



AUSTRALIAN TURF CLUB

Australian Communications and Media Authority,
5/65 Pirrama Road,
Sydney,
NSW 2009

Wednesday, 6 May 2026

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: Submission – Review of Alcohol Advertising Rules in the Free TV Code

I write on behalf of the Australian Turf Club (ATC) in response to the Australian Communications and Media Authority's (ACMA) Review of alcohol advertising rules in the Free TV Code.

ATC is one of Australia's leading sporting and events organisations, operating four metropolitan racecourses and delivering a year-round calendar of premium racing, entertainment and hospitality experiences. Our major events, including The Everest and the Sydney Autumn Racing Carnival, attract large domestic and international audiences and generate significant economic and community benefit. As a major venue operator and rights holder, ATC is directly impacted by the regulatory framework governing advertising, sponsorship and broadcast integration.

The broader racing industry is also a significant contributor to the New South Wales economy. Horse racing supports more than 90,000 participants across the state and sustains approximately 27,500 full-time equivalent jobs when considering direct and indirect employment. The industry generates in excess of \$3 billion in economic activity annually, delivering substantial benefits across metropolitan and regional communities, including employment, tourism, agriculture and major events. This highlights the importance of maintaining a strong and sustainable commercial framework to support the industry's ongoing viability and contribution.

ATC welcomes the opportunity to contribute to this review and supports a balanced, evidence-based approach that recognises both the importance of responsible alcohol marketing and the critical role that advertising and sponsorship revenue plays in sustaining the sport and events ecosystem.

Role of Advertising – Media Rights and Sponsorship

Advertising and sponsorship revenue are fundamental to ATC's business model and the broader racing and sporting landscape. These revenues underpin media rights agreements, support the delivery of world-class events, and enable ongoing investment in facilities, customer experience and industry growth.

Alcohol advertising and partnerships form a long-standing and important component of this ecosystem. For ATC, these partnerships exist both directly through commercial agreements with beverage partners and indirectly through media rights arrangements with broadcasters whose revenues are supported by advertising. Any material restriction on alcohol advertising has the potential to reduce the value of media rights, diminish sponsorship opportunities and create flow-on impacts across the industry. This may result in reduced investment in events, increased costs for consumers through ticketing and hospitality, and less capacity to support broader industry initiatives, including community and charitable programs.



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Existing Safeguards

ATC recognises the importance of responsible alcohol consumption and is committed to maintaining high standards across all aspects of its operations. The alcohol industry in Australia is already subject to comprehensive regulation, including adherence to the Alcohol Beverages Advertising Code (ABAC), which governs the content and placement of alcohol marketing across all channels. ATC supports and operates within this framework and works closely with partners to ensure compliance with all applicable standards. In addition, ATC operates under strict licensing conditions and collaborates closely with state liquor authorities to ensure responsible service of alcohol at all venues and events. This includes RSA compliance, staff training, and operational measures designed to promote safe and responsible consumption.

Community Programs and Responsible Consumption Initiatives

ATC is committed to promoting responsible consumption and supporting positive community outcomes. A key component of this is our partnership with DrinkWise Australia, a leading independent organisation focused on behavioural change and education around responsible alcohol consumption. Through this partnership, ATC supports the amplification of responsible drinking messages across our venues, events and communications channels, ensuring that large-scale audiences are consistently exposed to education-led messaging. This partnership reflects our proactive approach to responsibility — not just compliance — and demonstrates how sporting and events organisations can play a meaningful role in influencing positive consumer behaviour. More broadly, ATC supports a range of community and charitable initiatives through the ATC Foundation, with revenue generated through commercial partnerships contributing directly to the sustainability of these programs, as well as broader industry support including employment, regional engagement and economic activity.

Conclusion

ATC acknowledges the importance of ongoing review and evolving community expectations in relation to alcohol advertising. However, we urge ACMA to carefully consider the potential unintended consequences of any significant tightening of the current framework. The existing regulatory environment, including the ABAC scheme, already provides robust safeguards to ensure responsible marketing. Importantly, organisations such as ATC are actively contributing to education and behavioural change through partnerships like DrinkWise. Any changes should be proportionate, evidence-based and developed in consultation with impacted stakeholders to avoid adverse impacts on the viability of sporting organisations, venues and major events. ATC remains committed to promoting responsible consumption, maintaining strong governance standards and working collaboratively with regulators and industry partners.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this submission.

Yours sincerely,

Steve McMahon
Chief Executive Officer
Australian Turf Club