

Australia's Responsible Alcohol Marketing Scheme

17 January 2022

High demand for ABAC's Pre-vetting Service in 2021

The Alcohol Beverages Advertising Code (ABAC) has concluded a busy year with record levels of activity across both the ABAC pre-vetting service and the ABAC complaints system.

"High demand for ABAC's pre-vetting service continues with a new record level of pre-vetting requests received in 2021, (3,336 pre-vetting requests) up 38% on last year." ABAC Chair Harry Jenkins AO noted

"We were pleased to see this upward trend continue, in particular an increase in pre-vetting of social media campaigns. Pre-vetting is the easiest and most efficient way for marketers to ensure their promotions and packaging are responsible before hitting the marketplace. Pre-vetting may be undertaken by both signatories and non-signatories and we encourage all alcohol producers, distributors and retailers to utilise this valuable service."

"2021 also set a new record for complaints and determination levels, with 288 complaints and 153 determinations.

"It is a credit to the Chief Adjudicator, the Hon Professor Lavarch AO and everyone that supports and participates in the process, that all complaints were considered promptly. In addition, the vast majority of breaches were promptly remedied with only one breach last year referred to the relevant Liquor Licensing authority for investigation due to non-compliance.

"During 2021, digital marketing was again the largest source of complaints considered by the Panel, by a significant margin. ABAC regulates all social media activity generated by or within the reasonable control of alcohol marketers, including user generated content. It is important that agencies and staff developing social campaigns for alcohol marketers understand and work within the ABAC standards, in particular ensuring that available age restriction controls are applied to all alcohol marketing, which is an area that will be monitored in 2022.

"In response to higher complaint levels, ABAC increased its training initiatives in 2021. In particular, with the launch in March of an online training course and video series available free of charge on the [ABAC website](#). The training has now been completed by around 450 alcohol marketing, agency and media staff. It takes just over an hour to complete and is a must for everyone involved in marketing alcohol in Australia.

ABAC's Fourth Quarterly Report for 2021 detailing decisions made during the past quarter is available [online](#).

More information about the Code is also available at: www.abac.org.au

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