



Foundation for Alcohol  
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10 December 2015

Stuart Irvine  
Chief Executive Officer  
Lion Pty Ltd  
Locked Bag 58  
SILVERWATER NSW 1811

Dear Mr Irvine

**COMPLAINT ABOUT *BEER THE BEAUTIFUL TRUTH* CAMPAIGN**

I write to you to express my concern with Lion's *Beer the beautiful truth* campaign and ask that you cease and desist with this campaign. This advertising campaign misleads consumers to perceive that beer has health benefits that it does not possess. This is demonstrated through the use of language in the campaign and on products such as "Low calorie", "low carb", "99.9% sugar free" or "preservative free." This language promotes the idea that beer is somehow healthy, when in reality beer contains little nutritional value and affects the body's ability to metabolise kilojoules from foods consumed or stored fat.

This language and marketing strategy is similar to that used by the tobacco industry which purposefully marketed menthol cigarettes as a supposed healthier alternative to non-menthol cigarettes. Research demonstrates that the tobacco industry took this approach specifically to build this perception among consumers that menthol cigarettes were healthier. The intent behind marketing was to attract consumers who may not otherwise progress to regular smoking and appeal to health-concerned smokers who might otherwise quit.<sup>1</sup>

The *Beer the beautiful truth*, does something similar, it pretends to provide information to consumers to enable them to make informed choices but in reality does little of the sort through the distorted lens that the information is presented. The campaign in actuality is about convincing non-regular drinkers to become regular beer drinkers and to appeal to health conscious consumer who might otherwise stop drinking beer and alcohol due to health reasons to continue drinking.

I request that Lion cease this campaign immediately. If a satisfactory response to this request is not received within seven days a consumer complaint will be submitted to the Australian Consumer Commission for false or misleading advertising.

If you require any further information about why I believe that this campaign is not in consumer's best interest, how it presents distorted view of evidence and does not in reality enable consumers to make informed choices by not giving them all the facts, then please don't hesitate to contact me. I would be happy to meet with you to discuss these issues in more detail.

Yours sincerely

MICHAEL THORN  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

<sup>1</sup> Anderson, S. (2011). Marketing of menthol cigarettes and consumer perceptions: a review of tobacco industry documents. Tobacco Control Volume 20, issue Supplementary 2