

Guidelines for responsible liquor advertising and promotions



Contents

Introduction	4
The Law	6
What is the law?	7
How will it be applied?	7
Principles and examples: principles concerning the irresponsible consumption of liquor	8
Principle 1	8
Principle 2	9
Principle 3	10
Principle 4	11
Principle 5	12
Principle 6	13
Principle 7	14

Principles and examples: public interest principles	15
Principle 8	15
Principle 9	16
Principle 10	17
Principle 11	18
Principle 12	19
Principle 13	20
Principle 14	21
Principle 15	22
Principle 16	23
Assessing risk	24
Promotions on licensed premises	25
Responsible promotions	28
More information	30



Introduction



Introduction

The way alcohol is promoted and sold influences patrons, the way they consume alcohol and how they behave. Some drink promotions can encourage the excessive and irresponsible consumption of alcohol, which in turn contributes to anti-social behaviour, alcohol-related violence and disorder, and adverse health effects.

Other types of promotions are out of step with community standards and can place the safety of patrons at risk.

For example, certain promotional activities can encourage inappropriate attitudes towards women and place them at increased risk of sexual assault. Other types of advertising or promotions may appeal to minors and increase risky drinking.

The guidelines

These guidelines set clear standards for the conduct of licensees in relation to responsible advertising and promotions. The guidelines:

- explain the powers of the Commission under the Act to ban inappropriate advertising or promotions and how these powers are applied in practice
- describe the standards that underpin good practice, and
- provide examples to illustrate the types of activities likely to attract a ban by the Commission.

Licensees have clear obligations under the *Liquor Control Reform Act 1998* (the Act) to serve alcohol responsibly. Responsible advertising and promotion of liquor plays an important part in minimising harm to customers and to the broader community, in addition to making good business sense for licensees and for the sustainability of the hospitality industry in Victoria.

Promotional and serving practices that contribute to drunkenness and alcohol abuse on licensed premises will result in swift action being taken against the licensee. The Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation (the Commission) has the power to ban inappropriate advertising or promotions. The Commission may also seek to vary, suspend or cancel a liquor licence.



The law



What is the law?

The Commission may give a notice to a licensee, banning them from advertising or promoting:

- the supply of liquor by the licensee, or
- the conduct of the licensed premises by the licensee.

The Commission may do so if, in his or her opinion, the advertising or promotion is likely to encourage irresponsible consumption of alcohol or is otherwise not in the public interest.

An advertisement or promotion can come in various forms. For example:

- signs/banners/flyers/posters
- newspaper or internet advertisements
- websites
- social media (e.g. Facebook or Twitter)
- SMS

Licensees should be aware that they may be responsible for advertisements on social media sites. This includes comments made by third parties, and advertisements and promotions made by promoters engaged by the licensee.

How will the law be applied?

Step one

The Commission will apply the principles in these guidelines to assess whether a promotion is likely to lead to irresponsible consumption or is otherwise not in the public interest.

Step two

The Commission may contact the licensee seeking an explanation and may request that the advertising or promotion be withdrawn or modified.

Step three

Should this initial request not result in the rectification of the situation or an acceptable explanation, the Commission will issue a formal s115A banning notice that requires the licensee to take specified action.

Step four

Failure by the licensee to comply with a banning notice may result in fines of more than \$14,000. Licensees may apply to have the decision of a delegate of the Commission reviewed. Please note, decisions of the Commission itself cannot be reviewed internally.



Principles and examples

The following principles outline the types of promotion practices that can be banned.

Principles concerning the irresponsible consumption of liquor

Principle

Principle 1:

The advertising or promotion of liquor should not provide incentives that could lead to the rapid or excessive consumption of liquor.

Some promotions by their nature can encourage individuals to drink more rapidly, or simply to drink more than they normally would.

Activities such as games, competitions, dares and challenges can provide patrons with an entertaining environment on licensed premises. However, where these activities involve the consumption of liquor in order to take part or to win a prize, these types of promotions can act as incentives for the irresponsible consumption of liquor.

Competitions and games in themselves are not prohibited under these guidelines, but licensees should consider carefully how they promote and conduct these types of activities. In promoting these events, licensees should ensure that consuming or receiving alcohol is not a requirement to take part.

Licensees should also consider offering prizes other than liquor for consumption on licensed premises, for example, meal vouchers, movie tickets, free entry tickets. Where free or discounted liquor is offered as a prize, licensees should ensure that there is no requirement for the liquor to be consumed on the licensed premises.

Examples of unacceptable practices

- Drinking games, competitions, dares or challenges that involve rapid or excessive consumption of liquor. Some common examples include:
 - skolling games
 - speed drinking games
 - boat races
 - "toss the boss".
- Any competition where liquor is the prize or reward and consumption is expected to take place on the licensed premises (for example, a drink card as a prize)
- Any challenge or dare to induce consumers to drink or sample a particular alcoholic drink because of its higher alcohol content
- Reward schemes that are only redeemable over a limited period thereby encouraging the purchase and consumption of large quantities of liquor over a short period of time
- Promotions linked to unpredictable events (for example, "free drinks after every goal scored")
- The use of language, labelling or titling of a promotion that suggests rapid or excessive consumption (for example, "beat the clock", "drink like a fish", "beer prices hammered")

Principle 2:

The advertising or promotion of liquor should not encourage the stockpiling of drinks by the consumer for consumption at the licensed premises.

Stockpiling is the practice of consumers accumulating several drinks. Some types of promotions such as drink cards or free drink offers can encourage stockpiling where there are no controls over how the consumption takes place.

Stockpiling can lead to rapid or excessive consumption. Patrons may feel compelled to finish accumulated drinks where they would normally have stopped drinking. In particular, patrons may drink more quickly to finish accumulated drinks prior to closing or departing.

Licensees should have in place a serving strategy to prevent consumers from stockpiling drinks.

Where drink cards are available, licensees should consider extending the redemption of the drinks beyond the trading period, for example, redeeming the drink card over a 1 month period.

- Promotions that encourage or reward the purchase of, or drinking of, large quantities of liquor in a single session or transaction (for example, “buy six drinks in one round and get the seventh for free”)
- Drink cards or loyalty schemes that may only be redeemed by consuming liquor on the licensed premises within a finite timeframe during a trading period (for example, “\$50 drink card to be redeemed between 8pm-10pm”)
- Drink cards or loyalty schemes that, by their design or potential misuse, create an incentive to consume liquor more rapidly and/or in greater amounts than customers should
- Discounted or free drink offers conducted in rapid succession (for example, “2 for 1 spirits for the first 15 minutes of every hour”)



Principles and examples

Principles concerning the irresponsible consumption of liquor (cont.)

Principle

Principle 3:

The advertising or promotion of liquor should not involve the availability of non-standard sized drinks or the availability of liquor in receptacles that encourage rapid drinking.

There are well-recognised standard drinking receptacles used for drinking particular types of liquor. While there may be variations in different Australian jurisdictions, in Victoria there are generally standard-sized glasses used for the serving of wine, beer and spirits.

In some cases, new and innovative ways of serving liquor may have the result of encouraging irresponsible drinking (for example, drinking receptacles such as test tubes that encourage individuals to consume liquor in quick fashion, by skolling or downing the drink in one).

The type of serving method may also mean that consumers are unaware of how much liquor they are consuming.

When advertising or promoting the sale of liquor, licensees are encouraged to utilise standard drinking receptacles to minimise the risk of rapid or excessive drinking.

Examples of unacceptable practices

- Serving liquor in a yard glass for skolling
- Pouring liquor straight into patrons' mouths (for example, pouring liquor directly from a bottle or shooting liquor from a water pistol)
- Providing a multiple supply of shooters for an individual's consumption
- Serving spirits in a non-standard spirits glass (for example, schooner glass)
- Supplying a whole bottle of liquor to a single individual intended for consumption by an individual (for example, supplying champagne bottle with straw, serving spirits, champagne or wine bottles without appropriate drinking glasses)
- Laybacks, slammers, blasters, bombs or similar
- Supplying large quantities of mixed spirits in jugs or other receptacles (for example, "cocktails in a teapot" – drinks are served to patrons in a teapot containing approximately three to four nips of spirits. Patrons consume either straight from the spout or from shot glasses provided by the bar staff)
- Serving liquor in drinking vessels that are designed for rapid consumption (for example, test tubes without a stand on which the glass can be placed).

Principle 4:

The advertising or promotion of liquor must not condone or encourage rapid or excessive drinking, drunkenness or anti-social behaviour.

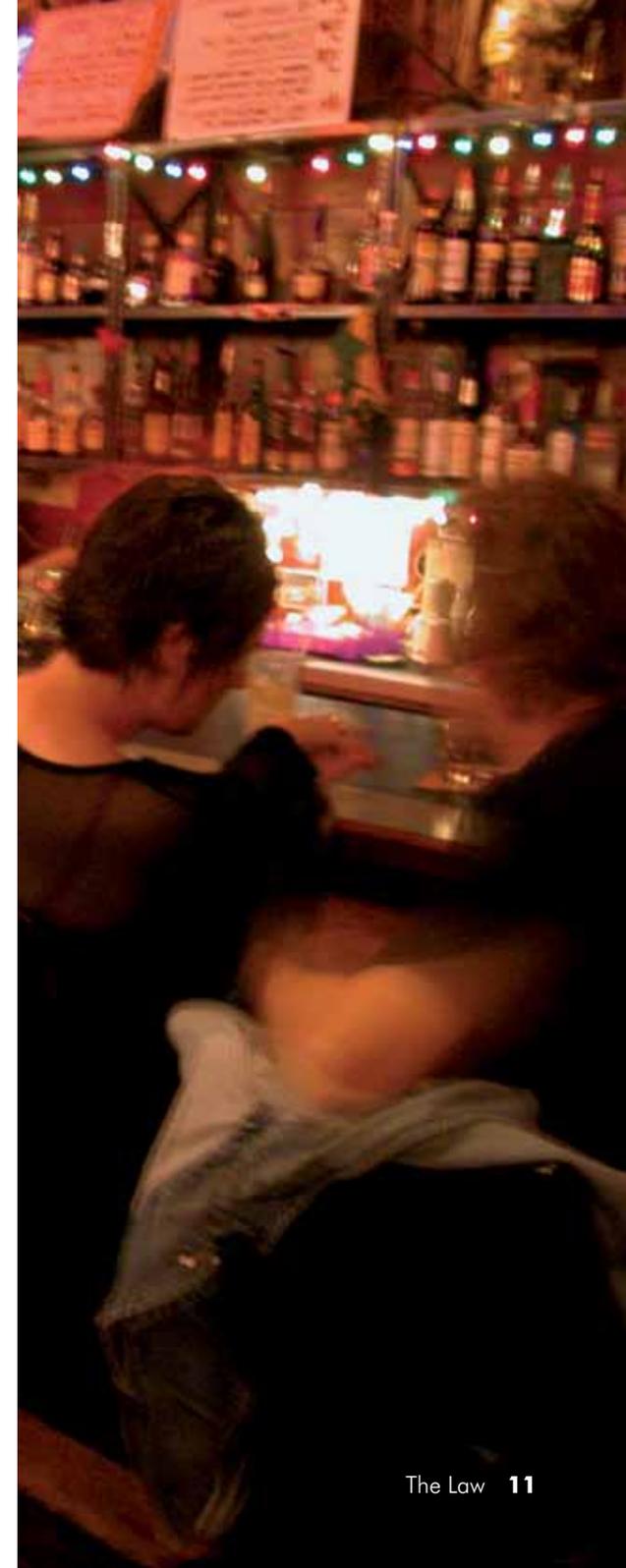
The inappropriate advertising or promotion of liquor can contribute to a culture that condones, encourages or even celebrates the irresponsible consumption of liquor.

This type of culture around the use of alcohol has a range of negative consequences for individuals and for the community such as anti-social behaviour and violence, including domestic violence.

For the purpose of these guidelines, anti-social behaviour covers a range of conduct including acting in a manner that causes or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to other people, such as intimidating, bullying, aggressive or threatening behaviour. It also includes socially unacceptable behaviour such as vandalism, rowdy or noisy behaviour, creating a public nuisance, or offensive behaviour such as urinating in public, or public drunkenness.

Licensees should ensure that the advertising or promotion does not appear to condone or encourage rapid or excessive drinking, drunkenness or anti-social behaviour.

- The advertising or promotion of events that focus principally on the excessive consumption of liquor (for example, promoting binge-drinking as part of end of sporting season celebrations such as “Mad Monday”, or end of school year celebrations such as “Schoolies Week” or “after parties”)
- Using language, slogans or images that promote or encourage consumers to get drunk (for example, “we drink till we drop”)



Principles and examples

Principles concerning the irresponsible consumption of liquor (cont.)

Principle

Principle 5:

The advertising or promotion of liquor involving “happy hours”, free drinks or discounted drinks must have reasonable limits and controls to minimise the risk of rapid, excessive or irresponsible consumption of liquor.

The liquor market is an increasingly competitive environment. Reducing the price of liquor or providing free liquor for limited periods is one tool used by licensees to attract customers and increase sales both in licensed venues and in off-premises settings.

Promotions offering one free drink upon arrival or with entry do not present high risks.

However, “happy hour” promotions that extend beyond one hour are problematic, raising an increased risk of irresponsible consumption. Offers of free drinks and extreme discounting can result in an environment of irresponsible consumption by creating incentives for patrons to purchase and drink more than they normally would. Where this involves particular client groups (for example, young people or women), these practices can have the result of making that group more vulnerable or at risk of harm.

These types of promotions will be closely monitored. As part of their obligations to serve liquor responsibly, licensees must ensure that there are limits and controls in place when conducting such offers to minimise the risk of irresponsible consumption of liquor. Practical advice on the types of controls that can be put in place is provided at the end of these guidelines.

Examples of unacceptable practices

- Extended “happy hours” (for example, “5 hours of happiness”)
- Promotions involving extreme discounts (for example, \$1 shots of spirits)
- Excessive periods of free drinks (for example, \$50 entry and free drinks all night)
- Multiple promotions in one trading period (for example, “open bar for the first 10 minutes of each hour”, or multiple reoccurring “happy hours”)
- Where the duration of the promotion is more than 2 hours (for example, “2 for 1 basic spirits all night”)
- Gender-based discounts (for example, “unlimited free alcohol for women all night”)

Principle

Principle 6:

Where limited free liquor is advertised or promoted as ancillary to a product or service, the advertising or promotion must not place the free liquor as the primary focus.

In some circumstances, liquor is advertised or promoted as part of a package that includes other services or products. For example, a restaurant may offer a free glass of champagne as part of a Mother's Day lunch package.

For such promotions, where the free liquor is offered in conjunction with the purchase of products or services, licensees should ensure there is a balance between messages about liquor and other activities. The advertising or promotion should not place the primary emphasis on the availability of the free liquor.

Licensees should also consider the appropriateness of linking promotions of liquor to other non-related products, particularly where the transaction takes place away from the licensed premises.

Examples of unacceptable practices

- Advertising that focuses exclusively on the free alcohol where there are other activities to promote
- Advertising or promotion of liquor linked to non-related products or services that are inappropriate (for example, the promotion of a voucher for a free 'ready-to-drink' beverage upon purchase of a CD or DVD raises risks of targeting minors. Such an offer combines the type of drink that appeals to minors, with the type of products minors are likely to purchase)



Principles and examples

Principles concerning the irresponsible consumption of liquor (cont.)

Principle

Principle 7:

Where the advertising or promotion involves the inclusion of unlimited liquor within the entry price, the advertising or promotion must be consistent with responsible serving of alcohol practices.

For certain types of functions, the supply of liquor may be included within the entry price. Such an event will usually include food and/or entertainment (for example, race day functions, fundraising events, balls or special events).

In some cases, the combination of the type of event with unlimited alcohol as part of a ticket or entry price can lead to excessive drinking over a period of time.

Promoting these functions as “all you can drink” events can encourage a culture of irresponsible consumption of liquor, especially where no controls are in place to minimise this form of consumption.

The advertising and promotion of such events should be consistent with responsible serving of alcohol practices. These include:

- Ensuring that a serving strategy is in place to limit the amount of liquor provided to individuals
- Ensuring a ready availability of food and non-alcoholic drinks

Principle (cont.)

- Providing a variety of spaces and activities
- Providing adequate seating arrangements
- Ensuring that the advertising or promotion clearly indicates that service will be refused if the person is, or appears to be, intoxicated.

Guidelines for the responsible serving of alcohol at functions can be found at www.justice.vic.gov.au/alcohol.

Examples of unacceptable practices

- Advertising or promotions that explicitly focus on the “all you can drink” element of the event by using terminology such as “drink till you get smashed” or “drink your money’s worth”
- Combining fundraising events such as “Reverse Raffles” – where the main aim of these raffles is to not have your ticket drawn out until the end – with unlimited alcohol included in the ticket price

Public interest principles

Principle

Principle 8:

The advertising or promotion of liquor must avoid sexual, degrading, sexist or gratuitously offensive images, symbols, figures and innuendo.

Sexual stereotyping, sexual innuendo and the portrayal of women as sex objects are commonly used to advertise and promote liquor and licensed premises.

The notion of what is, or is not, offensive is complex. Licensees should ensure that when advertising and promoting liquor or their licensed premises, they consider what an ordinary reasonable person within the general community would consider offensive. The use of humour should not serve as an excuse for advertising or promoting liquor or a licensed premises in a way that offends.

Examples of unacceptable practices

- Sexualised promotions that target women through offering free or reduced price alcohol combined with incentives to dress provocatively or remove their clothing (for example, wet T-shirt competitions, “free drinks for women wearing bikinis”, “take off an item of clothing for a free drink” or “\$50 drink card for women who hang their undies behind the bar”)
- Using language that is likely to insult or offend
- Promoting the stereotyping of social roles based on gender
- Using images that objectify women’s and men’s bodies or portraying men or women as sex objects
- Using offensive sexual innuendo
- Use of offensive images (for example, burnt babies, babies portrayed as footballs)



Principles and examples

Public interest principles (cont.)

Principle

Principle 9:

The advertising or promotion of liquor must not be linked to sexual imagery or imply sexual success.

The explicit or implicit linking of the promotion of liquor with messages of achieving sexual success can contribute to a culture around alcohol use that places pressure on individuals to either drink more or to rely on liquor as a “social lubricant” and a means of achieving social acceptance.

The use of certain types of sexual imagery can also foster messages of sexual availability linked with the consumption of liquor. Women who binge drink are more at risk of harassment and sexual assault by men and of engaging in behaviours that they would otherwise normally avoid.

Licensees should ensure that the advertising or promotion of liquor is not linked to sexual imagery or imply sexual success.

Examples of unacceptable practices

- Using sexual images that depict gratuitous use of nudity to promote the supply of liquor or the conduct of licensed premises (for example, using nudity to promote home delivery of liquor)
- Using images or language displaying or implying sexual activity
- Using inappropriate and exploitative sexual imagery of both men and women
- Connecting the consumption of liquor with achieving social or sexual success (for example, “drink x brand and be the envy of all your friends”)

Principle 10:

The advertising or promotion of liquor must not suggest any association with risk taking, or with violent, aggressive, dangerous or anti-social behaviour.

The link between the misuse of alcohol and violence and anti-social behaviour is well-established.

Reducing the impact of alcohol-fuelled violence and anti-social behaviour on public safety is an important community goal, and there is clearly a public interest in breaking the link between alcohol and aggressive behaviour.

The evidence shows that young males tend to be the major perpetrators of alcohol-related violence. Licensees should take care that the advertising or promotion of liquor does not focus on the negative characteristics of masculinity such as risk taking or aggressive behaviour.

- The use of images or messages associating the consumption of liquor with risky or dangerous activities (for example, sky diving, motor racing, drink driving, speed boating)
- The use of stereotyping that links the advertising or promotion of liquor with celebrating aggressive or risk-taking behaviour
- The association of liquor with activities that encourage aggressive behaviour towards others (for example, competitions or challenges that pit patrons against each other such as arm wrestling)



Principles and examples

Public interest principles (cont.)

Principle

Principle 11:

The advertising or promotion of liquor must not portray people or depict material in a way that discriminates against, vilifies or is demeaning to any person or section of the community on account of race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, age, sexual preference, religion, disability or political belief.

This principle reflects well-established standards of treatment commonly found in equal opportunity legislation. Under this principle, the advertising or promotion of liquor should not involve treating someone unfairly or unfavourably because of personal characteristics of the individual.

Within this context, to vilify, means behaviour that incites or encourages hatred, displaying serious contempt, revulsion or severe ridicule against another person or group of people, because of certain characteristics. To demean others means to degrade or humiliate.

Licensees should take care to ensure that the content and messages used in liquor advertising or the conduct of promotions do not give rise to inappropriate treatment of individuals in line with this principle.

Examples of unacceptable practices

- Advertising or promotions that use stereotyping to highlight racial differences
- Advertising or promotions that make fun of personal characteristics such as disability
- Advertising that reflects negatively on a person's sexuality (for example, "are you man enough to drink ...")

Principle

Principle 12:

The advertising or promotion of liquor must not suggest any association with, acceptance of, or allusion to, illicit drugs.

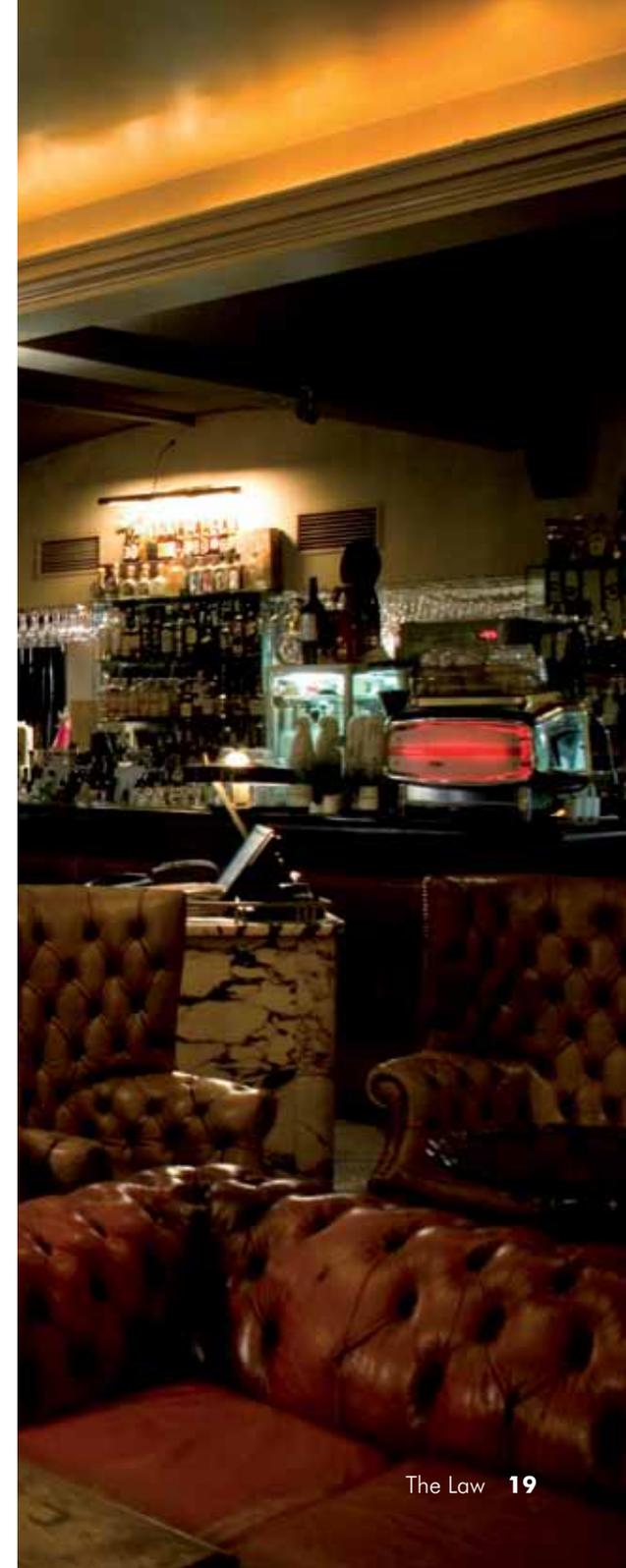
Taking illicit drugs – in addition to being illegal – has serious health consequences. The combination of alcohol and drugs has been shown to present serious health risks.

In some licensed settings, drug taking may be considered by patrons to be part of an accepted culture and practice.

There is a clear public interest in ensuring that licensees do not encourage or condone illicit drug taking when advertising or promoting the supply of liquor or the conduct of their licensed premises.

Examples of unacceptable practices

- Using images, text or language that allude to drug taking behaviour
- Using props, settings or scenarios that link the promotion of liquor to illicit drugs



Principles and examples

Public interest principles (cont.)

Principle

Principle 13:

The advertising or promotion of liquor must not encourage breaking the law.

There is a strong public interest in upholding the law.

Licensees should ensure that they are not advertising or promoting liquor in such a way that could be seen to be encouraging or condoning breaking the law. This includes the civil or criminal law, and anti-social behaviour such as intimidating, bullying, aggressive or threatening behaviour, vandalism, rowdy or noisy behaviour, creating nuisance, or offensive behaviour such as urinating in public, or public drunkenness.

Examples of unacceptable practices

- Linking the consumption of liquor to drink driving
- Linking the consumption of liquor to breaking the law
- Showing contempt for the law
- Depicting individuals intending to, or actually breaching the law or engaging in anti-social behaviour

Principle

Principle 14:

The advertising or promotion of liquor must not encourage under-age drinking.

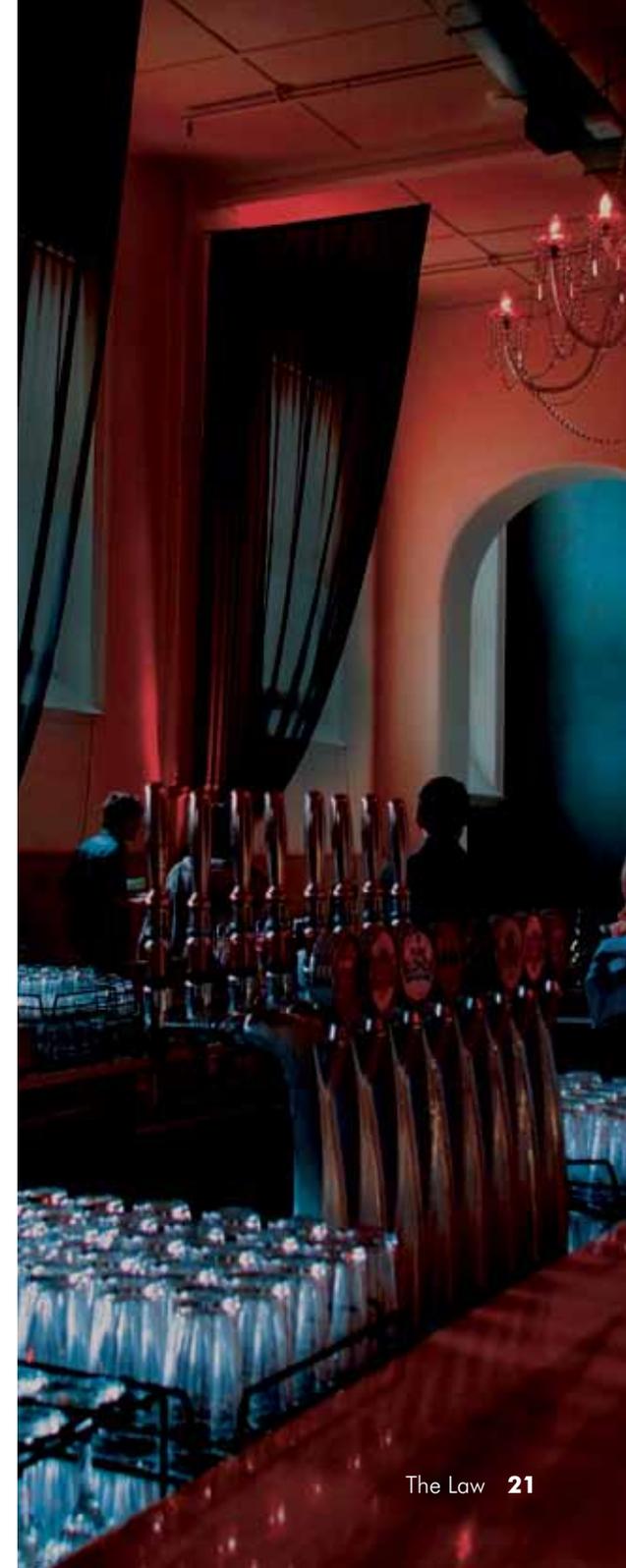
It is illegal under Victoria's liquor laws to sell or supply liquor to minors. Young adults are the group at highest risk in relation to alcohol-related injury, including road trauma, violence and sexual coercion. Younger, less experienced drinkers are at an even higher risk due to their lower alcohol tolerance.

There is a clear public interest in preventing the harms associated with drinking by minors.

Licensees should exercise particular care to minimise children's exposure to liquor advertising and promotions.

Examples of unacceptable practices

- Using characters, imagery, designs, motifs, interactive games, merchandise or media that are likely to appeal to minors
- Using role models, celebrities or other testimonials that primarily appeal to minors
- Locating advertising close to a primary or secondary school or other places primarily used by minors



Principles and examples

Public interest principles (cont.)

Principle

Principle 15:

The advertising or promotion of liquor must not incorporate images of people who are, or who appear to look under 18 years of age, unless there is no suggestion that they have just consumed, are consuming or are about to consume liquor.

For the same reasons as described in Principle 14, care should be taken with the use of children or people who look under 18 in any advertising or promotion of liquor. Advertising or promotions must not depict minors consuming or about to consume liquor.

It is acceptable to use children and young people in advertising or promotions of licensed venues where they are depicted in a family setting and where the consumption of liquor is not the primary focus (for example, advertising or promotions involving family meals in restaurants).

Examples of unacceptable practices

- Depicting models in settings primarily used by minors, even where the individuals used in the advertising or promotion are over 18 (for example, schools, youth clubs)
- Depicting models in school uniform or other clothing that is typically worn by minors
- Using props or characters that are commonly associated with minors or their interests or activities (for example, using cartoon characters or TV characters targeted at minors)
- Using models in liquor advertising or promotions who are, or who appear to look under 18 years of age
- Showing consumption of liquor and minors in the same frame

Principle 16:

The advertising or promotion of liquor should not be likely to place any group at risk of harm.

Some advertising or promotion of liquor targeted to particular groups may have the inadvertent outcome of placing these groups at risk of harm.

Particular groups at risk of harm associated with alcohol include young people, people with mental illness, Indigenous communities and people with existing alcohol-related health issues. Women who binge drink are more at risk of harassment and sexual assault by men.

Liquor advertising and promotions that place vulnerable groups at risk are clearly not in the public interest.

It is important that licensees consider the broader context when promoting the sale of liquor or their licensed premises. Licensees should consider the appropriateness of targeting particular “at risk” groups with their advertising and promotions.

- Promoting the availability of discounted liquor in ways that encourage excessive consumption by “at risk” groups (for example, window display promoting discounted liquor products with high alcohol content)
- Promoting the availability of large quantities of cheap forms of alcohol to certain groups with limited financial circumstances (for example, excessive discounts specifically targeting groups such as backpackers)
- Promotions involving the provision of liquor to individuals on a credit/pay later basis (for example, home delivery of bulk packaged liquor on a credit/pay later basis)



Assessing risk

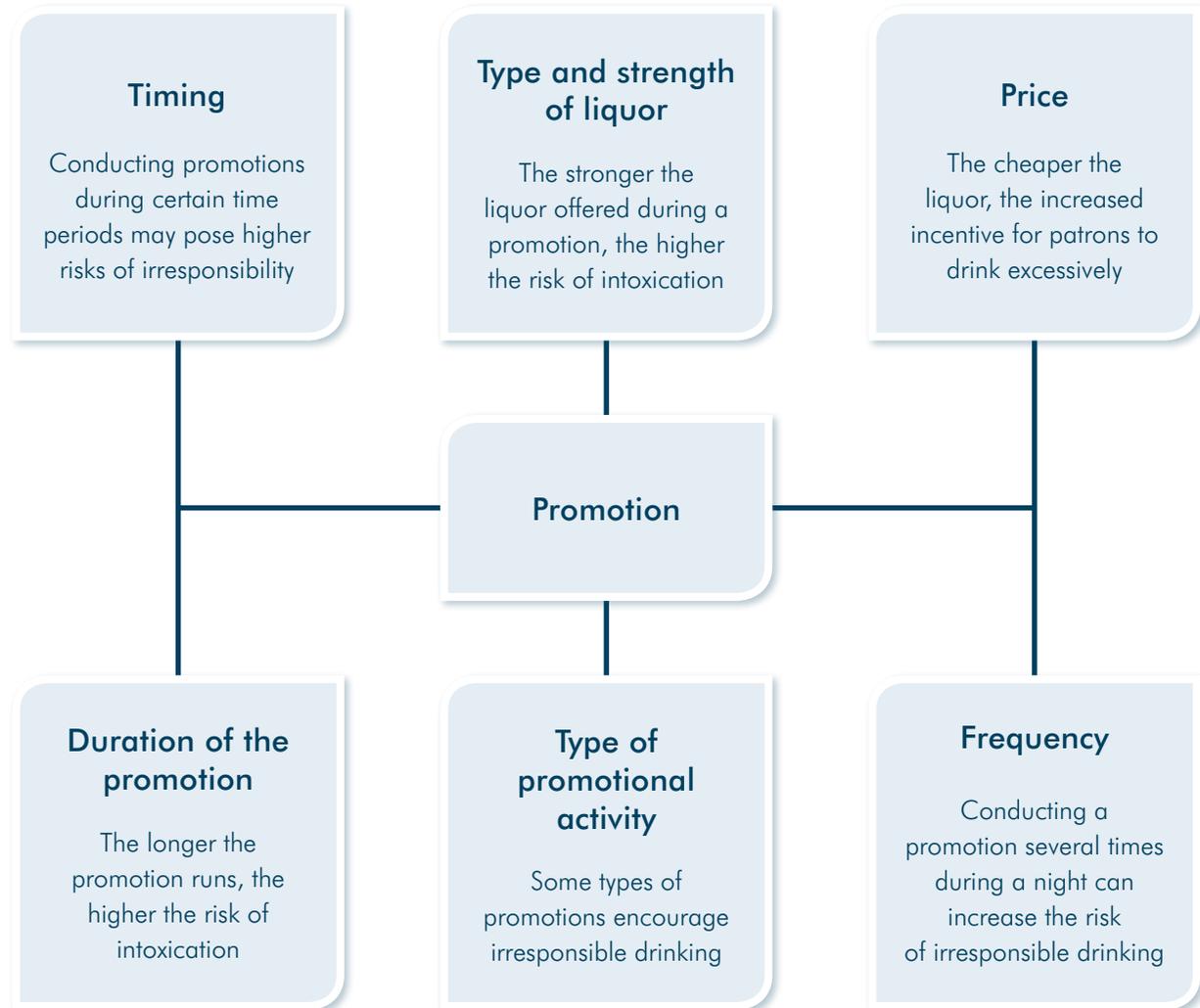


Assessing risk

Promotions on licensed premises

There are a number of elements to promotions in licensed venues that can result in irresponsible consumption of liquor. These elements may attract a banning notice from the Commission.

When considering new liquor promotions in licensed venues, it is important that licensees work carefully through each of these elements to assess the risks posed by the promotion. These elements interact together; in many cases, the risk that is raised by one element can be reduced or offset by adjusting another element of the promotion.



Promotions on licensed premises

Unacceptable promotions

This is a real example that includes all the **wrong** types of promotional activities:

- ✗ Reduced price liquor promotions
- ✗ Frequent promotions over the course of the trading period
- ✗ The duration of the promotion as a whole is 3 hours
- ✗ The strength of the liquor increasing over the course of the promotions
- ✗ The promotions are conducted at times when there is an increased risk of intoxication, particularly as the strength of the drinks available is increased



DRINK SPECIALS!

HAPPY HOUR 10PM

\$5 Basics
\$4 Bubbles/Wines
\$2.50 Pots
\$10 Jugs

POWER HOUR 11PM

SHOTS \$5
Tequila
Sour Monkey
Tequila Rose

BOMB! HOUR 12AM

2 for 1
Agwa Bomb
Skittle Bomb
Jager Bomb

A large red circle with a diagonal slash through it, indicating that the entire menu is unacceptable.

There are actions that licensees can take to reduce the risk associated with liquor promotions. Consideration should be given to the following factors:

1. Type and strength of liquor – the higher the percentage of alcohol by volume used in the promotion, the higher the risk that patrons will become intoxicated. Consider running promotions offering lower strength liquor products.
2. Price – the cheaper the liquor, the increased incentive for patrons to purchase and consume excessive amounts. Particular care should be taken with promotions involving free liquor, especially for higher strength liquor products. Consider limiting the discounting of liquor during a promotion, ensuring that reduction in price is not excessive.
3. Duration – the longer the promotion runs, the higher the risk of irresponsible consumption. By placing reasonable limits on the duration of your promotion, licensees can still provide opportunities to increase sales with reduced risk of irresponsible consumption (for example, a “happy hour” should not be “5 hours of happiness”).
4. Frequency – a promotion conducted several times during a trading period can heighten the risk of irresponsible consumption (for example, “half-priced drinks for the first 10 minutes of each hour”). Consider limiting the number of promotions that are held during a single trading period.
5. Timing/timeframe – conducting promotions during certain time periods may pose higher risks of irresponsible consumption. Promotions conducted before 10.00pm raise less risks as patrons are less likely to have consumed excessive amounts of liquor and are likely to have eaten a meal that reduces the effect of liquor. After this time, the risk of patrons becoming intoxicated increases. Licensees are encouraged not to conduct promotions at high risk times.
6. Type of activity – the nature of the promotion itself may contribute to a culture of excessive or irresponsible drinking. For example, competitions, games, dares or challenges can create incentives for patrons to drink more. Licensees should carefully consider the type of promotion they are conducting.



Responsible promotions



There are a range of good decisions that licensees can make about promotions they conduct in licensed venues to reduce the risk of irresponsible consumption.

These include:

- Restricting the duration, timing and frequency of “happy hours” and free or discounted drinks promotions
- Ensuring a controlled distribution of drink cards and allowing the redemption of drink cards beyond a single trading period (for example, redeeming a drink card over a 1 month period)
- Adopting a serving policy to restrict the number of drinks customers can obtain during the promotional period
- Offering non-liquor prizes or rewards for competitions (for example, meal vouchers, free entry tickets, movie tickets)
- Conducting promotions involving low and non-alcoholic drinks
- Pricing drinks to encourage customers to drink in moderation (for example, low and non-alcoholic drinks may be priced lower than full strength drinks)
- Incorporating responsible drinking messages into any advertising or promotion
- Placing firm controls over any third party promoters engaged to promote your venue.

Conducting responsible promotions should be supported by responsible serving of alcohol strategies to ensure a safe and comfortable environment for customers.

These strategies include:

- Helping customers make informed decisions about their alcohol consumption by standardising servings or raising awareness about the number of standard measures in the alcohol being consumed
- Offering free tap water regularly and ensuring food is available for customers
- Establishing and implementing policies and procedures to ensure all staff understand and observe responsible serving practices
- Using designated staff (RSA marshals) to monitor and co-ordinate the responsible serving of alcohol in high-risk premises to help reduce the risk of alcohol-related harm
- Ensuring adequate security is on hand at peak trading times and providing briefings for security and service staff emphasising the need to identify potential issues before they become problems
- Having written house policies regarding your strict adherence to RSA principles and communicating these to your customers. This includes ensuring that customers are aware of the responsible drinking laws and that inappropriate behaviour and intoxication will not be tolerated
- Ensuring minors and intoxicated people are not served liquor
- Displaying all required signage prominently
- Operating your venue within any prescribed patron capacity
- Promoting safe transport options.

More information

Complaints about inappropriate liquor advertising and promotions should be made to:

Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation
GPO Box 1988
Melbourne VIC 3001

Telephone: 1300 182 457

Hours of operation: 8:30am – 5:00pm weekdays (except public holidays)

Email: contact@vcglr.vic.gov.au



49 Elizabeth Street, Richmond 3121
GPO Box 1988, Melbourne 3001
1300 182 457
contact@vcglr.vic.gov.au
www.vcglr.vic.gov.au

AUGUST 2013