[GB] Ban on Advertising Spirits to Be Lifted

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Since the inception of commercial television in the UK, there has been a voluntary prohibition on the advertising of branded alcoholic spirits - e.g. whisky, vodka and gin. Distillers have promoted certain drinks, such as Drambuie and Cointreau, only as 'after-dinner' drinks. Spirits have been advertised during this period in the cinema, but the rules relating to television advertising and alcohol are more strict, being covered by the EC Television Without Frontiers Directive and the Independent Television Commission's Code of Advertising (Section 39). According to these rules, no television advertisement promoting alcohol may associate drinking with sexual prowess or sexiness, physical prowess, increased sexual acceptability, or lone drinking.

Actors featured in alcohol ads must appear to be over 25.

Now, one distiller, United Distillers, is planning an ad campaign for Bell's whisky. The script has been submitted to the Broadcast Advertising Clearance Centre, which clears adverts for television and radio before transmission, thus indicating that the self-imposed ban has ended.

Section 4.9.2 of the BACC's Note of Guidance will apply to such proposals and Section 4.9.2(e), which refers to the voluntary spirits advertisements ban, will cease to apply from June 1. BACC state that, in addition, the requirement that liqueurs should only be advertised in an 'after-dinner' context will also cease to apply after June 1 - providing that 'suitable restraints on over-consumption are observed'.

Broadcast Advertsing Clearance Centre, Notes of Guidance.

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