

ANNUAL REPORT

2025

INDEPENDENT CHAIR REPORT

In 2025 ABAC continued its important role to maintain high marketing standards that are vital to supporting positive public health outcomes.

Proactive Measures to Strengthen Compliance

It is an ABAC Code requirement that alcohol and alcohol alternative marketers apply available age restrictions to exclude minors from viewing their alcohol marketing on social media. To gauge compliance across industry, ABAC commissioned JWS Research to conduct a compliance audit of alcohol brand age restrictions on social media as a follow up to their 2022 audit. The audit found improved signatory compliance, but lower levels of compliance by non-signatories. The audit has subsequently assisted focussing ABAC's education initiatives, including through liquor authorities, and guided engagement with social media platforms on barriers to age restriction activation.

As AI use has grown exponentially across society, ABAC has developed additional guidance for industry on maintaining responsible marketing practices when using this emerging technology. This information has been included in ABAC's Digital Best Practice Guide, which has been circulated to industry and is reviewed annually.

In response to trends in marketing, directly implying alcohol use before or while participating in water activities, ABAC developed the Alcohol and Water Safety Compliance Guide, which was released in July. The guide has been promoted to industry by both ABAC and Liquor Authorities.

Operational Excellence

An independent review by Directors Australia in 2024 found ABAC to be self-regulatory best practice. The review made a number of recommendations for refinements which were implemented throughout 2025. These

included: recruiting a new Adjudication Panelist with extensive youth market research expertise; streamlining ABAC's rules and procedures; enhancing the Panel determination format; and improving pre-vetting processes to promote robust and consistent assessments. The 2023 Code Review changes, fully implemented from 1 January 2024, were reviewed twelve months later, resulting in minor improvements in language to better align with the Code's intent.

This year saw a slight decrease in complaints, determinations and breaches. Pre-vetting requests increased in the second half of 2025 with November recording the highest pre-vetting demand in ABAC's history. Statistically there is a much lower (almost negligible) risk of a breach of Code standards if clearance is sought from the Pre-vetting Service.

ABAC's pre-vetting and complaints adjudication systems continue to perform strongly. 52 determinations triggered advertisements and packaging being ordered out of market by the ABAC Adjudication Panel, six of which were resolved on an expedited basis with the marketer accepting the breach and removing the marketing without awaiting a Panel hearing. Overall turnaround of complaints is swift at 19.5 business days for marketing and 41 business days for packaging. 2766 marketing communications were checked and 282 rejected by ABAC pre-vetters before reaching market.

Enhanced Stakeholder Engagement

2025 saw continued high level stakeholder engagement promoting awareness of the Code and Scheme, while encouraging feedback from stakeholders. Engagement with social media platforms established avenues for referring non-compliant Code breaches to both Google and Meta. Google welcomed ABAC to its priority flagger programme, providing ABAC with a dedicated channel to inform Google of issues that may violate their

policies. ABAC also collaborated with the Outdoor Media Association to strengthen its Placement Policy banning alcohol advertising on school buses and on bus shelters near schools.

A collaboration with the Interactive Advertising Bureau Audio Council resulted in best practice guidance for advertisers and platforms to prevent minors being exposed to alcohol ads on podcasts.

ABAC was also pleased to welcome two new direct Code signatories - Mark Anthony Brands AU and Parallel 37 Pty Ltd.

Looking Forward

ABAC continues to be agile in responding to changes in the alcohol marketing landscape, working collectively with regulators, government and industry. It encourages responsible alcohol marketing without cost to the taxpayer. Global engagement in 2025 has also reinforced ABAC as a unique and world leading self-regulatory system.

I express my appreciation to ABAC's secretariat, led by our CEO, Jayne Taylor, Adjudication panel, led by our Chief Adjudicator, Michael Lavarch AO, and our pre-vetting team. I look forward to continuing to work with the Management Committee in raising industry standards.



Hon Tony Smith
Chair, ABAC Management Committee

OVERVIEW

The ABAC Scheme ('ABAC') is an important regulator of alcohol and alcohol alternative marketing throughout Australia. Established in 1998, ABAC raises industry standards of marketing so that it is conducted responsibly and consistently with standards of good practice through regulation, education and advice. ABAC operates under a representative governance model designed to ensure independence, transparency and multi-stakeholder oversight:

- **Oversight** by a Management Committee that includes representation from government, the alcohol industry and the advertising sector, with leadership by an independent chair.
- **Funded** entirely by industry via membership levies, direct signatory fees and pre-vetting service charges.
- **Operated** independently by a professional secretariat.
- **Working closely with Australian governments** through representation on the Management Committee, inclusion of a government nominated Professor of Public Health on all adjudication panels, and co-operative relationships with State and Territory Liquor Licensing Authorities.

The ABAC Scheme is not the only set of rules affecting marketing in Australia. Alcohol and alcohol alternative marketing must also comply with broader Australian legal requirements and codes, including:

- The Federal Competition and Consumer Act and State Fair Trading legislation
- State and Territory Liquor Licensing alcohol promotion requirements
- Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code
- The Australian Association of National Advertisers Code of Ethics
- The Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice
- The Commercial Radio Code of Practice
- The Outdoor Media Association Placement Policy.

ABAC SCOPE OF OPERATION

ABAC operates a risk-based regulatory model that balances proactive safeguards with reactive enforcement mechanisms.

PRO-ACTIVE REGULATION



SETTING STANDARDS

The ABAC Responsible Alcohol Marketing Code (The ABAC Code) sets high standards for alcohol and alcohol alternative marketing in Australia.



EMPOWERING INDUSTRY THROUGH EDUCATION & GUIDANCE

ABAC provides free ongoing training and practical toolkits to ensure the alcohol and advertising industry understand Code compliance obligations.



ADVICE

The ABAC Pre-vetting Service is a proactive risk management tool. It evaluates proposed marketing communications — including product names and packaging — against the ABAC Code to ensure standards are met before materials reach the public domain. Pre-vetting is mandatory for ABAC signatory television, cinema, radio and outdoor marketing and is supported by Outdoor Media Association members and the ClearAds Division of Free TV Australia.



MONITORING

In 2022 and 2025 ABAC commissioned independent proactive compliance audits of age restriction controls on social media.

REACTIVE REGULATION

AN IMPORTANT SAFETY NET

When marketing falls short of the ABAC standards, there is a transparent and independent resolution pathway through:

- **Public Complaint Resolution**
A free, confidential and accessible process for the community to raise concerns.
- **Independent Complaints Adjudication Panel**
An adjudication body, chaired by a legal regulatory expert and featuring members from outside the alcohol industry, ensuring impartial decisions.
- **Fast Efficient Processes**
Decisions are made quickly while providing procedural fairness.
- **Strong Voluntary Compliance**
A high historical rate of co-operation overall with full co-operation by signatories. Non-compliance is reported to relevant liquor licensing authorities, maintaining a bridge between self-regulation and government regulation.
- **Reporting & Sanctions**
All determinations are published to the ABAC website and via monthly, quarterly and annual reporting to ensure full transparency and industry learning. Adverse publicity, removal of marketing and packaging and referral to liquor authorities provide a strong framework of sanctions.

2025 IN NUMBERS

PRO-ACTIVE REGULATION

Building a culture of compliance

Industry Commitment

100%

Signatory Compliance with Panel Determinations

88%

Proportion of alcohol company media spend by ABAC signatories

>99%

Of Signatories had no Panel Breaches

66%

Proportion of off-premise retailer media spend by ABAC signatories

665

Signatory Companies Up from 548 in 2024

Education & Training

268

Online Training Course Certificates

232

Registered for ABAC Annual Webinar

32

In-house & Sectoral Briefings

3

New or refreshed guidance publications

Pre-vetting

2,766

Total Pre-vetting Requests: A high-volume commitment to responsible marketing

282

Applications Rejected/Modified: Risks identified and corrected before reaching the market

0

Panel Breaches of Pre-vetted Material: Demonstrating 100% effectiveness

REACTIVE REGULATION

Safety Net – Public Complaints Process

Rigorous, independent, and timely review of complaints against industry standards

Complaints & Determinations

196

Complaints Received

3.73%

of all Australian advertising complaints

103

Determinations (52 Breaches)

98%

Compliance with Panel decisions (100% by Signatories)

Operational Efficiency

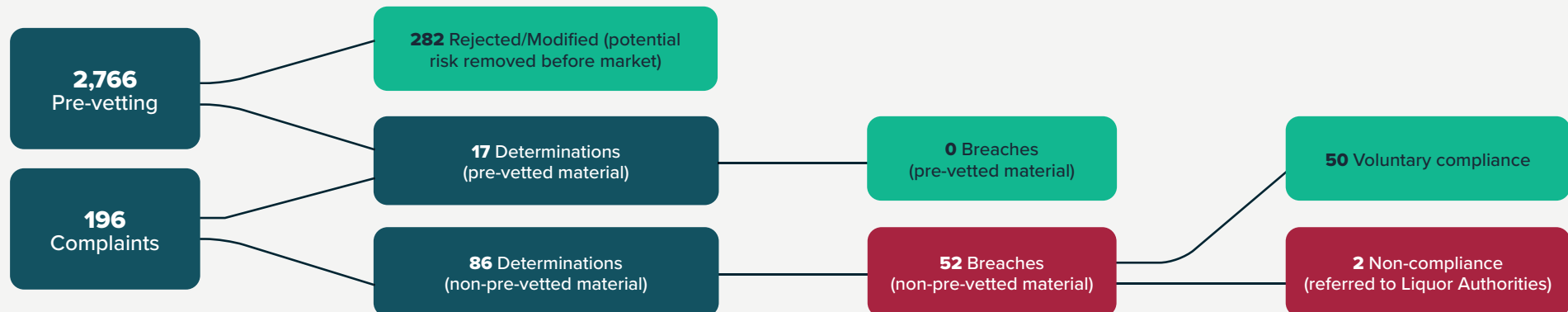
19.5

Business Days: Average turnaround for advertising determinations

41

Business Days: Average turnaround for packaging determinations

A STRONG WHOLISTIC REGULATORY SYSTEM



ABAC INTERACTIONS WITH ALCOHOL & ALCOHOL ALTERNATIVE MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

1

INTERNAL CHECK

Company and advertising agency staff check the marketing communication and its media placement schedule against the ABAC Code standards.

2

EXTERNAL PRE-VETTING CHECK

Independent pre-vetters check the marketing communication against the ABAC Code.

3

COMPLAINT

Once a campaign is in the marketplace consumers can lodge a confidential complaint about the marketing communication centrally through Ad Standards and at no cost.

4

REFERRAL TO CHIEF ADJUDICATOR

Ad Standards refers all alcohol and alcohol alternative marketing communication complaints to the Chief Adjudicator of the ABAC Adjudication Panel.

5

REFERRAL TO THE INDEPENDENT ABAC ADJUDICATION PANEL

All complaints are assessed by the Chief Adjudicator and referred, where appropriate, to the ABAC Adjudication Panel for a hearing on whether the marketing communication or its placement meets the ABAC Code standards.

6

DETERMINATION PUBLISHED

Determinations are sent to the complainant, marketer, ABAC Management Committee and Ad Standards and published on the ABAC website.

7

COMPLIANCE

If the ABAC Adjudication Panel finds the ABAC Code standards have not been met the marketer is asked:

- in the case of a product name, packaging or marketing collateral - to cease further orders for production and modify the product name, product packaging or marketing collateral to be consistent with the Panel's determination within 3 months.
- in the case of all other marketing communication content— withdraw, discontinue or modify the material within five (5) business days.
- in the case of placement of a marketing communication—withdraw, discontinue or modify the placement within five (5) business days and take all reasonable precautions to ensure that the marketing communication will not again be placed in the location, time or manner that was found to breach the Placement Standards in the Code.

Non-Compliance is referred to State & Territory Liquor authorities to consider against their promotional guidelines.

MANAGEMENT OF THE ABAC SCHEME

The Management Committee sets the strategic direction, has oversight of and reviews the operations and publications of the ABAC Scheme with a view to:

- Encourage industry members, large and small, to participate in the regulatory system;
- Ensure an effective regulatory system;
- Monitor ABAC operations and improve them where necessary;
- Ensure the ABAC Code is consistent with community standards and responsive to changes in the media and marketing landscape;
- Raise industry awareness of the ABAC Code and Scheme through education and resources;
- Manage the ABAC Pre-vetting Service as an effective mechanism to support and strengthen the aims of ABAC and encourage the use of this service; and
- Co-ordinate the development and completion of a publicly available annual report.

During 2025 the ABAC Management Committee comprised:

- Independent Chair, Hon Tony Smith;
- Chief Executive of the Brewers Association of Australia, Mr John Preston (until June 2025) & Ms Amanda Watson (from July 2025);
- Chief Executive of Spirits & Cocktails Australia Inc, Mr Greg Holland (until May 2025), Mr Sasha Grebe (from May 2025 to September 2025) & Mr Steven Fanner (from September 2025);
- Chief Executive Officer of Australian Grape & Wine Inc, Mr Lee McLean;
- Chief Executive of Advertising Council Australia Limited, Mr Tony Hale;
- The Assistant Secretary with responsibility for alcohol policy at the Commonwealth Department of Health.

The Management Committee is supported in its role by the ABAC Chief Executive Officer, Ms Jayne Taylor.

Each member of the Management Committee represents a group of stakeholders in alcohol marketing regulation. The Management Committee meets at least four times a year and any issues raised by any member or referred by the Panel or Pre-vetters receive full consideration. In practice, the Committee operates on a consensus basis.

ABAC MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



Hon Tony Smith



Tony Hale



John Preston



Amanda Watson



Sasha Grebe



Greg Holland



Lee McLean



Steven Fanner

ABAC SCHEME COVERAGE

Membership and compliance with the Scheme is voluntary. However, the Brewers Association of Australia, Spirits & Cocktails Australia and Australian Grape & Wine have agreed that its members will be bound by the Scheme. This means the great majority of alcohol marketing in Australia is regulated by the Scheme.

The following companies have joined the ABAC Scheme as direct signatories:

- 2013 – Endeavour Drinks Group & Coles Liquor Group
- 2015 – Campari Australia & Lion
- 2017 – Coca Cola Europacific Partners Australia & Asahi Beverages
- 2019 – Independent Brands Australia
- 2020 – Amazon Australia
- 2021 – Australian Distiller’s Association members
- 2024 – Coca Cola South Pacific
- 2025 – Mark Anthony Brands AU & Parallel 37 Pty Ltd

Around 665 companies involved in the production, distribution and retail of alcohol are signatories to the ABAC Scheme and these companies represent a considerably higher number of alcohol brands in Australia. This figure is around 21% higher than in 2024.

ABAC signatories comprise around 88% of alcohol producer media spend and 66% of alcohol off-premise retailer media spend in Australia.

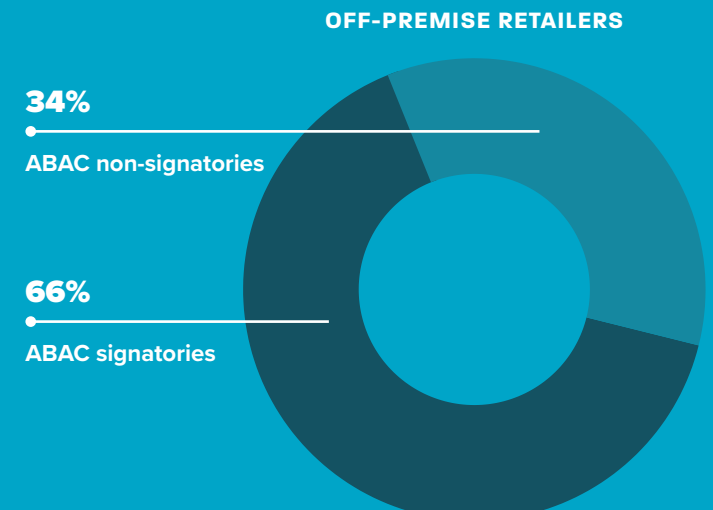
In 2025 over 98% of ABAC signatories did not receive complaints that went to Panel review and over 99% received no Panel breach decisions about their marketing. Signatories have demonstrated 100% compliance with ABAC Panel decisions throughout ABAC’s 27 years.

Many non-signatories currently use the Pre-vetting Service and the Scheme has the support of media associations. In 2025, 18% of pre-vetting applications were from non-signatories.

The alcohol and alcohol alternative industry (both signatories and non-signatories) and advertising agencies have access to a free online compliance training course and video series and annual training webinar hosted by the ABAC Chief Adjudicator where all aspects and obligations of the Code, Pre-vetting Service and complaints processes are explained. In addition, the ABAC pre-vetters, industry associations and ABAC administrators are all available to explain the Code and the Scheme to marketers and their agencies.

The ABAC Adjudication Panel makes decisions on all marketing communications on which a complaint raising ABAC issues is received and in most cases, marketers in Australia co-operate with the ABAC system and comply with Panel determinations. In the rare instances that voluntary compliance is not attained, the complaint is referred to the relevant State or Territory liquor authority for consideration against its promotional guidelines.

ABAC SIGNATORIES MEDIA SPEND





ABAC CODE

The ABAC Code sets key standards for the responsible content and placement of alcohol and alcohol alternative marketing in Australia.

Subject to regular reviews, the ABAC Code reflects community expectations and changes in the media and advertising industries. It applies beyond traditional forms of advertising (television, radio, print and outdoor) to marketing communications in emerging digital and social media.

ABAC has developed a range of **Guidance notes** to assist advertisers and agencies in interpreting the ABAC Code.

6 KEY STANDARDS FOR ALCOHOL & ALCOHOL ALTERNATIVE MARKETING IN AUSTRALIA

1 RESPONSIBLE AND MODERATE PORTRAYAL OF ALCOHOL

- No depiction, direct implication, encouragement or treating as amusing:
 - › consumption inconsistent with the Australian Guidelines to Reduce the Health Risks from Drinking Alcohol, in particular consuming alcohol while pregnant or consuming more than 4 standard drinks on any one day or more than 10 standard drinks per week; or
 - › rapid alcohol consumption, misuse or abuse of alcohol or alcohol related irresponsible or offensive behaviour.
- No challenge or dare to consume alcohol or portrayal of the refusal of alcohol or choice of abstinence in a negative light.
- No encouragement to choose a particular alcohol beverage by emphasising its alcohol strength (unless strength is lower than typical for similar beverages) or the intoxicating effect of alcohol.

2 RESPONSIBILITY TOWARD MINORS

- No strong or evident appeal to minors.
- People who are or look under 18 may only be shown where they are in an incidental role and there is no implication they will consume or serve alcohol.
- People who are 18-24 years old and look over 18 may only be shown where the image of the person is not visually prominent within the marketing OR is of a real person in a real scenario (not a paid model, actor or influencer) and placed in:
 - › Licensed premises that do not permit entry by minors; or
 - › An age restricted account or post within a social media platform which:
 - » requires users to register and login to use the platform, including the provision of their full date of birth; and
 - » is able to hide the existence of any alcohol-related pages, sites and content such that they are not visible other than to a user who has registered on the platform as being an adult.

3 RESPONSIBLE DEPICTION OF THE EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL

- No suggestion consumption/presence of alcohol causes/contributes to an improvement in mood/environment.
- No depiction (not even by implication) that the consumption or presence of alcohol is a cause or contributes to the achievement of personal, business, social, sporting, sexual or other success.
- No suggestion that the success of a social occasion depends on the presence or consumption of alcohol.
- No suggestion that alcohol offers any therapeutic or health (including mental health) benefit, is needed to relax, or helps overcome problems or adversity.

4 ALCOHOL AND SAFETY

- No depiction (not even by implication) of alcohol being consumed before or during an activity that, for safety reasons, requires a high degree of alertness or physical co-ordination (i.e. control of a motor vehicle, boat or machinery or swimming).

5 PLACEMENT RESTRICTIONS

- Comply with Australian media industry code provisions regulating the placement of alcohol and alcohol alternative marketing ie within 150m of a school or outside times allocated for alcohol ads on free to air television.
- Use available age restriction controls.
- Only placing where audience is at least 80% adults.
- Not placing with programs or content primarily aimed at under 18s.
- Not delivering directly to under 18s by hand or electronic mail or to any person that has sought removal from the marketing list (unless due to under 18 providing incorrect date of birth).

6 ALCOHOL ALTERNATIVES

- An Alcohol alternative is a beverage that is at or less than 0.5% alcohol by volume that has an appearance and style commonly associated with alcohol, uses a brand or descriptor commonly associated with alcohol, and is not a beverage commonly understood as non-alcoholic, such as fruit juice.
- Alcohol alternative marketing must comply with the Responsibility to Minors and Placement Restrictions.
- Alcohol alternative marketing must comply with all other ABAC standards if it fails to clearly and prominently identify the product as an alcohol alternative or if the marketing also promotes an alcohol product (beyond a common brand name) or alcohol use.

KEY ABAC INITIATIVES

ABAC OPERATIONS & GOVERNANCE REVIEW

Periodically ABAC commissions an independent review of its operations and governance to ensure it remains aligned with self-regulatory and governance 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 and has reviewed its operations in light of the recommendations made by Directors Australia. Key initiatives in 2025 arising from the review include:

- a new Panelist with extensive youth market research expertise;
- streamlined Panel determination format;
- improved internal processes, governance and clearer rules and procedures;
- review of pre-vetting system:
 - › changing outcomes to clearance, rejection and advice to align with global systems;
 - › greater pre-vetter collaboration on complex/borderline requests; and
 - › annual internal audits to assess and promote consistency.

ABAC EDUCATION & AWARENESS

ABAC Education & Awareness is a key driver of industry compliance. In 2025 ABAC:

- developed an Alcohol and Water Safety Compliance Guide in response to increasing Code breaches around alcohol use with water activities, promoted via ABAC and Liquor Authority circulars;
- published a revised Digital Best Practice Guide that included guidance on the use of generative AI in alcohol marketing and enhanced programmatic guidance;
- increased executive level briefings and engagement with signatories and non-signatory associations;
- held a free industry compliance training webinar for all industry participants with 232 registrations;
- delivered tailored in-house training sessions on ABAC compliance for companies and agencies;
- continued to offer a free online training course with 268 industry participants completing the course in 2025; and
- communicated with the regulated community in relation to ABAC developments and issues both directly and via circulars, upheld determination alerts and quarterly reports released publicly and available on the ABAC website.

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 2025 two 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 liquor promotion requirements.

In 2025 ABAC participated in the International Council for Advertising Self-Regulation (after joining in 2024) as part of its commitment to self-regulatory best practice. Membership has facilitated access to resources and sharing of innovation in advertising self-regulation as well as facilitating cross border complaint referral.

ABAC presented to permanent representatives to the UN and other officials on Australia's alcohol marketing regulatory regime and the role of the ABAC Scheme in the lead-up to the General Assembly's consideration of the WHO policy position on reducing preventable deaths.

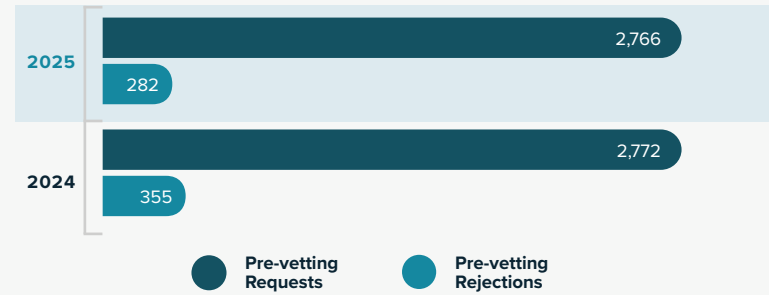
ABAC PRE-VETTING SERVICE (PRE-VETTING SERVICE)

The Pre-vetting Service provides a confidential assessment for marketers on whether proposed alcohol marketing communications comply with the Code. This service is offered on a 'user pays' basis.

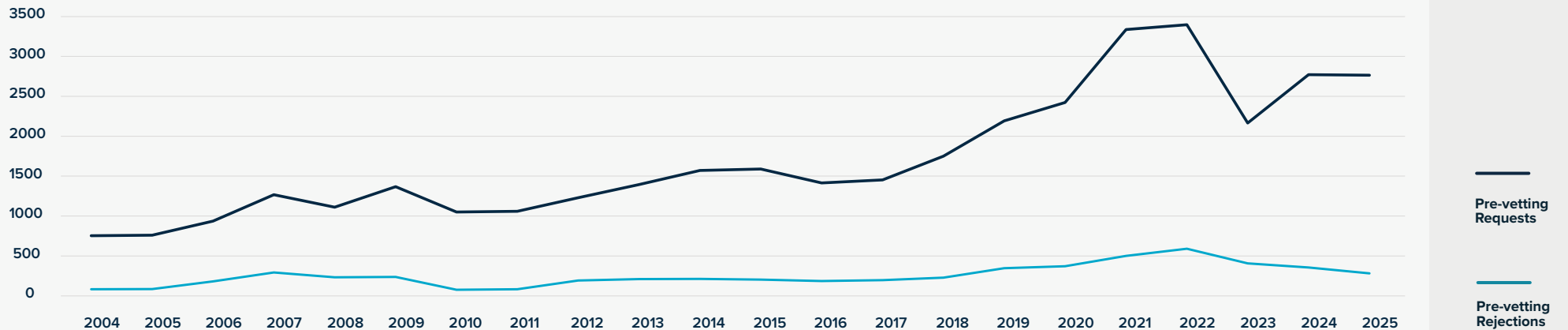
- Pre-vetters advise, clear, reject or suggest modification to material submitted to them for pre-vetting.
- The Pre-vetting Service has the support of:
 - › Media associations that encourage their members to check that an alcohol marketing communication has pre-vetting clearance prior to placement of the communication; and
 - › Retailer signatories that encourage suppliers to obtain pre-vetting approval for packaging and point of sale marketing.
- Pre-vetters are independent of the alcohol beverage industry.

Overall pre-vetting volume was similar to 2024 but with demand increasing significantly in the second half of the year.

PRE-VETTING REQUESTS & REJECTIONS

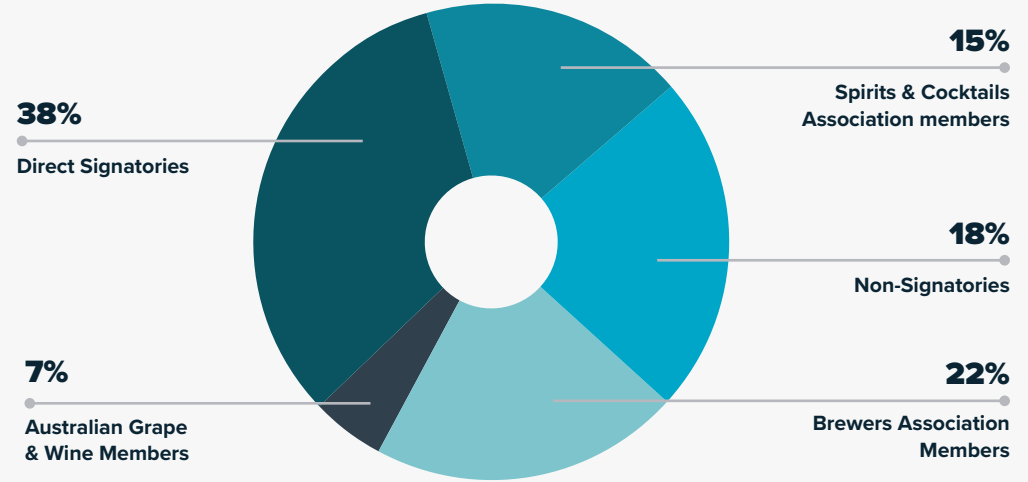


PRE-VETTING ACTIVITY 2004-2025



PRE-VETTING APPLICATIONS BY SECTOR

The Pre-vetting Service is available to both signatories and non-signatories and in 2025 18% of requests were by non-signatories. The use of Pre-vetting is encouraged by media associations and also ABAC signatory retailers which has the effect of raising awareness of Pre-vetting among non-signatories.

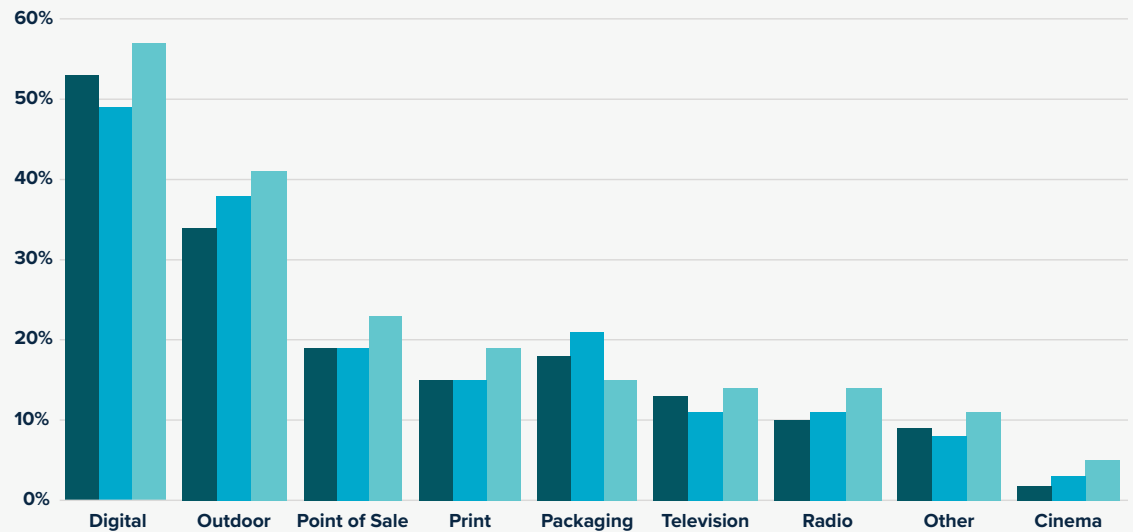


PRE-VETTING APPLICATIONS BY MEDIA

Pre-vetting is mandatory for signatory advertisements placed in outdoor, television, cinema and radio media but optional for all other media. The alcohol industry continues to find value in pre-vetting by using the service when it is an option rather than mandatory to do so. In 2025, 43% of all signatory pre-vetting requests were optional to pre-vet.

NOTE: Chart represents the percentage of requests that relate to a particular medium. As a number of requests relate to marketing to be used in more than one type of media the percentages total >100%.

2023 2024 2025



ABAC ADJUDICATION PANEL (THE ABAC PANEL)

The ABAC Panel headed by Chief Adjudicator Professor Michael Lavarch, AO, considers public complaints about alcohol marketing.

- Ad Standards is the central gateway for consumer complaints in relation to marketing communications in Australia. This streamlined process ensures all relevant Codes are triggered and reduces the risk of duplication and double handling. All alcohol related complaints received by [Ad Standards](#) are provided to the ABAC Chief Adjudicator and referred to the Panel, where appropriate, for a hearing on whether the marketing communication or its placement meets the ABAC Code standards.
 - Ad Standards considers all complaints it receives against the [AANA Code of Ethics](#) and other codes it administers. The Code of Ethics covers a wide range of social issues reflecting the matters that concern the community - from discrimination and language through to health and safety. The advertising self-regulation system works to ensure there is a consistent standard for advertising and marketing content across every media channel.
 - The ABAC Panel reports its decisions to Ad Standards, the ABAC Management Committee, the marketer and the complainant. Decisions are published on the ABAC website.
 - The Panel and its deliberations are conducted independently of the ABAC Management Committee and the broader alcohol and advertising industry.
- The Panel comprises:
 - › The Chief Adjudicator, Professor The Hon Michael Lavarch AO, who has legal expertise (or if unavailable, the deputy Chief Adjudicator, Debra Richards),
 - › A health sector panelist, Professor Richard Mattick AM or Professor Louisa Jorm (both were appointed from a shortlist of health sector professionals provided by the relevant Federal Minister responsible for alcohol issues or his or her nominee); and
 - › A panelist with market research, media or advertising expertise, Debra Richards or Cristiano Lima.
 - › Each quarter the Chief Adjudicator reports to the ABAC Management Committee on the operation of the Panel and the Chief Adjudicator submits an annual report on the Panel's operations to the ABAC Management Committee for inclusion in its annual report.



COMPLAINTS

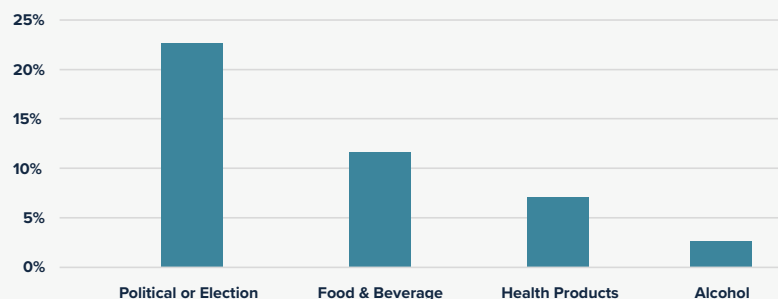
2025 saw a small decrease in complaints and a 28% decrease in the proportion of advertising complaints that Ad Standards received in the alcohol category.

OF THE 196 COMPLAINTS RECEIVED:

192 Separate advertising campaigns attracted a complaint

107 Complaints resulted in an ABAC Determination

SELECTION OF CATEGORIES ATTRACTING COMPLAINTS TO AD STANDARDS

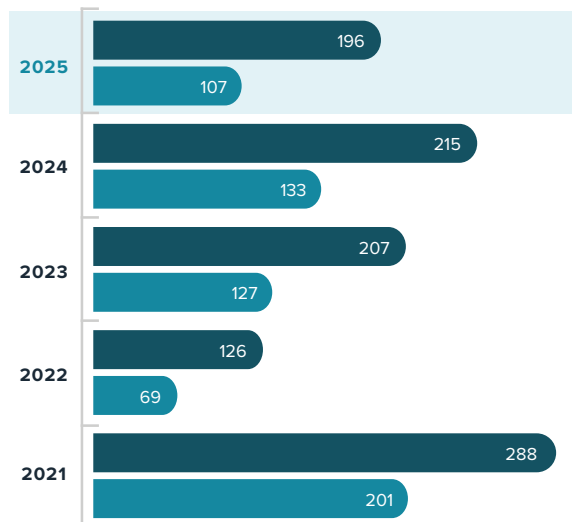


Source: [Ad Standards 2025 Annual Report](#)

COMPLAINTS RECEIVED AND RESULTING IN AN ABAC DETERMINATION

In 2025, 55% of complaints resulted in a determination, 34% were outside the scope of the ABAC Code, 3.5% raised issues that have been consistently dismissed by the Panel, 2.5% were previously considered by the Panel, 1.5% were referred to a more appropriate forum, 1.5% were summarily dismissed as very clearly not a Code breach, 1.5% could not proceed due to insufficient information being provided and less than 1% related to revised packaging that was certified following a breach. No complaints were informally resolved.

● Complaints Received ● Complaints resulting in an ABAC Determination

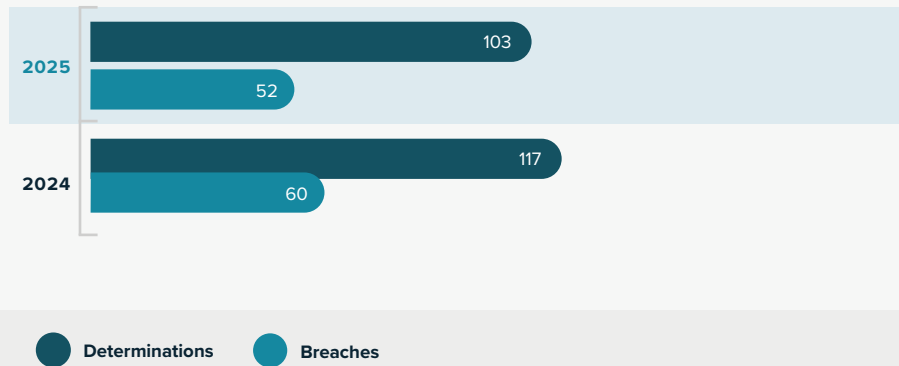


COMPLAINTS DID NOT RESULT IN AN ABAC DETERMINATION FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

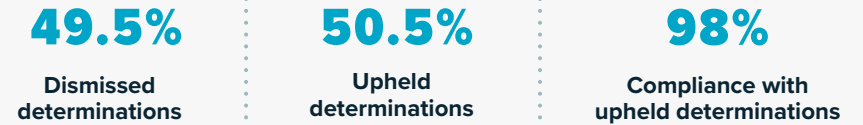
| | |
|--|----------|
| Referred to a more appropriate complaints adjudication forum | 3 |
| Summarily dismissed (very clearly not a breach of the Code) | 3 |
| Revised packaging certified following a breach | 1 |
| Complaint previously considered: | |
| 2025 Determinations | 2 |
| 2024 Determinations | 1 |
| 2023 Determinations | 1 |
| 2019 Determinations | 1 |
| Consistently dismissed issues: | |
| Placement the Panel has previously considered consistent with the Code | 7 |
| Outside scope of ABAC: | |
| Religious offence | 14 |
| Dislike the ad | 7 |
| Sexual Imagery | 6 |
| Not an alcohol or alcohol alternative marketing communication | 5 |
| Failure to disclose it is an ad or include alcohol guidelines | 5 |
| Sexual or Racial discrimination | 4 |
| Placement outside scope | 4 |
| Offensive language | 4 |
| Permissibility of alcohol advertising | 3 |
| Violence | 3 |
| Misleading advertising (referred to Fair Trading) | 2 |
| Alcohol pricing | 2 |
| Frequency of alcohol advertising | 2 |
| Concern about legislative compliance (referred to regulator if possible) | 2 |
| General Safety | 2 |
| In-store point of sale marketing | 1 |
| Food Standards Code | 1 |
| Insufficient information provided | |
| | 3 |

DETERMINATIONS

DETERMINATIONS & BREACHES IN 2025

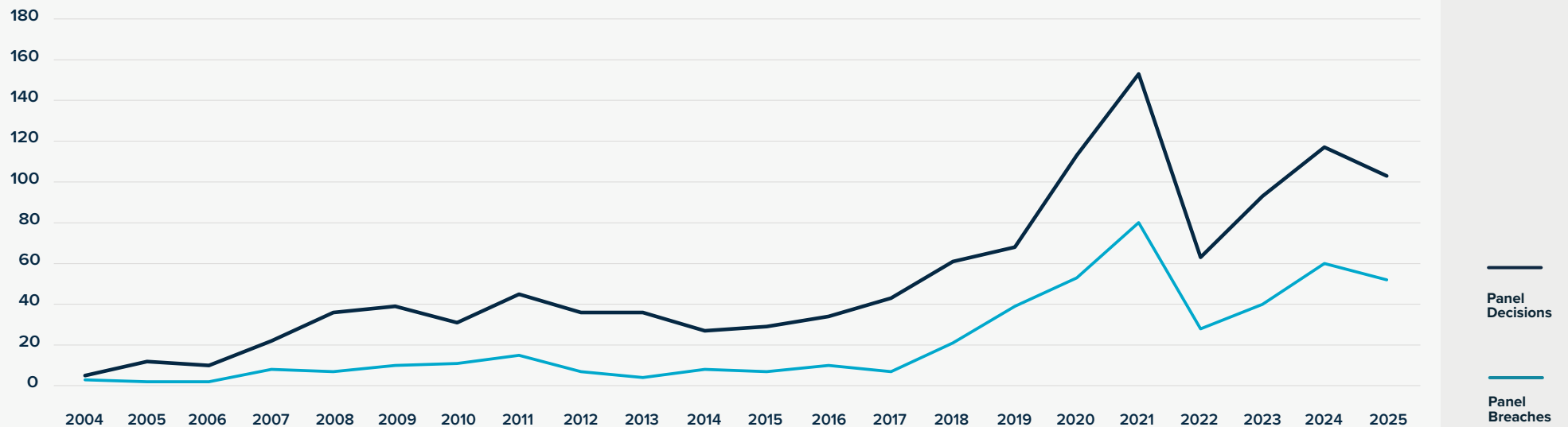


PERCENTAGES OF DISMISSED AND UPHELD DETERMINATIONS IN 2025



- There was a small decrease in determinations and breaches in 2025.
- The average turnaround time for marketing determinations was 19.5 business days (target 30 business days) and for packaging determinations, 41 business days (target 60 business days).
- There were no Panel breaches of marketing communications that received pre-vetting clearance in 2025 - Pre-vetting remains the most effective way to prevent a Panel determination or breach.

ABAC COMPLAINTS PANEL DECISIONS AND BREACHES



DETERMINATIONS & BREACHES BY MEDIA IN 2025

| MEDIA CHANNEL | DETERMINATIONS | BREACHES |
|---|----------------|----------|
| Digital Includes Digital/subscription TV | 82% | 94% |
| Packaging | 9% | 8% |
| TV Free to Air | 5% | — |
| Outdoor | 5% | — |
| Direct Marketing Email, Text, Telemarketing | 3% | 2% |
| Print | 1% | — |
| Cinema | 1% | — |
| Radio | 1% | — |

MEDIA TRENDS

Alcohol marketing via digital media (particularly social media), continued to be the most common medium considered in determinations and the most common medium to result in a breach of ABAC standards by a considerable margin.

The next most common medium to attract a determination or breach was packaging.

Traditional broadcast media attracted very few complaints or determinations.

DIGITAL PLATFORMS ATTRACTING A DETERMINATION & BREACH IN 2025

| MEDIA CHANNEL | DETERMINATIONS | BREACHES |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------|
| Instagram | 49% | 61% |
| Facebook | 29% | 27% |
| Company Website | 6% | 6% |
| TV Digital/subscription | 4% | — |
| Tik Tok | 3% | 3% |
| Spotify | 2% | — |
| Podcast | 2% | 1% |
| Third party App | 2% | 1% |
| Third party Website | 2% | — |
| Youtube | 1% | 1% |

DIGITAL TRENDS

Current and historical data demonstrates that as audiences and marketing shifted away from traditional broadcast media toward digital media, this is reflected in the media that attracts determinations and breaches.

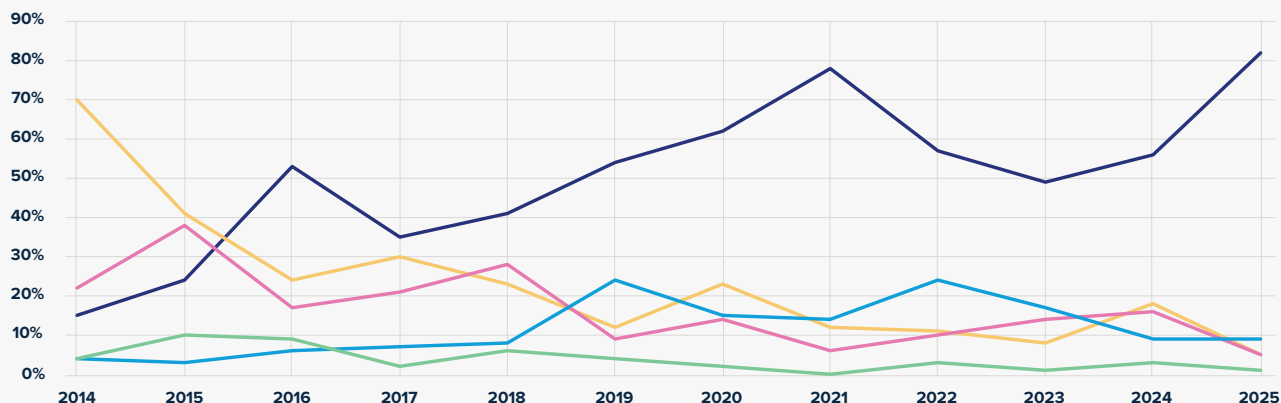
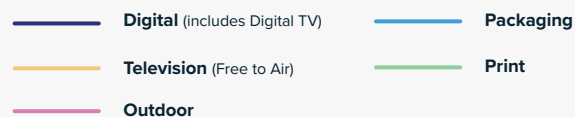
In response to the rapidly changing media landscape, ABAC acted swiftly to develop comprehensive digital best practice guidance

and media neutral placement standards to fill gaps in the regulation of the placement of alcohol advertisements in digital media.

ABAC also developed free online training as digital technologies became accessible to emerging small businesses with lower compliance skills in-house.

MEDIA ATTRACTING A PANEL DECISION 2014-2025

The primary media that attracts Panel decisions have been included in this historical chart. Other media, including Cinema, Radio, Point of Sale, Direct marketing and brand extensions attract much lower complaint levels.



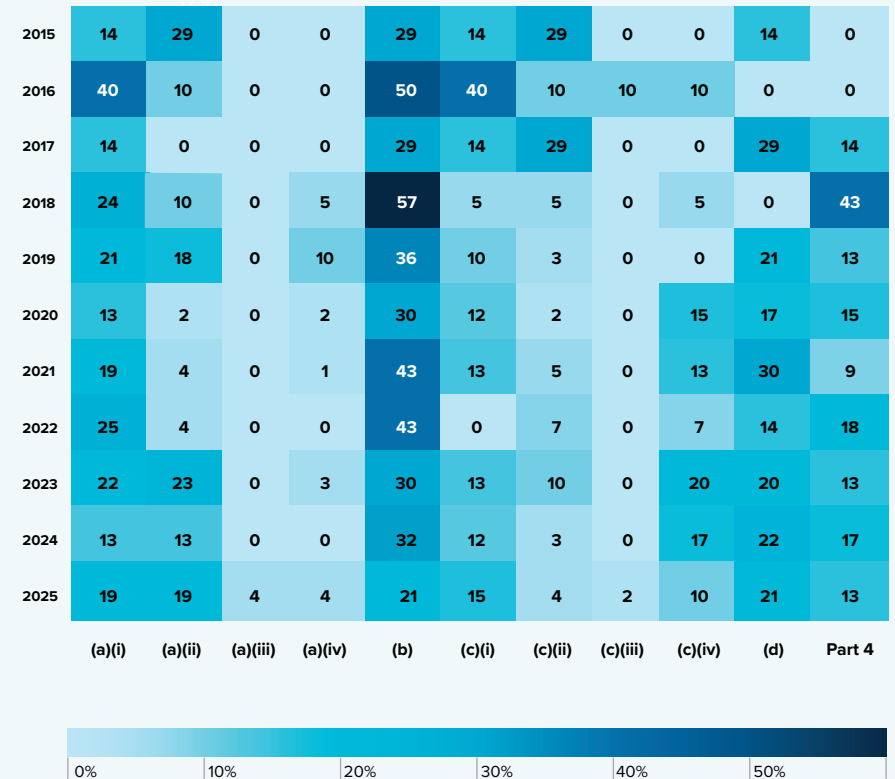
DETERMINATIONS & BREACHES BY ABAC CODE PROVISION IN 2025

| CODE PROVISION | DETERMINATIONS | BREACHES |
|---|----------------|----------|
| Strong or evident appeal to minors/ Depiction of under 25s | 32% | 21% |
| Rapid consumption, misuse or abuse of alcohol or other irresponsible or offensive alcohol related behaviour | 22% | 19% |
| Placement restrictions | 20% | 13% |
| Consumption inconsistent with Australian Alcohol Guidelines Excessive or with pregnancy/breastfeeding | 17% | 19% |
| Alcohol use with activities requiring alertness/physical co-ordination | 17% | 21% |
| Alcohol cause of improved mood/environment | 16% | 15% |
| Therapeutic, health or mental health benefit/needed to relax/ helps overcome problems | 14% | 10% |
| Alcohol cause of success | 8% | 4% |
| Challenge or dare to consume alcohol or portray refusal or abstinence in a negative light | 3% | 4% |
| Emphasise strength or intoxicating effect of alcohol | 3% | 4% |
| Success of social occasion depends on alcohol | 2% | 2% |

2025 observations

- No breaches of requirement to only show over 25 year olds and alcohol alternative standards;
- Significant reduction in proportion of breaches relating to alcohol offering a health benefit or helping to overcome problems (40%), strong or evident appeal to minors and placement standards;
- Increases in proportion of breaches relating to excessive, rapid or irresponsible alcohol consumption;
- Unlike previous years no single standard attracted significantly more breach findings.

HEATMAP OF BREACHES BY CODE PROVISION (2015 - 2025)



Ten year observations

- Strong or evident appeal to minors, Part (b)(i), has consistently attracted the most breaches followed by excessive/irresponsible alcohol consumption;
- Placement breaches, Part 4, breaches spiked after those standards were introduced and since decreased;
- Alcohol as a cause of success, Part 3(c)(ii), has significantly declined, while showing alcohol use in unsafe scenarios / suggesting alcohol has a health benefit, Parts 3(d) and (c)(iv), have increased;
- Other standards consistently attract very few breaches.

NOTE: Charts represent the percentage of determinations/breach determinations that include consideration of a particular ABAC Code provision. As a number of determinations relate to more than one Code provision the percentages total >100%.

2025 REPORT

The 2025 calendar year marked further maturation of the ABAC Scheme and a re-balancing of the Scheme's regulatory approach from static, reactive regulation that tackles problems as they arise to proactive, risk-based regulation that aims to minimise problems arising in the first place. This is evidenced by the focus of effort on industry education, the production of regulatory best-practice materials, and the testing of industry performance, triggered independently of the receipt of public complaints. Most notably, the conduct of compliance monitoring of industry-wide application of age-restriction controls in digital marketing to prevent minors from being exposed to alcohol marketing.

This shift in regulatory approach places an additional dimension on the work of the Adjudication Panel. The Panel's core function remains the timely and effective determination of complaints about individual marketing items. Beyond this, complaints and the Panel's work become key data sources and drivers of proactive regulation. Complaints tell the Scheme:

- The issues that most concern the community
- The Code standards that the industry might find most challenging to meet
- Where resources can be best employed to improve the compliance posture of alcohol and alcohol alternative industry participants.

The clearest example of the linkage between complaints, Panel determinations, and subsequent proactive regulation in 2025 was the series of complaints, determinations, and breaches of the Code's placement standards regarding alcohol advertising in podcasts. The problem identified by the complaints in early 2025 was that alcohol ads were being heard in the 'pre-roll' advertising of podcasts designed for children. This was a clear breach of the ABAC standard, but it was equally evident that alcohol marketers had no desire to place ads with this content. Something was breaking down.

The problem was that podcast content classification failed in some instances. Material for children was being misclassified, and as a result, automated programmatic marketing campaigns across various digital media, including podcasts, were misfiring. Using this data source, the ABAC secretariat engaged the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) Audio Council and podcast platforms to clarify responsibilities and implement stronger classification and placement controls. Best-practice guidance for buyers and sellers was produced, and no further podcast-related complaints were received for the remainder of the year.

In short, the problem was identified by concerned parents, analysed by the Adjudication Panel through the complaints process, taken up by the ABAC Scheme, and a better way to minimise the risk of recurrence was found—a virtuous cycle between reactive and proactive regulation.

The future of the Scheme lies in further developing and implementing its regulatory risk model. In doing so, ABAC can remain an efficient, cost-effective means of protecting community standards and supporting the National Alcohol Strategy's harm minimisation objectives. A shared regulatory model in which self-regulation operates alongside government regulation, each playing complementary roles.

During the year, the Panel determined complaints promptly and consistently across a caseload that reflected ongoing shifts in marketing practice. Digital marketing via social media platforms attracted most complaints to the Panel and was the medium where breaches were most likely to occur. The reason is obvious:

- Social media is cheap to produce, and there is effectively no barrier to entry for alcohol marketers, both large and small, to use the platforms to advertise
- Social media is immediate
- The relationship between a marketer and a customer is direct, with the marketing able to be targeted based on the audience data collected by the platforms.

While both complaints and Determinations were down slightly compared to 2024, the Panel was called upon to make, on average, over two decisions per week. Some of the Determinations address multiple examples of social

media posts or product packaging and raise complex issues. The Panel is not fulltime, and each Panelist has demanding 'day jobs'. Notwithstanding this, all target timeframes for handling and deciding complaints were met.

The Panel introduced a new Determination format to assist readers in quickly coming to grips with the issues and the final decision without sacrificing the rigour of the analysis, which the Panel has endeavoured to display throughout its 28-year operation. Feedback on the improved template format has been very positive.

Special mention must be made of Jeanne Strachan, who retired from the Panel in June 2025. Jeanne was one of the original Panel members and commenced with the Scheme in 1998. A highly skilled and enormously well-regarded marketing and research professional, Jeanne was instrumental in developing the Panel's approach to applying Code standards and in establishing the credibility of Panel decisions. All the Panel members enjoyed working with her, and we wish her the best with her ongoing creative endeavours.

Cris Lima joined the Panel and has brought valuable expertise in youth issues and market research. In his short time on the Panel, Cris has added real value, and we are delighted to have him at the ABAC Scheme.

As always, my thanks to each Panel member, the Scheme CEO, Jayne Taylor, and our wonderfully efficient Complaints Officer, Marilyn Hansford. ABAC is a very lean operation considering what it produces each year, and in no small measure, this is due to Jayne and Marilyn.

**Professor The Hon Michael Lavarch AO
Chief Adjudicator, ABAC Adjudication Panel**



MOST COMPLAINED ABOUT ALCOHOL MARKETING IN 2025

In 2025 the marketing that attracted the largest number of complaints was the name, packaging and website marketing of Hanuman Premium Lager.

The marketing attracted 13 complaints, all of which fell outside the scope of the ABAC code as the concerns related to religious offence. These issues are addressed within the AANA Code of Ethics. Ad Standards made a decision on an item of marketing for Hanuman Beer in 2025 and found that the advertisement was consistent with prevailing community standards.

The Ad Standards Community Panel acknowledged that advertisers should take care when referencing religious figures in advertising as such depictions can offend segments of the community. However, they considered that the use of the product name and packaging on a website was unlikely to reach a level that would incite hatred, contempt, or ridicule towards Hindus, or suggest they are deserving unfair or less favourable treatment.

Ad Standards considered that the advertisement did not discriminate against or vilify a group of people on the basis of religion and did not breach the AANA Code of Ethics.



NON-COMPLIANCE

As a self-regulatory system, compliance with the Panel's decisions is dependent upon the commitment of industry participants. In the vast majority of cases, decisions by the Panel to uphold a complaint are accepted by marketers and the marketing communications in question are withdrawn or modified to comply with the ABAC provisions.

If the ABAC Adjudication Panel finds the ABAC Code standards have not been met the marketer is asked:

- in the case of a product name, packaging or marketing collateral — to cease further orders for production immediately and modify to be consistent with the Panel's determination within 3 months.
- in the case of all other marketing communication content — withdraw, discontinue or modify the material within five (5) business days.
- in the case of placement of a marketing communication — withdraw, discontinue or modify the placement within five (5) business days and take all reasonable precautions to ensure that the marketing communication will not again be placed in the location, time or manner that was found to breach the Placement Rules in the Code.

Non-compliance is referred to State & Territory Liquor authorities and media platforms to consider against their promotional guidelines. At the time of preparing this report, the following advertisers had not discontinued, withdrawn or modified marketing the Panel believed to be inconsistent with ABAC standards.



BOOZICLES PACKAGING



Packaging of individual servings is similar to that used for non-alcoholic icy pole style products popular with minors and will likely appear very familiar to them. The box packaging adopts a colour scheme and a design that would be eye-catching to minors, including an anthropomorphised koala.

The Company initially advised it would modify the product. However, subsequently advised it would not. The complaint was referred to Queensland Liquor & Gaming.



BREACHES OF ABAC STANDARDS

During 2025, 52 ABAC determinations were made upholding public complaints about alcohol marketing communications, including:

- Six expedited breach determinations, where the alcohol marketer accepted there had been a breach of ABAC standards and promptly removed the marketing material.
- Three determinations were found to be 'no fault breaches', where the breach was considered to be reasonably unforeseeable or outside the reasonable control of the alcohol marketer or their agency.
- At the time of this report, 98% of all upheld determinations have resulted in removal, discontinuance or modification of marketing. All instances of non-compliance have been referred to State Liquor authorities/media platforms.

RESPONSIBLE & MODERATE PORTRAYAL OF ALCOHOL– ABAC CODE PART 3(A)

Excessive/Rapid alcohol consumption

BETTER BEER



An Instagram video was found to depict the excessive consumption of alcohol, due to an implication other people will also be bringing beer, the statements - "it's only 10 beers" and "it's just 10"- as a 10-pack is taken to the gathering.

The post was removed.

YOUR MATES BREWING



The humour of the social media post is drawn from an assumed common experience that people will sometimes drink far more than they first intended and that this is socially acceptable. This implicit message about excessive alcohol consumption conflicts with the ABAC standard.

The post was removed.

Note: This determination also found a breach of Part 3(c)(i)(ii) – Refer to page 33.

YOUNG HENRY'S



The Instagram video encourages excessive alcohol consumption as the sheer number of cartons shown suggests excessive consumption is likely, even if it involves several people (the boys) and the accompanying text - 'The famous couple beers strikes again'- would likely be understood as ironically suggesting the drinking session is not going to be two beers but many beers.

The post was removed.

RESPONSIBLE & MODERATE PORTRAYAL OF ALCOHOL– ABAC CODE PART 3(A)

Excessive/Rapid alcohol consumption

FIREBALL WHISKY



The most probable interpretation of two Instagram posts is that excessive alcohol consumption and/or an irresponsible approach to alcohol use is implicitly condoned, through suggesting consuming shots in the morning, and equating alcohol with food.

Both posts were modified.

WET PUSSY SHOTS



Ten social media posts showed or directly suggested the excessive and/or rapid and uncontrolled consumption of alcohol.

The social media posts were removed.

FUNSTERS



Three social media videos showed the excessive and/or rapid consumption of alcohol, noting:

- Bottles were substantially empty
- The "pre-loading" connotation
- Accompanying text such as "that goes down way too easily" and "we can promise to shut up your rellies for as long as the bottle lasts".
- The demeanour of party attendees.

The posts were removed.

RESPONSIBLE & MODERATE PORTRAYAL OF ALCOHOL– ABAC CODE PART 3(A)

Excessive/Rapid alcohol consumption

CHEEKY WINE CO



Four social media posts raised a direct implication of excessive alcohol consumption through a combination of:

- Depicting consumption directly from a wine bottle;
- Showing multiple bottles of wine and/or glasses of wine with a single person; and
- Accompanying text suggesting excessive or uncontrolled consumption.

The social media posts were removed.

REAL MCCOY WHISKY



An Instagram post is endorsing more than moderate alcohol consumption, noting:

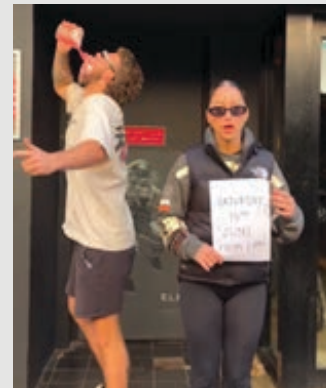
- Women are depicted drinking whiskey and a schooner of beer in quick succession;
- The scenario of 'sneaking' the bottle of alcohol from home to drink in the pub, together with the pace at which one of the women consumes the whiskey, is suggestive of at least rapid and quite likely consumption beyond the equivalent of four standard drinks; and
- While only a small portion of the whiskey is shown being added directly to a beer, the mixing of spirits and beer suggests heavier, rather than more moderate, alcohol consumption.

The social media post was removed.

EASY SELTZER



BEVANDA BAR



Showing rapid consumption of alcohol.

All social media posts were removed.

RESPONSIBLE & MODERATE PORTRAYAL OF ALCOHOL– ABAC CODE PART 3(A)

Irresponsible/Offensive Behaviour related to alcohol

FOUR LOKO



The image of a koala hanging over a can with drooping eyes brings to mind the behaviours of someone who is intoxicated. While a reasonable person would understand that the koala has not actually consumed the product, the Code provides that directly implying offensive behaviour, namely alcohol consumption by wildlife, is not permitted.

The social media post was removed.

GROG



A video Instagram post showing an armed holdup of a liquor store was found to depict irresponsible behaviour.

The advertiser removed the post.

LYCAN VODKA



Packaging for an alcohol product shaped as an assault rifle and an associated social media post breached this standard as alcohol as a product and its consumption should not be associated with firearms and marketing that draws an implication of the consumption or presence of alcohol with the use of weapons is 'irresponsible or offensive'.

The ad was removed and the packaging has been discontinued.

RESPONSIBLE & MODERATE PORTRAYAL OF ALCOHOL– ABAC CODE PART 3(A)

Encourage the choice of a particular alcohol product by emphasising its strength or intoxicating effect

MXTOLOGY COCKTAILS



Brand website was modified.

Note: This determination also found a breach of Part 3(d) – Refer to page 35.

QUIPS



Brand website was modified.

NOTE

- One expedited determination related to portraying the refusal of alcohol or choice of abstinence in a negative light (a)(iii) – Refer to page 38.
- One expedited determination related to challenging or daring to consume alcohol (a)(iii) – Refer to page 37.
- Two expedited determinations related to rapid alcohol consumption – Refer to page 37-38.

STRONG OR EVIDENT APPEAL TO MINORS – ABAC CODE PART 3(B)(I)

Packaging

BOOZICLES



The Panel found that the packaging of individual servings of Boozicles and also the 12 pack mixed box packaging would have strong or evident appeal to minors. Both items have factors that would combine to create an illusion that the product would be a smooth transition to an alcohol product.

The advertiser undertook to modify the packaging, but later declined to do so.

The complaint was referred to the Office of Liquor & Gaming Qld.

FUTURE BREWING



A combination of the smoothie descriptor, the product names, and bright, contrasting colours creates the impression that the products could be a smooth transition from a non-alcoholic to an alcoholic beverage and have strong or evident appeal to minors.

The Company advised that it had ceased orders for the packaging and it would no longer be in market or advertised within 3 months, with Turbo Tropic already removed.

Note: This determination also found a breach of Part 4(b) – Refer to page 40.

Packaging and website

FUNSTERS



Product packaging and website found to have strong or evident appeal to minors due to association with popular confectionery products and eye-catching colours and imagery.

The Company modified the packaging and marketing.

STRONG OR EVIDENT APPEAL TO MINORS – ABAC CODE PART 3(B)(I)

Social Media Marketing

LIQUORLAND



A TikTok video showing how to make a Carameltini cocktail had strong or evident appeal to minors through including a Caramello Koala confectionery item (highly recognisable and strongly resonating with minors) and the addition of ice cream and confectionery, which creates the possibility the alcoholic cocktail could be confused with a dessert and raising the illusion of a smooth transition from a non-alcoholic to an alcohol product.

The video captions associate the cocktail with the chocolate theme of Easter, and while this appeals across age groups, it is an additional element likely to resonate with minors.

The TikTok video was removed.

MODUS BREWING



A reasonable person would understand the Froot Loops' familiarity and relatability to minors as resulting in the post having strong or evident appeal to minors

The social media post was removed.

Note: This determination also found a breach of Part 3(d) – Refer to page 35.

HIS BOY ELROY & WILLIE THE BOATMAN



The Instagram post strongly appeals to minors given a combination of bright coloured product cans, the gummy bears and the supporting text referencing gummy bear vibes.

The advertiser removed the Instagram post on being advised of the complaint.

STRONG OR EVIDENT APPEAL TO MINORS – ABAC CODE PART 3(B)(I)

Social Media Marketing

MOON DOG BREWING



An Instagram post of a cake would be familiar and relatable for minors, and smashing the cake is an activity that would likely have evident appeal to minors contributing to an illusion of a smooth transition from a non-alcohol to an alcohol product.

The Instagram post was removed by the advertiser on being advised of the complaint.

FUNSTERS



A social media video had strong or evident appeal to minors due to alcoholic products being compared to confectionery items by the reviewers saying, 'It's a Snickers with alcohol', 'Tastes like Cherry Ripe' and 'Smells just like chocolate'. The inclusion of a confectionery item within an item of alcohol marketing will often elevate the potential appeal of the marketing communication to minors and create an illusion of a smooth transition from a well-known non-alcoholic product to an alcohol beverage.

The advertiser removed the social media post from Meta Ads Library.

SEALEGS BREWING – BIRTHDAY NEIPA



A social media video featured items that would be familiar to minors and often used at birthday parties for minors, the product is placed next to the cake and covered in brightly coloured streamers and would be eye-catching to minors, the balloon motif wrapping paper and larger streamers are brightly coloured and of a kind used at parties for minors, the cake is decorated with sprinkles and is similar to a type typically used for a child's birthday party. Taken as a whole, the video would likely be understood as strongly appealing to minors.

The social media post was removed.

STRONG OR EVIDENT APPEAL TO MINORS – ABAC CODE PART 3(B)(I)

Social Media Marketing

SAPPORO BLACK PREMIUM BEER



An Easter Instagram post has strong or evident appeal to minors, as Easter egg imagery will be highly recognisable and strongly resonate with minors. Presenting the product wrapped as if an Easter egg is a direct link to the confectionery item and this raises an illusion of an easy transition from a non-alcoholic product popular with minors to the alcohol product.

The advertiser removed the post.

THE PRINCE HOTEL



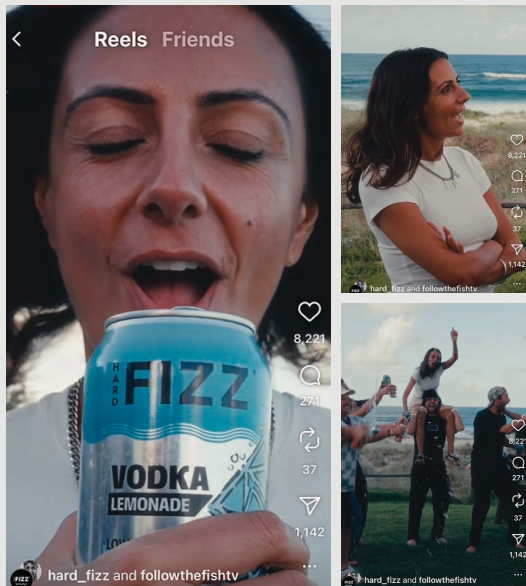
Social media posts had strong or evident appeal to minors as the confectionery imagery, the depiction of a can of Milo, and the use of Milo would likely be understood as creating an illusion of a smooth transition from a well-known non-alcoholic product to an alcoholic beverage.

The advertiser removed the social media posts.

RESPONSIBLE DEPICTION OF THE EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL – PART 3(C)

Alcohol creating/contributing to an improvement in mood or environment

HARD FIZZ



A social media post shows the introduction and consumption of Hard Fizz Vodka Lemonade as having caused or, at a minimum, contributed to the improvement in Karen's mood and the transformation of the gathering.

The social media video has been removed.

DRINK KIPPIS



A social media post stating, 'Whether you're fresh out of the steam or just dreaming of it, crack open a cold Kippis and take a moment. Because this... is how you reset.' suggests an improvement in mood. A reasonable person would likely believe that to 'reset' results in an improvement in mood.

The advertiser modified an Instagram post and removed a Facebook post.

Alcohol causing or contributing to an improvement in mood/ achievement of success / successful social occasion

DROP OF SUNSHINE WINES



The website tile suggests the product improves mood by bringing happiness and delight.

In addition, a podcast pre-roll ad positions the product as a contributor to achieving personal/social success of meaningful connections.

The marketing was modified.

RESPONSIBLE DEPICTION OF THE EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL – PART 3(C)

Alcohol causing or contributing to an improvement in mood/achievement of success/successful social occasion

YOUR MATES BREWING



- Sally IPA - the words 'Rain or shine, it's always a good time with your mate #SunshineSally' suggest that the product is a cause or contributor to an improvement in mood (good time).
- Bluey Red IPA - the words 'Bluey is your go-to for bold flavour and unforgettable sessions' suggest that the consumption of the alcoholic product will result in an 'unforgettable session', which is a successful social occasion.

The website descriptors were modified.

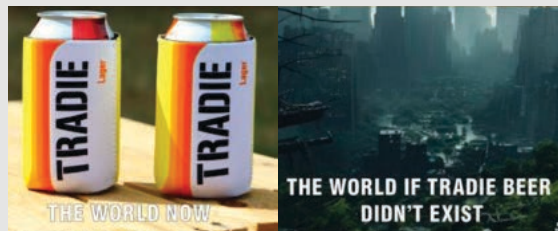
Note: This determination also found a breach of Part 3(a)(i) – Refer to page 23.

NOTE

- Two expedited determinations related to a breach of Part 3(c)(i) of the Code – Refer to page 37-38.

Alcohol creating/contributing to an improvement in mood or environment & offering a health benefit/needed to relax/helps overcome problems

TRADIE BEER



First post - while the standard is framed as alcohol improving something, it is to be understood as also capturing the inverse of the absence or the removal of a product contributing to a worse environment.

Second post - alcohol should not be placed alongside air and water as a requirement for life. Clearly, alcohol is not a basic necessity of life.

The social media posts were removed.

Alcohol causing or contributing to social success

TIPSY TEA



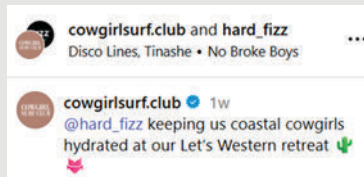
A social media post caption clearly communicates that if you bring cans of Topsy Tea to a gathering, you will be everyone's favourite and therefore achieve social success.

The social media post was removed.

RESPONSIBLE DEPICTION OF THE EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL – PART 3(C)

Alcohol offering a health benefit/ needed to relax/ helps overcome problems

HARD FIZZ



An Instagram post included the words “@hard_fizz keeping us coastal cowgirls hydrated at our Let’s Western retreat” which would be understood as claiming the product provided the health benefit of hydration.

The advertiser removed itself as showing as a collaborator on the post.

Note: This determination also found a breach of Part 3(d) – Refer to page 35.

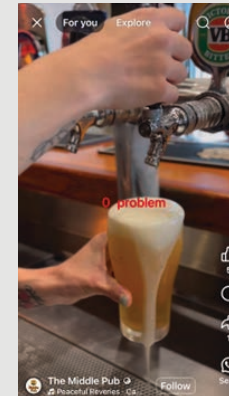
GARDEN STREET GIN CLUB



This Post - positions alcohol as a coping mechanism for a bad day and for feeling stressed.

Note: This determination also found a breach of Part 3(d) – Refer to page 35.

THE MIDDLE PUB

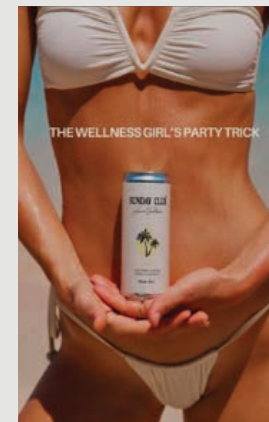


The most influential element of the post is a video showing a glass being filled as the countdown moves from 99 to 0 problems, which suggests problems diminish in correlation to beer being poured.

Accompanying text “Got 99 problems but going to the pub ain’t one...” amplifies that the consumption of alcohol reduces problems. Alcohol is depicted as causing a reduction in problems and/or overcoming problems or adversity.

The advertiser removed the post from Facebook and Instagram on being advised of the complaint.

SUNDAY CLUB HARD SELTZER



The most probable understanding of the photograph together with the text in this social media post is that the product is a ‘party trick’, i.e., a product that helps a ‘girl’ obtain the benefits of wellness.

The advertiser removed the Instagram Post on being advised of the complaint.

VODKA PRO



This Post - text suggests health gains from product use.

Further post - hashtags #HealthyCocktails and #Wellness Beverage would be understood that use of the product is healthy, aiding wellbeing.

The social media posts were removed.

ALCOHOL AND SAFETY – ABAC CODE PART 3(D)

Swimming

Each of the following social media posts showed either visibly or by direct implication the consumption of alcohol before or while swimming. All posts were removed.

WINE NOT THE BRAND

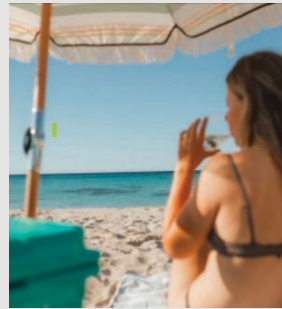


HARD FIZZ



Note: This determination also found a breach of Part 3(c)(iv) – Refer to page 34.

GARDEN STREET GIN CLUB

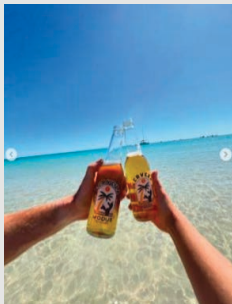


Note: This determination also found a breach of Part 3(c)(iv) – Refer to page 34.

KIPPIS

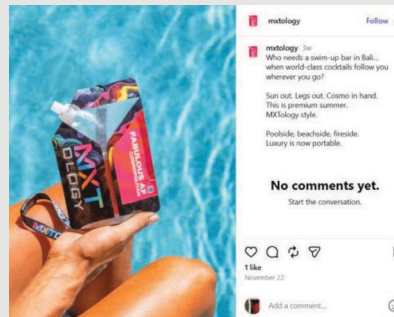


MODUS BREWING



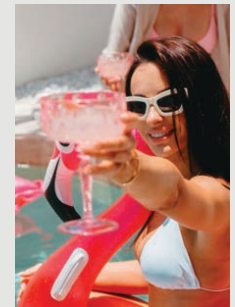
Note: This determination also found a breach of Part 3(b)(i) – Refer to page 29.

MXTOLOGY



Note: This determination also found a breach of Part 3(a)(iv) – Refer to page 27.

LULA RUM



ALCOHOL AND SAFETY – ABAC CODE PART 3(D)

Other activities

WINE NOT THE BRAND



User-generated content is the responsibility of the account holder. The video, through its imagery and use of text, directly implies alcohol consumption by the passengers of a moving vehicle. One of the passengers is not wearing a seatbelt in circumstances where common sense and the law indicate the seatbelt should be worn for safety reasons.

The social media post was removed.

NOTE

- Three additional expedited determinations related to Part 3(d) – Refer to page 38-39.

EXPEDITED DETERMINATIONS

The Chief Adjudicator has the option of electing to uphold a complaint by expedited resolution where:

- a marketing communication appears to be in breach of a Code Standard, given the issues raised in the complaint;
- the complaint and marketing communication do not raise issues of broader significance to the understanding of Code provisions or the operation of the ABAC Scheme;
- the marketing communication that is the subject of the complaint is not a product name or packaging; and
- the marketer accepts that the ABAC issues raised by the nature of the complaint have not been complied with and removes or modifies the marketing.

Excessive or rapid consumption – 3(a)(i)-(ii)

Challenge or dare to consume alcohol – 3(a)(iii)

Alcohol creating/contributing to an improvement in mood or environment – 3(c)(i)

HARD FIZZ

Social media videos with the following text were found to breach Code standards:

'When the duo finally reunites again and the only goal is to get drunk and have fun'

'when the alcohol starts feeling like u no longer shy & quiet'

'You look happier' Thanks, I've been drinking x'

A further video showing a man encouraging and pressuring people to scull a can of Hard Fizz from a shoe for a world record attempt, and a large group of people are then shown sculling from a shoe for a world record attempt, and a large group of people are then shown sculling from a shoe for a world record attempt, and a large group of people are then shown sculling from a shoe for a world record attempt.



Rapid consumption –3(a)(ii)
Alcohol & Safety – 3(d)

HARD FIZZ

Social media posts showing people doing 'shoeys' show the rapid consumption of alcohol.

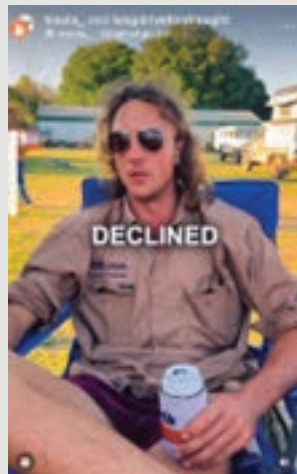
Posts showing alcohol consumption before driving a boat or while in a swimming pool breach are activities that require a high degree of alertness or physical coordination for safety reasons.



Portray refusal of alcohol or choice of abstinence in a negative light – 3(a)(iii)

TRAVLA BEER

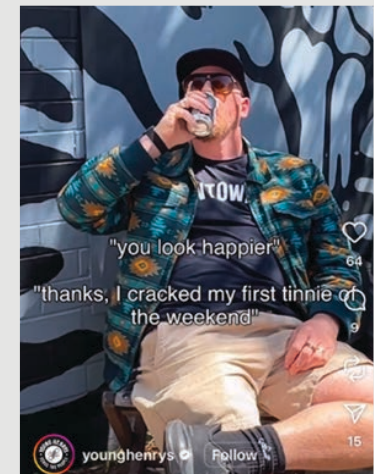
A social media post with the copy "Bloke I know once declined a beer. Couldn't look him in the eyes again ever." portrays the refusal of alcohol in a negative light by indicating that someone who does not drink alcohol is not worthy of respect.



Alcohol creating/contributing to an improvement in mood or environment – 3(c)(i)

YOUNG HENRYS

An Instagram video post showing a person drinking from a can of beer with the words "you look happier" followed by "thanks, I cracked my first tinnie of the weekend" superimposed shows a person with an improvement in mood i.e. is looking happier, due to consuming alcohol.

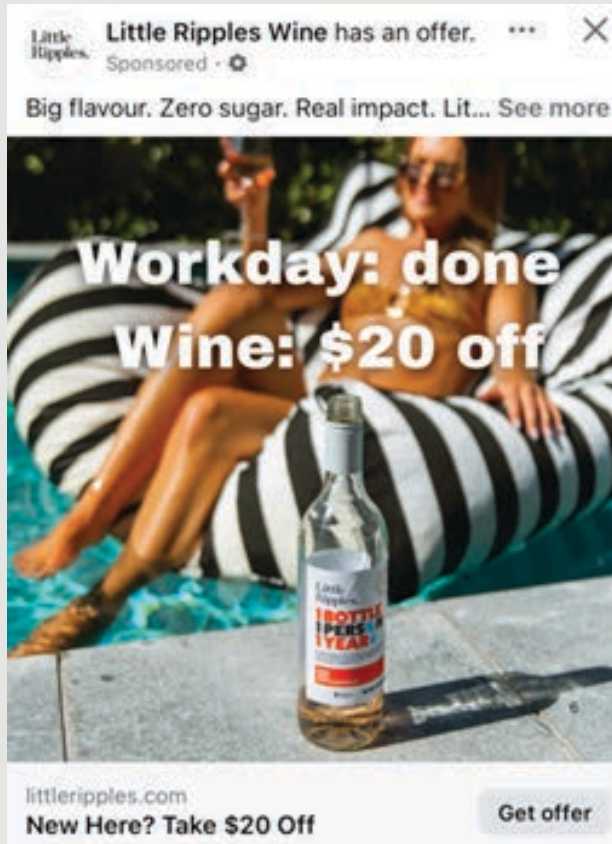


Alcohol & Safety –3(d)

Each of the following social media posts showed either visibly or by direct implication the consumption of alcohol before or while swimming.

All posts were removed.

LITTLE RIPPLES WINE



YOUR MATES BREWING



.....

PLACEMENT STANDARDS – ABAC CODE PART 4

Available age restriction controls must be applied (Part 4(b))

STRYDA BEER & BONE DRY DRINKS

Two determinations related to social media posts by paid partners, where available age restriction controls were not applied by the paid partner to the individual posts promoting their brand.

The breaches were remedied through either removal or age restriction of the posts.

FUTURE BREWING

Future Brewing did not have an age restriction on its Instagram account (but did on their Facebook account). They had thought both were age restricted and both now are.

Note: This determination also found a breach of Part 3(b)(i) – Refer to page 28.

NOTE

- One No-Fault Breach related to a breach of Part 4 (b) - Refer to page 41.

No placement with a >20% minor audience or programs or content primarily aimed at minors (Part 4(c)(d))

NOTE

- Two No-Fault Breaches related to a breach of Part 4 (c) & (d) – Refer to page 41.

No delivery to a person that has sought removal from a marketer’s mailing list (Part 4(e))

THE WINE VAULT

The Panel found that the Company failed to stop the direct delivery of marketing after receiving a request for the marketing to cease.

The advertiser advised that it had now removed the phone number from their telemarketing list.

NO FAULT BREACH

A breach of the ABAC Code that is reasonably unforeseeable by or outside the reasonable control of the Marketer or their agency will be classified as a 'no fault breach'.

Placement Standard – 4 (b)

LIQUORLAND

Available age restriction controls were not applied to the Magic Sort gaming app due to the app's failure to be classified as 'child directed'.

Placement standard – Part 4 (c)(d)

BWS

Failure to correctly classify the 'Calm Kids Bedtime Stories' podcast on Spotify resulted in an age restricted alcohol ad being placed with a podcast primarily aimed at minors that is likely to have less than an 80% adult audience.

HARD RATED & CARLTON DRY

Failure to correctly classify '123 GO! Zoo' on Youtube resulted in an age restricted alcohol ad being placed with a programme primarily aimed at minors that is likely to have less than an 80% adult audience.

INFORMAL RESOLUTION

The Chief Adjudicator may decide that a complaint is suitable for Informal Resolution if it solely relates to a social media post(s) that is more than 6 months old and has not been promoted or actioned in any way by the account holder within the last 6 months.

If the Marketer voluntarily removes the historic social media post, the complaint is not referred to the Panel or otherwise assessed, the identity of the marketer is not publicly reported and the ABAC annual report records the number of complaints informally resolved for transparency.

In 2025, no complaints were resolved via informal resolution.

ABAC STATISTICS 2016 – 2025

| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
|--|------|------|------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Marketing Pre-vetted | 1416 | 1453 | 1751 | 2192 | 2424 | 3336 | 3397 | 3167 | 2772 | 2766 |
| Rejected | 186 | 198 | 228 | 346 | 371 | 501 | 590 | 406 | 355 | 282 |
| Alcohol Complaints | 139 | 130 | 154 | 128 | 208 | 288 | 126 | 207 | 215 | 196 |
| Percentage of all complaints ¹ | 2.5% | 2% | 2.3% | 2.4% | 6% | 6% | 4.7% | 5.3% | 5.1% | 3.73% |
| Campaigns complained about | 78 | 67 | 100 | 108 | 170 | 299 ² | 118 | 171 | 200 | 192 |
| Complaints resulting in a determination | 47 | 73 | 89 | 75 | 141 | 201 | 69 | 127 | 133 | 107 |
| ABAC Determinations | 34 | 43 | 61 | 68 | 113 | 153 | 63 | 93 | 117 | 103 |
| Total Determinations Upheld | 10 | 7 | 21 | 39 | 53 | 80 | 28 | 40 | 60 | 52 |
| Expedited Upheld | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 3 | 8 | 2 | 5 | 10 | 6 |
| No Fault Breach | N/A | 1 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 3 |
| Compliance with determination (Signatory) | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Compliance with determination (Overall) | 100% | 100% | 98% | 99% ³ | 100% ³ | 99% ⁴ | 100% ³ | 92.5% ⁴ | 97% ⁴ | 98% ⁴ |
| Upheld Marketing Pre-vetted | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Average business days – Marketing ⁵ | 19.7 | 14.6 | 22 | 16.7 | 14 | 19.6 | 17.7 | 23 | 20.5 | 19.5 |
| Average business days – Packaging ⁶ | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 27 | 41 |

¹ Alcohol related complaints referred by Ad Standards to ABAC as a percentage of all complaints received by Ad Standards about all product/service categories. ² Various complaints referenced multiple campaigns.

³ Example(s) of non-compliance resolved after completion of that year's annual report following referral to the relevant Liquor Licensing Authority. ⁴ Referred to relevant Liquor Licensing Authority. ⁵ 30 business day target timeframe. ⁶ 60 business day target timeframe as has a review option.

