

2024

YEAR IN REVIEW

ABAC - AUSTRALIA'S RESPONSIBLE ALCOHOL MARKETING SCHEME

FROM THE CHAIR

2024 saw a range of ABAC initiatives completed or underway including an independent review of ABAC's operations and governance.

The independent review undertaken by Directors Australia found ABAC to be self-regulatory best practice, reflecting well on the Scheme's custodians. ABAC strives for continual improvement and over the next twelve months will consider the helpful observations made by Directors Australia.

An initiative in 2024 flowing from the 2023 Code Review was the publication of a Sponsorship Best Practice Guide. The guide highlights how the Code currently applies to sponsorship activity and importantly, the guidance for sponsorship agreements will assist industry to proactively ensure that their decision to engage in an agreement with a particular individual, group or event is socially responsible.

During 2024, 60 complaints triggered advertisements and packaging being ordered out of market by the ABAC Adjudication Panel, 10 of which were resolved on an expedited basis with the marketer accepting the breach and removing the marketing without awaiting a Panel hearing. In addition, 355 marketing communications were rejected by ABAC pre-vetters before they reached the market. These outcomes demonstrate ABAC is an active, efficient and effective regulator of alcohol marketing in Australia.



Hon Tony Smith
Chair, ABAC Management
Committee



THE
ABAC
SCHEME
LIMITED

KEY ABAC INITIATIVES

ABAC Operations & Governance Review

Periodically ABAC commissions an independent review of its operations and governance to ensure it remains aligned with best practice.

In 2024 Directors Australia were commissioned to undertake a review and found ABAC to be self-regulatory best practice. ABAC strives for continual improvement of its operations and governance and over the next twelve months will consider recommendations made by Directors Australia.

Key initiatives in 2024 arising from the review include:

- Review of ABAC's stakeholder engagement, key person and strategic plans;
- Setting a target timeframe for resolution of packaging complaints;
- Expanding the Chief Adjudicator's discretion in relation to the triaging of complaints to improve efficiency and optimise resource allocation; and
- Review of ABAC Adjudication Panel composition and tenure.

ABAC Education & Awareness

ABAC Education & Awareness is a key driver of industry compliance. In 2024 ABAC:

- published a Sponsorship Best Practice Guide;
- held a free industry compliance training webinar for all industry participants;
- delivered tailored in-house training sessions on ABAC compliance for companies and agencies;
- continued to offer a free online training course with 248 industry participants completing the course in 2024; and
- communicated with the regulated community directly and via circulars, upheld determination alerts and publicly available quarterly reports.

Engagement with other Regulators

To facilitate communication on common issues and cross-referral of complaints, ABAC has entered memoranda of understanding with State and Territory liquor authorities in Victoria, South Australia, Northern Territory and New South Wales. In 2024 five complaints were referred to liquor licensing authorities where the concerns were focussed on the responsible service of alcohol by licensed venues and all non-compliant determinations were referred to liquor licensing authorities to review in relation to their liquor promotion requirements.

In 2024 ABAC joined the International Council for Advertising Self-Regulation as part of its commitment to self-regulatory best practice. Membership has facilitated access to resources, sharing of innovation in advertising self-regulation and cross border complaint referral.

2772

**Requests to
pre-vet marketing**

*355 rejected prior
to entering market*

215

Complaints

*Resulting in
117 determinations*

60

Determinations upheld

[Access via the ABAC Website >](#)

Determination turnaround

20.5

**Business days
(marketing)**

*Determinations completed
within 30 day target*

27

**Business days
(packaging)**

*Determinations completed
within 60 day target*