



ABAC RESPONSIBLE ALCOHOL MARKETING CODE

MEDIA RELEASE

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New restrictions on placement of alcohol marketing

FROM 1 November 2017 responsible placement of alcohol marketing will be included in the ABAC Responsible Alcohol Marketing Code (ABAC), to regulate where alcohol marketing can appear.

“Not only do the new placement standards support and bolster existing placement regulation in media specific codes, such as the Outdoor Media Association and Commercial Television Industry codes, but they go further, by aiming to keep pace with new and emerging technology,” Chair of The ABAC Scheme, The Hon Alan Ferguson, said.

“These new standards include additional safeguards for minors, namely a requirement to use available age restriction controls in digital media to exclude minors from an audience, to only use media platforms with a 75%+ adult audience, verification of ages as 18+ for electronic direct mail and no placement with content or programs primarily aimed at minors.”

“Most alcohol marketers are already very conscious of these issues and include such restrictions within their internal policies, but the inclusion of these standards in the ABAC Code means that alcohol marketers will be accountable to the community via ABAC Complaints Panel decisions.”

“ABAC periodically reviews its Code and procedures to ensure it remains at the cutting-edge of developing new approaches to ensure a robust and effective Code for alcohol marketing in Australia”.

[ENDS]

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Background:

The ABAC Scheme is the centerpiece of Australia's system for responsible alcohol marketing and is administered by a management committee which includes industry, advertising and government representatives.

The ABAC Responsible Alcohol Marketing Code regulates alcohol marketing (including packaging) in Australia. Subject to regular reviews, the Code reflects community expectations and changes in the media and advertising industries.

The Alcohol Advertising Pre-vetting Service provides independent, confidential advice to advertisers on whether proposed marketing communications comply with the Code. This service is offered on a 'user pays' basis.

The ABAC Adjudication Panel, headed by the Chief Adjudicator, Professor The Hon Michael Lavarch AO, considers public complaints about alcohol marketing communications that fall within the jurisdiction of the Code. The Panel and its deliberations are independent of the Management Committee and the broader alcohol and advertising industry.

In 2016, complaints referencing alcohol (139) represented 2.5% of all advertising complaints received by the ASB (5,581). However, given multiple complaints are received about single ads and many complaints do not relate to responsible portrayal of alcohol these complaints resulted in 34 Panel determinations (0.6% of all advertising complaints)