

6 November 2024

Free TV Australia
Suite 1, Level 2
76 Berry Street,
North Sydney NSW 2060
codereview@freetv.com.au

Dear Free TV Australia,

This submission is in response to the public consultation on the draft '*Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice*' (the Code).

Women's Community Shelters works community by community to establish an Australia where women are safe, secure, supported and equal.

We work with communities to establish new shelters, which provide short term emergency accommodation and support in a safe environment that enables homeless women to rebuild self-esteem and achieve control and fulfilment of their lives.

Sporting events like the State of Origin and AFL and NRL grand finals are associated with increases in reported incidents of family and domestic violence.

Phone calls to domestic violence hotlines and demands for places in our shelters spike in both the lead-up to these games and the immediate aftermath.

A common story our shelter managers hear from victim-survivors is that their partner's drinking around these games fuels the violence they experience and increases its severity.

Women tell us they put strategies in place to ensure their family's safety, like taking themselves out of the home and staying with friends for the night, or ensuring their children are particularly quiet the day after the game.

Your Code, the Commercial Television Code, currently has a loophole allowing for alcohol advertising during sporting events. This means that there are more ads for alcohol at times that are higher risk for services like ours.

The [recent Rapid Review](#) of Prevention Approaches for gender-based violence recommended that alcohol advertisements be restricted around sporting events. The Review noted that 'given the statistical increase in DFSV [Domestic Family and Sexual Violence] incidents during football grand finals, as well as the high number of children who watch sport on television and mobile apps, the Review recommends that alcohol advertising be restricted during sporting events.'

Given this, I am very concerned that you are seeking to extend alcohol advertising to public holidays, weekends and school holidays, rather than restricting alcohol advertising during sporting events.

I urge you to implement the recommendation of the Rapid Review and restrict alcohol advertising during sporting events and to abandon your proposed extensions of alcohol advertising.

The safety of women and children across the country should always be prioritised if we are working together as a community to end domestic and family violence.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Annabelle Daniel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a small dot at the end.

Annabelle Daniel OAM
Chief Executive Officer
Women's Community Shelters