

## Australia's Responsible Alcohol Marketing Scheme

18 June 2018

### **Harry Jenkins AO appointed new Independent Chair of ABAC**

FORMER Speaker of the House of Representatives Mr Harry Jenkins AO will take up the Independent Chair role of the Alcohol Beverages Advertising Code (ABAC) from 1 July 2018.

Mr Jenkins brings a wealth of experience to the role, having served in federal parliament for 27 years, including as Speaker for three-and-a-half years, Deputy Speaker for two-and-a-half years, Second Deputy Speaker for 11 years and serving on numerous Parliamentary Committees, many as Chair.

“We’re just wild about Harry,” Deputy Chair of the ABAC Management Committee Brett Heffernan said today.

“He comes to the advertising control body at an important time, providing strong independent leadership as ABAC continues to evolve in meeting public expectations about alcohol advertising, but also in explaining the functions of ABAC and the rationale behind its decisions.

“Importantly, Harry is highly regarded across the political divide and has a well-known public reputation for not tolerating nonsense.”

Mr Jenkins added: “I’m looking forward to the challenge. When you look at the work of ABAC, it’s a prime example of how industry can take the lead in ensuring its activities are consistent with community values.

“ABAC has kept pace with the times and is attuned to the new and ever-emerging issues around social, online and digital media, with industry, through ABAC, demonstrating its willingness to be ahead of the curve.

“ABAC’s embracing of new Placement rules last year, governing where and when alcohol advertising can and cannot take place, is a case in point. It’s that proactive and dynamic recognition of the changing landscape that is really important and why I am excited about the Independent Chair role.”

Mr Jenkins will succeed ABAC’s inaugural Independent Chair the Hon Alan Ferguson upon his retirement at the end of June. Mr Heffernan paid tribute to Mr Ferguson for his three-year contribution at the helm of ABAC.

“Alan has provided independence, continuity and a fresh perspective throughout his tenure as Independent Chair,” he said.

“The ABAC Management Committee is grateful for his leadership and sage advice in helping ABAC to evolve over the last three years to keep pace with community expectations and a rapidly changing media landscape. We wish him all the best for his well-earned retirement from the position.”

Mr Ferguson added: “I am honoured to have been part of ABAC. I have always been impressed with its preparedness to acknowledge, and get out in front of, emerging issues to ensure it meets and, indeed, exceeds, community expectations to provide a strong regulatory framework for responsible alcohol marketing in Australia.

“Harry Jenkins’ reputation precedes him. He is very well placed to lead ABAC into its next phase as it reaches the milestone of 20 years of operation in Australia.”

More information about ABAC is available at [www.abac.org.au](http://www.abac.org.au)

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**Media Contact:** For interviews with Harry Jenkins, please contact Jayne Taylor on 0411 700 225.

**Background:**

- The ABAC Management Committee comprises representatives from alcohol and advertising industry associations together with a Commonwealth government representative.
- The ABAC Responsible Marketing Code regulates the content of alcohol marketing and 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 complies 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 and packaging 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.