

## Australia's Responsible Alcohol Marketing Scheme

26 July 2024

### **ABAC reaches milestone of 1000 complaint determinations**

ABAC's Quarterly Report marks the milestone of the 1000<sup>th</sup> complaint determination made by the ABAC Adjudication Panel since the commencement of the Scheme in 1998.

"Panel determinations involve careful consideration of public concerns about alcohol marketing and give valuable guidance to industry on responsible alcohol marketing. 1000 determinations demonstrates the enduring strength of the ABAC Scheme for over 25 years as it has dealt with new communication technologies, shifts in marketing techniques and changes in community expectations regarding alcohol use and its marketing. ABAC is grateful to Professor Hon Michael Lavarch AO and his Panel colleagues for their commitment and dedication to providing any member of the public with a hearing of their concerns about alcohol marketing and packaging." ABAC Chair Hon Tony Smith said

"The Panel's work extends beyond the adjudication of individual complaints to providing the Management Committee with valuable insights on consumer concerns and trends in relation to alcohol marketing that can be directed toward reviews of Code standards and also focus areas for industry education.

"Last quarter a range of concerns resulted in a breach of Code standards, including:

- Alcohol marketing must not suggest that alcohol will improve your confidence, mood or happiness. The Panel found that suggestions that alcohol will help you 'float away', 'escape the ordinary' 'make your brain happy' or 'come alive' were found to breach this standard.
- Alcohol marketing and packaging with strong or evident appeal to minors, through references to confectionery, chocolate, soft drink and ice-blocks.
- Caution in describing attributes of alcohol products to make sure claims that alcohol is 'healthy' or gives health benefits are not made.
- Caution against social media posts showing long pours from a height or making light of a drinking habit, which breach the standard relating to rapid or excessive alcohol consumption.

There was also a good example last quarter of the co-operation between ABAC and State Liquor Licensing Authorities with NSW Liquor & Gaming acting to support the enforcement of a Panel determination. While industry participants overwhelmingly accept and act on determinations finding a breach of an ABAC standard, on the rare occasion this does not happen the case will be referred to the government regulator for action.

ABAC is holding its annual industry webinar in August, with registrations open now. Joining the webinar and educating yourself on ABAC standards prevents irresponsible communications entering the market, and ensures the industry is meeting community expectations." ABAC Chair Hon Tony Smith emphasised

ABAC's Second Quarterly Report for 2024 detailing decisions made during the past quarter is available [online](#).

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

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