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Free TV responds to ACMA alcohol advertising review

Free TV Australia welcomes the conclusion of the ACMA's review of alcohol advertising rules in the Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice. Free TV will consider the recommendations as part of the next revision of the Code, which will include public consultation.

The ACMA has rejected a ban on alcohol advertising on commercial television. It found that a ban would be a blunt instrument with uncertain outcomes, would impose significant costs on broadcasters, and could simply push advertising onto unregulated online platforms.

The review confirms that commercial television is one of the most tightly regulated environments for alcohol advertising in Australia. The ACMA did not assess a single code-compliant complaint about alcohol advertising on broadcast television between January 2024 and August 2026. In 2025, 82% of ABAC determinations related to digital media, which accounted for 94% of breaches. Broadcast television accounted for 5% of determinations and no breaches.

Free-to-air television is already regulated far more heavily than the global digital platforms competing for the same audiences and advertisers, and those platforms remain largely untouched. Each additional restriction placed on local broadcasters alone widens that gap. It also reduces the revenue that funds the Australian news, sport and entertainment that audiences rely on, all of it free to every Australian.

The review also recognises that the large majority of alcohol exposure during televised sport comes from sources outside broadcasters' control, including stadium signage, team apparel and venue assets. Free TV supports the ACMA's call for the Government to address alcohol marketing across all platforms.

Free TV Chief Executive Officer Bridget Fair said:

"Free-to-air television takes its responsibilities to Australian audiences seriously, and our compliance record shows it.

"The evidence is clear that alcohol marketing problems sit overwhelmingly on digital platforms, not on free-to-air television. Yet once again, it is local broadcasters who face the prospect of further restrictions while global platforms continue largely unregulated.

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"Every new restriction on free-to-air television makes it harder to keep investing in the Australian news, sport and local stories that audiences depend on. That is the real cost of regulating one part of the market and ignoring the rest.

"We will work through the ACMA's recommendations carefully as part of our Code review, and continue to argue for proportionate, evidence-based settings that apply across all platforms."

ENDS

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ABOUT FREE TV AUSTRALIA

Free TV Australia is a leading media industry organisation. It represents all of Australia's commercial free-to-air television licensees through advocacy, innovation and strategic advice. The members of Free TV Australia are Southern Cross Media Group, Nine Entertainment Co, Network 10, WIN Network, and Imparja Television.