

Media Release

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Regulator bans liquor advertisements

The Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulator (VCGLR) has banned two liquor advertisements that it has found encourage the irresponsible consumption of alcohol.

The VCGLR directed the licensee, Ascot Vale Liquor Pty Ltd, to remove the two social media advertisements which it has now done.

The first advertisement used an edited screenshot from the television show 'Who wants to be a millionaire?' and asked the question, with reference to a particular liquor brand, "what flavour has made you lose all your dignity?"

The VCGLR found that the advertisement normalised and trivialised the excessive consumption of liquor. It also found that inviting the audience to post responses to a question had the potential to further encourage the irresponsible consumption of alcohol.

The second advertisement included a caption "Raise your hand if you have been personally victimised" by an alcoholic product, implying patrons were 'victims' of liquor as a result of excessive consumption. The VCGLR found this advertisement normalised and trivialised the excessive consumption of alcohol.

VCGLR CEO Catherine Myers said the way that alcohol is promoted and advertised can impact customers and influence their behaviour.

"Licensees must advertise and promote the supply of alcohol in a way that does not encourage the irresponsible consumption of liquor. This is particularly true on social media where we know young people are very active" Ms Myers said.

"Alcohol is a product that has the potential to cause harm, particularly when consumed irresponsibly, which is why there are legislative requirements around its advertising or promotion. This responsibility extends to advertisements or promotions on social media sites.

"Licensees should carefully consider all advertising and promotions against the requirements of the *Liquor Control Reform Act 1998* and ensure they do not encourage irresponsible consumption of alcohol."

Under the Liquor Control Reform Act the VCGLR may ban an advertisement or promotion of liquor if it is likely to encourage irresponsible consumption of alcohol or it is not in the public interest.

Failure to comply with a banning notice is an offence and may attract a penalty of up to \$19,342.80.

Further information on alcohol advertising and a summary of all advertisements and promotions banned by the VCGLR is available on the VCGLR website. Complaints in relation to alcohol advertising can also be made to the VCGLR via the website.

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