

[View online](#)



Industry Newsletter: Gambling and Liquor

An update from ACT Gambling and Racing Commission
and the ACT Commissioner for Fair Trading

The ACT Gambling and Racing Commission (the Commission) and the ACT Commissioner for Fair Trading are pleased to present the latest edition of our newsletter, where we share key regulatory updates, upcoming priorities and important reminders for the gambling and liquor industries. As always, our focus remains on fostering responsible practices, supporting compliance, and promoting the safety and wellbeing of the ACT community.

This edition comes at a time of continuous activity across the sector, with several new initiatives, compliance priorities and industry obligations shaping the months ahead.

In this issue, we highlight guidance on responsible liquor promotions. The legislation sets out a range of prohibited promotional activities that licensees must not conduct, the Commissioner has produced guidelines to support licensees understand their obligations. We strongly encourage all licensees to review their current advertising and promotional material to ensure it aligns with these requirements.

We also outline the specific exemptions for Two-Up and ANZAC Day under the *Unlawful Gambling Act 2009*. Inspectors will be out in the community monitoring compliance, supporting venues, and helping ensure these important traditions are upheld safely and legally.

For gambling licensees, we are pleased to announce that the 2026 Gambling Contact Officer (GCO) [training schedule](#), and the approved training providers, is now available. To maintain their appointment, GCOs must complete an approved training session each year. We particularly encourage newer GCOs to consider the Access Recognised Training, which offers practical tools, real-world scenarios and a public health-based approach to harm prevention, harm reduction, emotional support and regulatory compliance.

With the end of the financial year approaching, we also take this opportunity to remind licensed gaming venues of their annual reporting obligations. Under Section 158 of the

Gaming Machine Act 2004, licensed clubs must provide audited financial statements and report the number of club members by type within 6 months of the end of their financial year.

We hope you find this edition informative and helpful as we move through another busy period together. If you have any questions or require support, our teams are here to assist.

Josh Rynehart

Commissioner for Fair Trading

Derise Cubin

CEO - ACT Gambling and Racing
Commission

Responsible liquor promotions

Responsible liquor promotions are an essential part of maintaining a safe and sustainable hospitality industry in the ACT. Under the [Liquor Act 2010](#), licensees have an obligation to ensure that all advertising and promotional activities encourage responsible attitudes towards the sale, supply and consumption of liquor. The Act places harm minimisation and community safety at the centre of all liquor-related decision-making and these principles apply to how liquor is marketed to the community.

The [Liquor Regulation 2010](#) sets out a range of prohibited promotional activities that licensees must not conduct. These include any promotions that encourage rapid or excessive consumption, intoxication, stockpiling of drinks, or unsafe drinking practices. Prohibited practices also include promotions that use sexualised or offensive imagery, target minors or appeal to young people, or associate alcohol consumption with risky or anti-social behaviour. Licensees are reminded that conducting a prohibited promotional activity is an offence under section 137 of the Act, and penalties may apply.

In addition to the legislative requirements, the [Liquor Promotion Guidelines](#) provide practical examples of acceptable and unacceptable promotional methods. These guidelines reinforce the importance of avoiding promotions that incentivise speed drinking, reward excessive consumption, use non-standard serving vessels, or target specific groups in ways that may be discriminatory or harmful. Promotions should always reflect community expectations and support a responsible drinking culture.

Licensees are encouraged to regularly review their advertising and promotional activities to ensure they comply with the Act, Regulation and Guidelines. Taking a proactive approach to compliance not only reduces the risk of enforcement action but also contributes to a safer environment for patrons, staff and the wider community. By ensuring that liquor promotions are conducted responsibly, licensees play a vital role in minimising alcohol-related harm across the ACT.

Anzac Day

ANZAC Day is a significant national day of recognition, and many ACT venues host traditional activities such as Two-Up, special events, and have increased patron numbers. To support venues and ensure a safe and respectful environment, Access Canberra Inspectors will be undertaking inspections across various licensed premises on ANZAC Day. These inspections will focus on activities associated with Two-Up and liquor licensing obligations.

Inspectors will monitor RSA practices to ensure alcohol is supplied responsibly throughout the day. Licensees and staff must ensure liquor is not provided to underage or intoxicated persons, and venues must actively manage intoxication risks, particularly during busy periods. Promotions or practices that encourage rapid or excessive consumption must be avoided at all times.

Two-Up may be played on ANZAC Day in accordance with specific exemptions and conditions under the [Unlawful Gambling Act 2009](#). Inspectors will monitor to ensure the game is overseen by approved persons, played only by persons 18 years or older and offered without prohibited inducements or gambling-related promotions. Licensees must ensure that Two-Up activities comply strictly with legislative requirements and do not contribute to unsafe or irresponsible behaviour. Electronic gaming machines continue to have a mandatory shut-down period from 4am to 9am, that includes both Anzac public holiday dates.

Inspectors will also check that venues comply with smoke-free laws, including the use of Designated Outdoor Smoking Areas (DOSAs) where applicable. Licensees must ensure DOSAs are appropriately signed and that patrons are not smoking or vaping within eating or drinking areas.

ANZAC Day is a time of community reflection and connection. It is important that all licensed venues operate in a way that supports harm minimisation, reduces the risk of alcohol related incidents, and promotes a safe and respectful environment. This includes monitoring crowd behaviour, adjusting service practices as needed, and ensuring venue policies prioritise patron and staff safety.

Anzac Day trading hours for ACT

Relevant liquor licensed businesses may operate under the [Access Canberra Special Event Declaration](#) only on Saturday 25 April 2026 for extended operating hours from 6am and they must follow their regular trading hours.



Gambling Contact Officer Training Sessions

Gambling harm prevention training is important for preventing and reducing gambling harm in the ACT. GCOs who complete the training will gain skills and knowledge to empower them to support their patrons.



Now available

To maintain appointment as a Gambling Contact Officer (GCO), industry staff are required to complete an approved GCO training session each year.

The ACT Gambling and Racing Commission is pleased to share the 2026 [GCO training schedule](#) and approved providers with ACT Gambling Licensees.

Access recognised training

This course is recommended for newer GCOs and is designed to equip GCOs with the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to identify and respond to gambling harm. Adopting a public-health approach, the training focuses on harm prevention, harm-reduction strategies, emotional support, and regulatory compliance.

Through interactive discussions, real-world scenarios and expert guidance, participants gain practical tools to foster safer gambling environments and support patrons who may be experiencing, or are at risk of, gambling harm.

Register here: [Access Recognised Training – GCO Annual Training](#)

Lifeline training – Confidence in Conversations with Patrons Impacted by Gambling

Best suited for GCOs who have previously completed a session with Access Recognised Training.

This session offers a deeper focus on conversational skills, supporting GCOs to confidently engage with patrons who may be experiencing, or are at risk of, gambling harm. Participants will strengthen their understanding, communication techniques and ability to provide effective support.

Register here: [Lifeline Canberra](#)

The Gambling and Racing Commission acknowledges the invaluable role GCOs play in preventing and reducing gambling harm across the Canberra community.

For more information, please visit the training page on the Commission's website.

Enquiries can be directed to: gamblingharmprevention@act.gov.au

Reporting obligations

As the end of the financial year will very soon be upon us it's a timely opportunity to remind Licenced gaming venues of their own financial year reporting obligations.

Specifically, the obligations of licenced clubs under Section 158 of the [Gaming Machine Act 2004](#) to provide an audit of financial statements and the number of club members by type at the end of the relevant financial year – the legislation says that this must be provided within 6 months of the end of each financial year of the licensee.

In parallel with the recent community contributions program, the licencing team have conducted an audit of outstanding annual reports, financial statements and club membership details. In the coming months you may be contacted to provide any shortfall in documentation not yet provided. It should be noted that this is an obligation under the Act and must be provided if requested.

Should you have any questions or concerns you can forward to the Licencing team at Gaming.Operations@act.gov.au

The relevant section for your reference is:

158 Audit of financial statements etc

(1) A licensee must, as soon as practicable (but not later than 6 months) after the end of each financial year of the licensee—

(a) if the licensee's gross revenue for all authorised premises for the year is at least \$200 000—

(i) ensure that the licensee's financial statements for the year are audited by a qualified accountant; and

(ii) ensure that the audited financial statements identify the licensee's gross revenue for all authorised premises during the year; and

(b) if the licensee's gross revenue for all authorised premises for the year is less than \$200 000—

(i) prepare an income and expenditure statement for the year that identifies the licensee's gross revenue for all authorised premises during the year; and

(ii) certify that the statement is true; and

(c) give the commission a copy of the audited financial statements or certified income and expenditure statement.

Note Gross revenue—see the dictionary. (2) The audited financial statements or certified income and expenditure statement must be accompanied by—

(a) if the licensee is a club—a report stating the number of club members at the end of the relevant financial year and, if different classes of members exist, the number of members in each class; and

Examples—classes of member

life member, social member, voting member

Note Member, of a club, does not include a temporary member (see dict).

(b) any other details the commission requires in writing.

(3) In this section:

qualified accountant means—

(a) a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia, the Institute of Public Accountants or the Australian Society of Certified Practising Accountants; or

(b) a person registered as a registered company auditor under the [Corporation Act](#).



Clubs Inquiry Interim Report

The *Independent inquiry into the future of the ACT clubs industry* is examining how to support vibrant and sustainable ACT clubs while significantly reducing their reliance on electronic gaming machine revenue. Following extensive engagement with clubs, gambling harm reduction advocates, academics and other stakeholders, the Inquiry Panel has now released its interim report. The interim report summarises the Inquiry’s findings to date and recommendations for government and clubs. The Panel is currently undertaking a final round of targeted engagement and is seeking final submissions and feedback from stakeholders until 10 April 2026 before it delivers its final report to Government by mid-2026.

Visit the [Inquiry page](#) on the ACT Government website for more information and to read the interim report.’



Reminder: Liquor licence fee reductions are available now for eligible businesses

If you own or operate a licensed venue with an occupancy of up to 350 people and regularly showcase artists, musicians, and other cultural activities, you can apply for a reduction on your annual liquor licence fees.

- Eligible venues with occupancies up to 150 people can apply for an 80% reduction on their annual liquor licence fees.
- Eligible venues with occupancies between 151 and 350 people can apply for a 50% reduction on their annual liquor licence fees.

Visit the Access Canberra webpage [to apply to reduce your annual licence fee if you offer live performances and events](#).

If you are wondering how to contact artists to start programming more events, the ACT Artists Database can help you [find the right performers to showcase at your business](#).

Have your say on reducing single use plastics in the ACT

Canberra businesses are invited to shape the next stage of reducing single-use plastics in the ACT. Your insights will shape the way we reduce plastic waste while also supporting businesses with the transition to more sustainable alternatives. Items under consideration include coffee cups and lids, cold cups, cigarette filters, plastic confetti, and produce bags.

View the full list of [proposed items and share your feedback](#) before **Friday 1 May 2026**.



Acknowledgement of Country



We acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the ACT and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.

You have received this email from the ACT Gambling and Racing Commission and the Commissioner for Fair Trading, as our records indicate you hold a current gaming machine and/or liquor licence. If you do not hold a current licence, or believe you have received this email in error, please email us at: GamblingandRacing@act.gov.au to be **unsubscribed** from future communications

