidents.
- Help achieve a balance between creating a safe and enjoyable atmosphere for customers and reducing liability.
  - The sale and service of liquor can provide customers with enjoyment and businesses with profitability. However, service to the point of intoxication can result in illness, injury, and even death. These consequences can potentially create situations where the establishments and their employees can each be held legally liable. This program outlines the potential liability held by establishments and individuals involved with the service and sale of liquor, and how to reduce potential risks



#### Serve It Right Saskatchewan (SIRS) Backgrounder

- Help servers and retailers understand and apply relevant liquor legislation.
  - There are social, moral, and legal responsibilities surrounding liquor service. This program outlines key legislation that affects all owners, managers, and employees involved in liquor service.
- Promote the responsible sale of liquor in service and retail environments.
  - It is the responsibility of anyone selling or serving liquor to prevent over-serving, to handle intoxicated customers appropriately, and to handle situations involving minors trying to purchase and/or consume liquor. This program identifies who is permitted to purchase liquor and how to serve them responsibly.
- Provide the knowledge to identify signs of intoxication and the techniques to effectively refuse or discontinue service.
  - Knowing how to recognize signs of intoxication is critical to knowing when to stop service. This program helps servers and other staff members identify when to slow or stop service and how to do it.
- Draw attention to the number of people involved in responsible liquor service and their responsibilities
  - Servers and retailers who interact directly with customers have a major role to play in responsible liquor service. There are also many other individuals who work in positions that contribute to ensuring liquor service is safe and responsible.