

Submissions summary

The total type of submissions are below.

Total submissions	574
Organisation submissions	31 (5.5%)
Individual submissions	543 (94.5%)
Alcohol comments	118 (29 organisations & 89 individuals)
Section 22	Section 22

Section 22 of the FOI Act

Organisational submissions

Organisation	Alcohol advertising	Key issues	Recommendations/summary
Section 22 of the FOI Act			
Cancer council	Y	Alcohol advertising	<p>Notes the dangers of alcohol and considers industry self-regulation of alcohol advertising to be inappropriate.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stronger safeguards for alcohol advertising. 2. Changes to 'M' time-zone submissions should be made publicly available and independently assessed by ACMA, 3. Remove exemptions for alcohol advertising in sport, 4. Reconsider the changes to 'M' classification zone times and impact on alcohol advertising. 5. Implement changes to ensure that alcohol ads cannot be broadcast during streamed family programs.
The George Institute	Y	Alcohol advertising	<p>Strongly opposes extension of time at which children can be exposed to alcohol advertising. Cumulative exposure to alcohol advertising increases the risk of early initiation and participation in hazardous drinking among underage drinkers.</p> <p>69% of Australians expect the government to limit the amount of alcohol advertisement and 67% expect government to ensure children are not exposed to it. These expectations are not being met.</p> <p>Alcohol advertisements breach the alcohol industries own advertising code in Australia as well as standards in other countries.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Changes to Free TV codes should not extend 'M' hours 2. Retain current 'M' zone allowances 3. Do not extend 'M' midday zone to weekends and school holidays; 4. De-couple alcohol in section 6.2 from 'M' classification zones, separately defining times restricting advertising of alcohol. This includes: removing exemption in 6.2 that allows alcohol advertising during sports broadcasts; and removing exemption in Section 8 of 'program sponsorship' that allows promotion of alcohol companies during program broadcasts.
National Organisation for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (NOFASD)	Y	Alcohol advertising	<p>Deeply concerned about changes in the draft code that will increase the hours during which alcohol advertising is permissible.</p> <p>Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a preventable disability caused by prenatal alcohol exposure. Exposure to alcohol advertising, particularly among young people, normalises drinking behaviour and increases likelihood of early initiation into alcohol use, leading to unplanned pregnancies and increased risk of FASD.</p> <p>Australia is currently experiencing highest rates of alcohol-induced deaths in over 20 years. Alcohol is associated with hospitalisations, cancer, mental-illness, brain injury, and is a significant factor in domestic violence. Several studies show that violence involving alcohol increases at the time of football grand finals and State of Origin.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Changes to the code (including to the 'M' classification zone in Section 2.2.2), do not extend the hours when alcohol advertising is permitted to be broadcast. 2. Remove exemption in section 6.2 for alcohol advertising during sports broadcasts. 3. Remove exemption in Section 8 of 'program sponsorship' from alcohol advertising.
Consumer Policy Research Centre	Y	Alcohol advertising	<p>Consumer research highlights a clear mismatch between Australian community expectations and the current proposal to reduce 'M' zone classification times.</p> <p>77% of Australian support restricting alcohol advertising on television during times when children are likely to be watching (Alcohol Change Australia).</p> <p>National Drug Strategy Household Survey (2022-23) found that 70% of Australians supported limiting advertising for alcohol on television until after 9.30pm and half of Australians support banning alcohol sponsorship of sporting events</p> <p>The ACMA's 'What Audiences Want' Report raised ongoing community concerns that existing alcohol advertising restrictions do not go far enough.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Changes to the code (including to the 'M' classification zone in Section 2.2.2), do not extend th hours when alcohol advertising is permitted to be broadcast. 2. Remove exemption in section 6.2 for alcohol advertising during sports broadcasts. 3. Remove exemption in Section 8 of 'program sponsorship' from alcohol advertising.
Australian Medical Association	Y	Alcohol advertising	

		Misinformation/Disinformation Gambling advertising	<p>Free TV Australia has a unique opportunity to build trust, compliance, and knowledgeable content. Australia is saturated by advertisements that have a negative impact on the health of Australians. While unhealthy advertising is regulated to some degree through program ratings, changes to these ratings will lead to loopholes that will be exploited by industry.</p> <p>Concerns include risks related to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), marketing unhealthy food to children, the increased prevalence of gambling in Australia, and the distribution of medical misinformation via media platforms, including television.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Changes to the code (including to the 'M' classification zone in Section 2.2.2), do not extend the hours when alcohol advertising is permitted to be broadcast. 2. Remove exemption in section 6.2 for alcohol advertising during sports broadcasts. 3. Remove exemption in Section 8 of 'program sponsorship' from alcohol advertising. 4. Ensure that TV and similar media are free from unhealthy food marketing at all times when children are watching. 5. Separately review parts of the Code relating to gambling advertising, possibly requiring a separate public consultation process. 6. Implores Free TV to acknowledge their public health responsibility and work actively to counter health misinformation on commercial television under their code.
Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY)	Y	Alcohol advertising	<p>Strongly opposes the extension of hours that alcohol advertising can be shown to children under the proposed 'M' zone classification. Arguments and evidence are similar to those of the George Institute and NOFASD. They add that companies tie sporting events to their branding to maximise sales and profits during times that are most harmful and may even boast about the increase in sales during this time. Broadcast media has a responsibility to act with a holistic duty of care towards young people, shaping an environment that supports their health, development, and future well-being.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Changes to the code (including to the 'M' classification zone in Section 2.2.2), do not extend the hours when alcohol advertising is permitted to be broadcast. 2. Remove exemption in section 6.2 for alcohol advertising during sports broadcasts. 3. Remove exemption in Section 8 of 'program sponsorship' from alcohol advertising.
FARE	Y	Alcohol advertising	<p>Opposes code changes which breach the requirements of the BSA Section 3 (broadcasting services should place a high priority on the protection of children) and sections 123, 125 and 130 (provide community safeguards).</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Changes to the code (including to the 'M' classification zone in Section 2.2.2), do not extend the hours when alcohol advertising is permitted to be broadcast. 2. Remove exemption in section 6.2 for alcohol advertising during sports broadcasts. 3. Remove exemption in Section 8 of 'program sponsorship' from alcohol advertising.
Collective shout	Y	Alcohol advertising	<p>Opposes changes that would reduce safeguards for children. They note changes to the 'M' time zone which would expand the times that alcohol advertising may be permitted, and indications that the industry may move to reduce the information provided to audiences about programming (presumably referring to classification information and consumer advice).</p>
Public Health Association	Y	Alcohol advertising	<p>Voluntary industry codes are an inherently substandard form of regulation of unhealthy products and are NOT regulation. Alcohol advertising influences a person's likelihood to consume alcohol. Alcohol is involved in one third of suicides, linked to cancer, and is involved in 25-65% of all police-reported family violence incidents.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduce the amount of alcohol advertising by changing the codes to decrease weekday 'M' zoning hours to align with weekend, public holiday and school holiday hours. 2. Prevent alcohol advertising before 10.30pm. 3. Remove the exemption that allows alcohol advertising during sports broadcasting. 4. Does not support M zone changes but would welcome simplification of M zone if weekday zoning aligns to weekend, public holiday and school holiday zoning; and alcohol advertisements were not permitted during sports broadcasting. 5. Prohibit online gambling advertising.

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South Australian Network of Drug and Alcohol Services (SANDAS)	Y	Alcohol advertising	<p>Recommendation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Changes to the code (including to the 'M' classification zone in Section 2.2.2), do not extend the hours when alcohol advertising is permitted to be broadcast. 2. Remove exemption in section 6.2 for alcohol advertising during sports broadcasts. 3. Remove exemption in Section 8 of 'program sponsorship' from alcohol advertising.
WRAD Health	Y	Alcohol advertising	<p>Recommendation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Changes to the code (including to the 'M' classification zone in Section 2.2.2), do not extend the hours when alcohol advertising is permitted to be broadcast. 2. Remove exemption in section 6.2 for alcohol advertising during sports broadcasts. 3. Remove exemption in Section 8 of 'program sponsorship' from alcohol advertising.
Women's Community Shelters (WCS)	Y	Alcohol advertising	<p>Recommendation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement the recommendation in the Rapid Review of Prevention Approaches for gender-based violence and restrict alcohol advertising during sporting events. 2. Abandon the proposed extensions of alcohol advertising.

Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU)	Y	Alcohol advertising	Notes that the AIHW estimated the social cost of alcohol consumption in Australia was \$66.8 billion in 2017-18. Opposes changes that would increase alcohol advertising.
Dalgarno Institute	Y	Alcohol advertising	<p>94% of Australian students aged 12-17 have seen alcohol advertising on television. 87% of alcohol advertising appears during sports TV programming; in a single year, Australia's children and adolescents experience more than 50 million exposures to alcohol of three major sporting codes (AFL, NRL, cricket).</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Changes to the code (including to the 'M' classification zone in Section 2.2.2), do not extend the hours when alcohol advertising is permitted to be broadcast. 2. Remove exemption in section 6.2 for alcohol advertising during sports broadcasts. 3. Remove exemption in Section 8 of 'program sponsorship' from alcohol advertising.
Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drugs Association ACT (ATODA)	Y	Alcohol advertising	<p>Recommendation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Changes to the code (including to the 'M' classification zone in Section 2.2.2), do not extend the hours when alcohol advertising is permitted to be broadcast. 2. Remove exemption in section 6.2 for alcohol advertising during sports broadcasts. 3. Remove exemption in Section 8 of 'program sponsorship' from alcohol advertising.
Alcohol Beverages Australia (ABA)	Y	Alcohol advertising	<p>The Australian alcohol industry does not support the expansion of alcohol advertising.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recommends that the changes to the code do not directly or indirectly facilitate the expansion of alcohol advertising.
Uniting Church	Y	Alcohol advertising	<p>Concerned that the draft code proposes extending the hours that alcohol advertising can be shown to children by over 800 hours per year, and during daytime on school holidays, public holidays and weekends when children are more likely to be watching.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ban alcohol advertising from being shown on television before 9.30am. 2. Changes to the code (including to the 'M' classification zone in Section 2.2.2), do not extend the hours when alcohol advertising is permitted to be broadcast. 3. Remove exemption in section 6.2 for alcohol advertising during sports broadcasts. 4. Remove exemption in Section 8 of 'program sponsorship' from alcohol advertising.
Alcohol and Drug Foundation (ADF)	Y	Alcohol advertising Extend code safeguards online	<p>Notes that alcohol advertising is a key evidence-based factor in driving alcohol harms.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Removal of the extension of the times when M programs can be shown, 2. Removal of the exemption for alcohol advertising to be permitted during sports broadcasts, 3. Amendment of the definition of "commercial for alcoholic drinks" to remove the exemption for 'program sponsorship'. 4. Extending the code to BVODs.
Alcohol Change Australia (ACA)	Y	Alcohol advertising Extend code safeguards online	<p>Alcohol causes significant levels of harm to the Australian community.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introducing a regulatory framework with legislative basis that effectively protects the community from exposure to alcohol marketing. 2. No extension on the times when alcohol advertising is permitted to be shown. 3. Removal of the exemption for alcohol advertising to be permitted during sports broadcasts. 4. Amendment of the definition of "commercial for alcoholic drinks" to remove the exemption for 'program sponsorship'.
Alcohol Change Victoria (ACV)	Y	Alcohol advertising	<p>The proposed changes to the M Classification zone and existing sports broadcast loopholes, breach the requirements in the BSA that "broadcasting services place a high priority on the protection of children from exposure to program material which may be harmful to them" and that industry codes "provide appropriate community safeguards."</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Changes to the code (including to the 'M' classification zone in Section 2.2.2), do not extend the hours when alcohol advertising is permitted to be broadcast. 2. Removing the exemption in Section 6.2 that allows alcohol advertising during sports broadcasts. 3. Removing the exemption in Section 8 of 'program sponsorship' from alcohol advertising.
Safe and equal	Y	Alcohol advertising	<p>Provides evidence of links between alcohol use and domestic and family violence.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Changes to the code (including to the 'M' classification zone in Section 2.2.2), do not extend the hours when alcohol advertising is permitted to be broadcast.

			2. Removing the exemption in Section 6.2 that allows alcohol advertising during sports broadcasts. 3. Removing the exemption in Section 8 of 'program sponsorship' from alcohol advertising.
Western Australian Council of Social Service (WACOSS)	Y	Alcohol advertising	Greatly concerned that proposed changes to the code will increase the amount of time in which alcohol related products can be advertised. Recommendation: Proposed changes are redrafted to restrict broadcasting of alcohol commercials, ensuring broadcasting hours for alcohol commercials do not exceed current limits.
Injury Matters	Y	Alcohol advertising Distressing material	Recommendation: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to the code (including to the 'M' classification zone in Section 2.2.2), do not extend the hours when alcohol advertising is permitted to be broadcast. Removing the exemption in Section 6.2 that allows alcohol advertising during sports broadcasts. Removing the exemption in Section 8 of 'program sponsorship' from alcohol advertising. Strengthening provisions relating to high-impact news material. Mandating the inclusion of help-seeking information when broadcasting road crashes
NSW Health	Y	Alcohol advertising	Minimising alcohol-related health harms is a priority for NSW Health. World Health Organisation recommends the introduction of restrictions on alcohol advertising, sponsorship and promotion, and prevent marketing of zero and low alcohol products to children to reduce health harms. Recommendation: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> If M classified content is extended, Free TV should ensure this does not include alcohol advertising. Free TV should also consider if current restrictions on alcohol advertising on streaming services are sufficient.
Department of Health and Aged Care	Y	Alcohol advertising	Opposes the proposed amendments to the timings for the M classification zone. The proposed amendments directly contradict a significant body of research which demonstrates the general risks to alcohol advertising, WHO guidance and position on alcohol advertising and Australia's national drug and alcohol strategies and recent Government reviews including the senate inquiry into FASD and the National Cabinet requested review into FDSV.

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Association of Alcohol and Other Drugs Northern Territory	Y	Alcohol advertising	Firmly against the prevalence of alcohol advertising on television, particularly when young people and vulnerable audiences are watching. Research consistently shows that exposure to alcohol advertising is linked to earlier drinking initiation and increased consumption, especially among young viewers.
L Short (Drug ARM)	Y	Alcohol advertising Gambling advertising	Ban gambling and alcohol advertising during sport events. Does not want any healthy association with sport. Revenue from alcohol and sport should be directed to organisations like Drug ARM
Children and Media Australia	Y	Misinformation/ Disinformation Distressing material Privacy	The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is binding on the Commonwealth Government, it includes an obligation to 'Encourage the development of appropriate guidelines for the protection of the child from information and material injurious to his or her well-being' (article 17(e)). A more detailed review w/ an issues paper and broad ranging inquiry was needed given the long period between reviews. Code continues a trend of watering down protections for children and support for families with each review. The code is 'bewilderingly complex' and a barrier to effective enforcement. A defect is that enforcement relies on complaints from the public. A complete exemption (including news) from classification is unjustified and it is questionable whether differential treatment for current affairs and sports is justified. Opposes the removal of the word 'spoken' from paragraph b for material which may cause distress' provision. Spoken warnings retain salience, particularly when parents are supervising children. Reframe 'warnings as the licensee considers appropriate' to an objective standard eg (a reasonable person would consider...'.

		Classification	Welcomed the extension of the code' to online services.
		Gambling advertising	
		Extend code safeguards online	Recommendations: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Licensees should take responsibility themselves for classification of the content they show.2. Ad restrictions should be aligned to the classification of the program and the additional protections for 7.30-8.30pm in 6.2.1 (a) and 6.4.2 should be extended to 10am-3pm on weekends and during school holidays3. Provision 2.4.3 should be removed. It removes protections in 2.4.2 in some situations based on way the film is promoted and the likely size of the child audience.4. At 2.5.2 'as soon as practicable after' should be replaced to read, 'Classification symbols for a classified Program must be clearly displayed by a Licensee ... for at least 5 seconds at the commencement of the Program'.5. In 2.5.3 'where practicable' should be removed. Licensees have no difficulty in incorporating watermarks promoting their own programs so there should be no problems displaying classification.6. 2.5.4 should be maintained.7. Strengthen privacy obligation, 3.5.2 'exercising special care' is an unreasonably low standard.8. Supports removal of 'make reasonable efforts to' in accuracy obligations, and elsewhere9. No exemption on the length of a piece of content at 5. 2.1 (a)10. Clause should be rephrased to bind licensees to AANA codes.11. 6.2.1 (b) should be removed (commercials for alcohol may be broadcast during Sports programs on a weekend or public holiday)12. Applauds addition of 7.2.5 for code complaints, suggest adding word 'prominently' after 'display'.13. Recommends Email address for each Licensee should be listed.14. Television Classification Guidelines should specify that for the purpose of classifying ads and trailers, the relevant 'context' is the program in which the ad or trailer is broadcast. Guidelines should address question of scary content separately from violence. Suggests removal from the PG guideline of the words indicating that more leeway is allowed for stylized and unrealist content.