

# 2020 — YEAR IN REVIEW

## FROM THE CHAIR

The global COVID-19 pandemic disrupted many aspects of normal life during 2020. Throughout all this ABAC proceeded at record levels of activity.

Fortunately, 'working from home' is the normal path for our Adjudication Panel, Pre-vetters and administrators. Whilst the ability to have face to face interaction when required was lost for large parts of the year, timeliness of decisions and actions continued.

The public health measures responding to the pandemic saw the closing of licensed premises, a rise in activity of bottle shops/off licences and use of delivery services. The tight economic environment resulted in some producers arranging their own marketing without reference to the Code. After an initial spate of concern, greater compliance with Code requirements became apparent.

The pre-vetting service is perhaps the unheralded pro-active success story of the ABAC scheme. During the year there were a record 2424 pre-vetting requests, of these 371 were rejected. These numbers are important, representing proposals that then go into the market with a high level of assurance that they comply to requirements. To put the level of assurance into perspective only two pre-vetted items were later subject to a complaint that was upheld, that is two of over two thousand. Insufficient credit is given to this activity by observers and critics. A great debt of gratitude is owed to our Pre-vetters.



**Mr Harry Jenkins AO**  
Chair, ABAC Management  
Committee



THE  
ABAC  
SCHEME  
LIMITED

## ABAC - AUSTRALIA'S RESPONSIBLE ALCOHOL MARKETING SCHEME

### KEY ABAC INITIATIVES

#### ABAC Education & Awareness

ABAC Education & Awareness is key to ensuring industry compliance. In 2020 ABAC:

- held its annual free industry compliance webinar;
- delivered a tailored webinar on ABAC compliance at the Australian Distillers Association virtual conference;
- directly engaged with the Independent Brewers Association to raise awareness, including delivering a tailored webinar on ABAC compliance to its members;
- continued engagement with alcohol industry associations, State Liquor Licensing Authorities, digital platforms and media associations; and
- communicated with the regulated community in relation to ABAC developments and issues arising via quarterly reports released publicly and made available on the ABAC website, circulars and upheld determination alerts.

#### Guidance on 'Strong or evident appeal to minors'

In 2020 ABAC engaged Youth Insight to provide observations to the ABAC Adjudication Panel and Pre-vetters on the themes, designs and imagery that 14-17 year olds find strongly appealing and unappealing in product marketing. This valuable work will assist ABAC Panelists and Pre-vetters in assessing alcohol marketing communications against the ABAC standard that requires alcohol marketing to not have strong or evident appeal to minors. It has also been used to update the ABAC Guidance Notes and Alcohol Packaging Compliance Guide (available on the ABAC website) to assist alcohol marketers to meet this standard.

### GLOBAL INITIATIVES

Globally, considerable work has been undertaken by the International Alliance for Responsible Drinking (IARD), in partnership with the large social media platforms, to reduce exposure of minors to alcohol marketing on these platforms. A variety of measures have been achieved including opt outs for users that do not wish to see alcohol marketing, and improvements to age restriction controls on the platforms. ABAC placement rules require the application of available age restriction controls to alcohol marketing. Early in 2020 IARD published a set of [instructional videos](#) on how marketers can activate age restriction controls on Facebook, Instagram, Youtube and Snapchat which ABAC has made available to industry participants on its website and promoted in its quarterly reports.

# 2424

Requests to  
pre-vet marketing

*371 rejected prior  
to entering market*

# 208

Complaints

*Resulting in  
113 determinations  
by the ABAC panel*

# 53

Determinations  
upheld

Access via the  
ABAC Website >

# 14

Day Turnaround

The average number of business  
days determinations were  
completed within. (30 day target)