



ABAC Adjudication Panel Determination 134/25

Determination Date	8 October 2025
Brand/Company	Mountain Goat Brewery/Asahi Beverages
Media	Outdoor Billboard
ABAC Code provision	Part 3 (b)(i)
Outcome	Dismissed

Part 1 - Determination Overview

Complaint:

The complainant is concerned about a poster at a train station promoting Goat alcohol products, which is argued to target minors by featuring a goat that resembles a cartoon character, smirks, looks mischievous and has “Always up to something” written between its antlers.

Key findings:

The Panel dismissed the complaint, finding that:

- The blocks of bright solid colours used in the poster may be eye-catching to minors; however
- The poster depicts the face of a goat, which is rendered in a more realistic rather than cartoon-like style.
- The images of the three product cans don’t have features likely to be particularly attractive to minors.
- The expression ‘Always up to something’ is not overly used in youth culture, nor would it be likely to be explicitly associated with minors.
- The poster lacks particular appeal for a minor beyond its general appeal to an adult.

Marketing Communication:

The marketing communication is a poster at a train station:



Part 2 - The Panel's View

2. This determination has arisen from a complainant's concern that a poster advertising Goat alcohol products targets children. The poster depicts three cans of Goat alcohol products – cider, beer and low carb – each in a quarter of the poster and against different background colours of green, orange and red. The fourth frame of the poster shows an image of a goat, with the words “Always up to something” between its antlers.
3. The complainant’s principal concern is that the poster targets children by:
 - Including an image of a goat on the marketing, which is cartoon-like due to its smirking, looking mischievous and not goat like; and
 - Including the words “Always up to something” which accentuates the mischievousness and playfulness of the cartoonish goat, making it more appealing to minors.
4. The issue for assessment is whether the poster has a strong or evident appeal to minors in breach of the ABAC standard in Part 3 (b)(i) of the Code. The standard might be breached if the marketing:
 - specifically targets minors;
 - has a particular attractiveness for a minor beyond the general attractiveness it has for an adult;
 - uses imagery, designs, motifs, language, activities, interactive games, animations or cartoon characters that are likely to appeal strongly to minors; and
 - creates confusion with confectionery, soft drinks, or other similar products, so the marketing communication is likely to appeal strongly to minors.

5. The Panel has often considered the Part 3 (b) standard. While each marketing communication must always be assessed individually, some characteristics within marketing material that may make it strongly appealing to minors include:
 - The use of bright, playful, and contrasting colours.
 - Aspirational themes that appeal to minors wishing to feel older or fit into an older group.
 - The illusion of a smooth transition from non-alcoholic to alcoholic beverages.
 - Creating a relatable environment using images and surroundings commonly frequented by minors.
 - Depiction of activities or products typically undertaken or used by minors.
 - Language and methods of expression used more by minors than by adults.
 - Inclusion of popular personalities of evident appeal to minors at the time of the marketing (personalities popular to the youth of previous generations will generally not have strong current appeal to minors).
 - Style of humour relating to the stage of life of a minor (as opposed to humour more probably appealing to adults); and
 - Use of a music genre and artists featured in youth culture.
6. Only some of these characteristics will likely be present in a specific marketing communication. The presence of one or more characteristics does not necessarily mean that the marketing item will have a strong or evident appeal to minors. The overall impact of the marketing communication, rather than an individual element, shapes how a reasonable person will understand the item.
7. Asahi submits that the poster is consistent with the Code standard, arguing:
 - The goat character has been given adult-like attributes (such as a dry, knowing expression) to align with the brand's personality and to resonate with an adult audience.
 - A reasonable person, considering the tone, style, and placement context, would understand the advertisement as light-hearted and humorous, rather than as an appeal to children or minors.
 - While the goat's expression carries adult-like cheekiness, it is not a cartoon or stylised character designed to appeal to minors.
 - The phrase "Always up to something" is an adult colloquialism, widely recognised as playful banter rather than a child-oriented phrase.

- A reasonable person would not conclude that the advertisement is appealing to minors.
8. The consistency of a marketing communication with an ABAC standard is assessed from a reasonable person's probable understanding of the marketing. A 'reasonable person' refers to the life experiences, values, and opinions held by most members of the community, serving as the benchmark. A person who interprets the marketing item differently is not 'unreasonable', but possibly their take on the marketing would not be shared by most people.
9. The Panel believes the Instagram post does not breach the Part 3 (b)(i) standard. In reaching this conclusion, the Panel noted:
- The blocks of bright solid colours used in the poster may be eye-catching to minors; however
 - The poster depicts the face of a goat, which is rendered in a more realistic rather than cartoon-like style.
 - The images of the three product cans don't have features likely to be particularly attractive to minors.
 - The expression 'Always up to something' is not overly used in youth culture, nor would it be likely to be explicitly associated with minors.
 - The poster lacks particular appeal for a minor beyond its general appeal to adults.
10. The complaint is dismissed.

Part 3 - Supporting Information

Panel Process

This complaint was received from Ad Standards (the common entry point for all marketing complaints by members of the Australian community). The Chief Adjudicator referred it to the ABAC Adjudication Panel for consideration against the ABAC Responsible Alcohol Marketing Code. The complaint process is explained [here](#).

The Panel operates in accordance with the [ABAC Rules & Procedures](#) and has regard to the principles of procedural fairness.

The Panel comprised Chief Adjudicator Professor the Hon Michael Lavarch AO, Health Sector Panellist Professor Richard Mattick AM, and Panellist Debra Richards.

Applicable ABAC Responsible Marketing Code Standard

Code Part 3 (b) of the Code requires that an Alcohol Marketing Communication must NOT:

- (i) have Strong or Evident Appeal to Minors, in particular;*
 - (A) Specifically target Minors;*
 - (B) Have a particular attractiveness for a Minor beyond the general attractiveness it has for an Adult;*
 - (C) Use imagery, designs, motifs, language, activities, interactive games, animations or cartoon characters that are likely to appeal strongly to Minors;*
 - (D) Create confusion with confectionery, soft drinks or other similar products, such that the marketing communication is likely to appeal strongly to Minors;*
or
 - (E) Use brand identification, including logos, on clothing, toys or other merchandise for use primarily by Minors.*

Company Response

Asahi (the Company) was provided with an opportunity to respond to the complaint, and its principal comments were:

- GOAT has always been positioned as a light-hearted, tongue-in-cheek brand that uses a dry Australian humour to connect with its adult audience. The brand identity leans into playful irreverence and satire rather than serious or literal messages.
- Importantly, the goat character itself is consistent with the brand's long-standing imagery since its inception. Across packaging, campaigns and merchandise, the goat has always been depicted in a realistic and/or cartoon manner. In this particular execution, the character has been given adult-like attributes (such as a dry, knowing expression) to align with the brand's personality and to resonate with an adult audience.
- A reasonable person, considering the tone, style, and placement context, would understand the advertisement as light-hearted and humorous, rather than as an appeal to children or minors.

Responsibility toward minors

- The goat image used is consistent with the realistic goat character that GOAT has used for many years. While the expression carries adult-like cheekiness, it is not a cartoon or stylised character designed to appeal to minors. It is part of a long-established brand device that resonates with adult audiences.

- The phrase “Always up to something” is an adult colloquialism, widely recognised as playful banter rather than a child-oriented phrase. Its tone is consistent with GOAT’s established personality and would not reasonably be considered to have a strong appeal to minors.
- The campaign was not targeted at young children, nor could a reasonable person conclude that it was. The placement is an out-of-home advertisement that received ABAC pre-vetting approval. Media buying practices ensure placements are consistent with responsible marketing principles.
- A reasonable person would not conclude that the advertisement is appealing to minors.

Marketing Best Practice

The Company was asked how it demonstrates a commitment to alcohol marketing best practices. It advised:

- Asahi Beverages takes the responsible marketing of alcohol seriously. We are committed to compliance with all relevant codes and guidelines, including the ABAC Code, and our marketing is developed in line with these standards.
- Asahi Beverages is a signatory to the ABAC Code and complies with all relevant standards and Panel determinations.
- All relevant team members have completed the current ABAC online training course.
- GOAT out-of-home (OOH) materials, including the placement in question, were submitted for and received pre-vetting approval (Approval #10530-2025).
- Asahi Beverages is committed to ensuring that our promotional and marketing materials, and those of our associated entities, do not promote advertising to minors. Our goal is for adults to enjoy our products responsibly and in moderation.