

Formal Warning

under section 64A of the *Interactive Gambling Act 2001*

To: Mr Rhys Mathieson

Of: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

I, [REDACTED], delegate of the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA), being satisfied that you have contravened subsection 61EA(1A) of the *Interactive Gambling Act 2001* (the IGA):

HEREBY issue you a formal warning under section 64A of the IGA, for three contraventions of subsection 61EA(1A) of the IGA, being a civil penalty provision.

Details of the contraventions

Obligations under the IGA

Publication of a designated interactive gambling service advertisement

1. Subsection 61EA(1A) of the IGA provides that person must not publish a designated interactive gambling service advertisement in Australia if the publication is not permitted by sections 61EB, 61ED, 61EE or 61EF of the IGA.
2. A 'designated interactive gambling service advertisement' is defined in section 61BA of the IGA. A person 'publishes' a designated interactive gambling service advertisement if they do any of the things set out in section 61CA of the IGA (subject to certain exceptions), such as disseminates the advertisement to the public, or a section of the public, by any means.

Investigation

3. On 23 April 2026, the ACMA commenced an investigation under section 21 of the IGA into whether you published a designated interactive gambling service advertisement in Australia, in contravention of subsection 61EA(1A) of the IGA.
4. The Vegastars content was available in one Instagram video published on 20 March 2026 and two Instagram videos published on 6 April 2026 on the @rhys.mathieson Instagram account.
5. You are the owner of the Instagram handle @rhys.mathieson.

Contravention of subsection 61EA(1A) of the IGA

6. The ACMA has previously found that the Vegastars service is a designated interactive gambling service.
7. The Instagram videos published on 20 March and 6 April 2026 on your account under the handle @rhys.mathieson, contained content that constitutes advertising in the form of writing and visual images and includes:
 - a. branding images, logos of the Vegastars service; and

- b. footage of gameplay on the Vegastars service.
8. The ACMA is satisfied that you published designated interactive gambling service advertisements by creating and making the content available to the public through your Instagram page (paragraph 61CA(1)(f)).
 9. The ACMA is also satisfied that the content mentioned above was published in Australia, as an ACMA staff member was able to access and view the Instagram videos from Australia.
 10. Further, you were engaged by the providers of Vegastars to endorse and promote its service under an agreement in which you were paid to create and upload content to your Instagram account.
 11. Your audience is predominantly Australian, as you are a former AFL player and co-host a podcast which discusses the AFL, a competition exclusive to Australia.
 12. The content appears to target your Australian Instagram followers, by showing you appearing to gamble on the Vegastars service while in a popular hotel in Brisbane, Australia, during an AFL match and giving away the purported winnings from your gambling on the Vegastars service to the patrons of the hotel, by providing free drinks.
 13. Subsection 61EA(3) provides that a designated interactive gambling advertisement included on a website is taken to be published in Australia where the website is available for access by end users in Australia and it is likely that a majority of persons accessing the website are physically present in Australia. The content was available for access in Australia and, having regard to the AFL-focused nature of the content, your Australian public profile, the Brisbane-based imagery contained in the content and the manner in which the content was promoted through your social media account, the ACMA considers it likely that a majority of persons accessing the content were physically present in Australia.
 14. The publication of these advertisements in Australia was not otherwise permitted by sections 61EB, 61ED, 61EE or 61EF of the IGA.
 15. I am satisfied, for the reasons set out in the investigation report dated 1 October 2026, that you contravened subsection 61EA(1A) of the IGA on three occasions.

Dated this 8 October 2026





Delegate of the Australian Communications and Media Authority