



## ABAC Adjudication Panel Determination 178/25

<b>Determination Date</b>	9 January 2026
<b>Brand/Company</b>	Matso's Low Sugar Ginger Beer/Good Drinks Australia
<b>Media</b>	Digital – Social Media
<b>ABAC Code provisions</b>	Part 3 (c)(iv)
<b>Outcome</b>	Dismissed

### Part 1 - Determination Overview

#### ***Complaint:***

A social media post promoting Matso's Low Sugar Ginger Beer purports to present the product as providing health benefits, thereby breaching Part 3(c)(iv) of the Code.

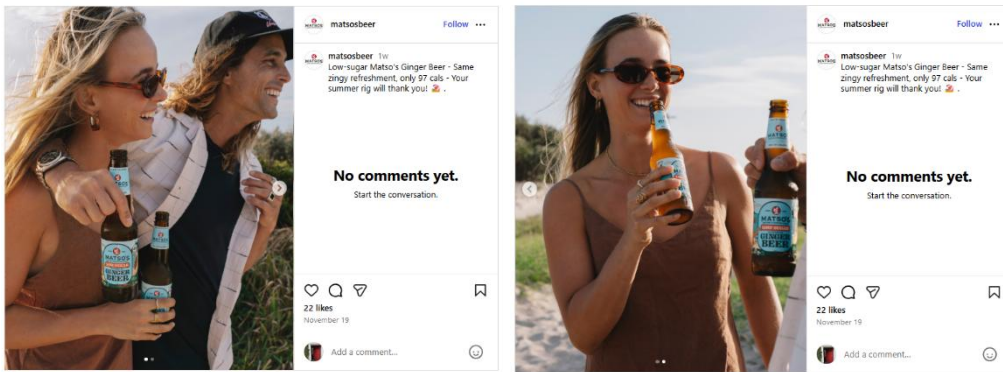
#### ***Key findings:***

The Panel dismissed the complaint, finding that:

- The key concept in the Part 3 (c) standard is causation. It is not permitted to suggest that alcohol offers any therapeutic or health benefit, is needed to relax, or helps overcome problems or adversity.
- The dominant element of the post is the photographs, and the text will not be overly influential. The pictures depict people drinking the product and do not suggest any effect of its use.
- The accompanying text refers to the product attributes of low sugar, 97 calories, and a 'zingy' taste, with the phrase 'Your summer rig will thank you,' which is likely understood as highlighting these attributes.
- The text is unlikely to be understood by a reasonable person as a serious claim of the product providing a positive health benefit.

#### ***Marketing Communication:***

The marketing communication is a social media post consisting of two static images accompanied by the words 'Low-sugar Matso's Ginger Beer – Same zingy refreshment, only 97 cals – Your summer rig will thank you 🍹':



## Part 2 - The Panel's View

1. This determination concerns a complaint about a social media post promoting Matso's Low Sugar Ginger Beer ('the product') by Good Drinks Australia ('the Company'). The post includes two static images of individuals drinking the product at what appears to be a beach. The accompanying text reads 'Low-sugar Matso's Ginger Beer – Same zingy refreshment, only 97 cals – Your summer rig will thank you 🍹'
2. The complainant argues that the post would be understood as claiming that the product assists a 'summer rig,' which is understood as Australian slang for a fit, attractive, or sexy person. This is contended to suggest that the product offers a health benefit in breach of the ABAC standard in Part 3(c)(iv) of the Code.
3. 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 for what is reasonable.
4. Issues around the interpretation of Part 3 (c)(iv) standard mainly arise when marketing contains statements about the attributes of a product, e.g. the product contains no carbs or no sugar and then goes on to assert or imply a positive health benefit from the product attribute.
5. The Company submits that the post does not offend the ABAC standard, arguing:
  - The post describes the product as a lower-sugar, lower-calorie variant within an alcoholic ginger beer range.
  - Describing composition in this way does not assert that the product will improve health, fitness, or well-being, nor does it suggest that alcohol consumption is beneficial. Instead, it simply recognises that some consumers are interested in sugar and calorie information when choosing between products.
  - The post acknowledges that many adults are mindful of what they consume during the summer and may prefer options that align better with their existing

lifestyle goals, without implying that drinking this product will cause weight loss, body transformation, or any therapeutic outcome.

- The phrase 'Your summer rig will thank you!' was intended as a light-hearted copy, not a literal health or medical claim. It is colloquial, non-technical language that reinforces the product's 'lighter than the original' attributes, not as a representation that the product delivers health benefits of any kind or that alcohol is good for you.
6. With a social media post, a reasonable person will usually view the post once before scrolling on to the next post. Accordingly, a post won't typically be studied in fine detail; the most prominent visual aspects will be the most influential in shaping how the post's messaging is understood, rather than subtle details and accompanying text. In this case, the most influential elements are the photographs of people consuming the product, which, by themselves, do not convey a message about the product's effect.
7. The Panel believes the post does not breach the standard. In reaching this conclusion, the Panel noted:
- The key concept in the Part 3 (c) standard is causation. It is not permitted to suggest that alcohol offers any therapeutic or health benefit, is needed to relax, or helps overcome problems or adversity.
  - The dominant element of the post is the photographs, and the text will not be overly influential. The pictures depict people drinking the product and do not suggest any effect of its use.
  - The accompanying text refers to the product attributes of low sugar, 97 calories, and a 'zingy' taste, with the phrase 'Your summer rig will thank you', which is likely understood as highlighting these attributes.
  - The text is unlikely to be understood by a reasonable person as a serious claim of the product providing a positive health benefit.
8. 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 Louisa Jorm and Panellist Debra Richards.

***Applicable ABAC Responsible Marketing Code Standard***

*Part 3 of the Code requires that an Alcohol Marketing Communication must NOT:*

(c)(iv)	<i>Suggest that the consumption of Alcohol offers any therapeutic or health (including mental health) benefit, is needed to relax, or helps overcome problems or adversity.</i>
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***Company Response:***

The Company was provided with an opportunity to respond to the complaint. Its principal comments were:

- Our intent was not to represent, nor do we believe the copy itself suggests that Matso's Low Sugar Ginger Beer provides health benefits; instead, it transparently describes the product as a lower-sugar, lower-calorie variant within an alcoholic ginger beer range. The statements "Low-sugar" and "only 97 cal" are straightforward, verifiable product attributes that allow consumers to compare this drink with standard options in the same category. Describing composition in this way does not assert that the product will improve health, fitness, or well-being, nor does it suggest that alcohol consumption is beneficial. Instead, it simply recognises that some consumers are interested in sugar and calorie information when choosing between products.
- The phrase "Your summer rig will thank you!" was intended as a light-hearted copy, not a literal health or medical claim. In context, it acknowledges that many adults are mindful of what they consume during the summer and may prefer options that align better with their existing lifestyle goals, without implying that drinking this product will cause weight loss, body transformation, or any therapeutic outcome. This copy was intended as colloquial non-technical language that reinforces the intended "lighter than the original" attributes specific to this product, not as a representation that the product delivers health benefits of any kind or that alcohol is good for you.

***Marketing Best Practice:***

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

- We immediately removed the disputed copy from the post until the matter is resolved.