

Australia's Responsible Alcohol Marketing Scheme

13 July 2022

Strong Focus on Industry Education & Awareness

The Alcohol Beverages Advertising Code (ABAC) has seen a significant reduction in complaints and determinations in the first quarter, continue throughout the second quarter this year.

“Despite this reduction, complaints continue to raise new issues and determinations provide further clarity for the industry.” ABAC Chair Harry Jenkins AO noted

“The Panel has recently considered a complaint about an outdoor advertisement for a non-alcoholic beer and its [determination](#) provided helpful guidance for the industry on the application of ABAC standards to alcohol alternatives.

“In addition, a complaint was received this quarter about a third party post showing alcohol use in a swimming pool, where a brand was tagged in the post resulting in the post appearing on the brand's social media account. While the Panel noted that the post was created by a third party, it found that a brand should be keeping a regular eye on its own social media accounts. This decision highlights the importance of an alcohol marketer moderating user generated comments or tags on its social media accounts and removing any that do not meet responsible alcohol marketing standards within a reasonable period of time. Moderation is not only an ABAC requirement with the ACCC advising that *“businesses using social media channels like Facebook, Twitter and Youtube have a responsibility to ensure content on their pages is accurate, irrespective of who put it there”*

“Importantly, in two determinations the Panel has explained how the regulatory system more generally and the ABAC standards specifically deal with vulnerable communities and groups such as persons dealing with alcohol dependency and persons experiencing depression.

“Pre-vetting demand continues to remain high, as alcohol producers and retailers continue to use this service as an important independent check that their marketing communications and packaging meet responsible alcohol marketing standards. The [ABAC Pre-vetting Service Guide](#) has recently been updated, with the inclusion of new guidance on the submission of social media marketing material.

“ABAC continues to focus its efforts on alcohol industry education and awareness. Following the excellent uptake of the free online training course developed last year, ABAC has now developed a range of useful compliance checklists that can be accessed [here](#). ABAC encourages all alcohol marketing staff, ad agency staff, alcohol packaging designers and other media partners to undertake the online training course and now also use these checklists as an important compliance and self-audit tool.”

ABAC's Second Quarterly Report for 2022 detailing decisions made during the past quarter is available [online](#).

More information about the Code is also available at: <http://www.abac.org.au/>

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