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**RRAI Press Release**
**For immediate release: Wednesday, 15 June 2011**

**RRAI launches consumer hotline for complaints on display and sale of alcohol**

Responsible Retailing of Alcohol in Ireland (RRAI), today formally launched a new 24-hour free-phone hotline, for receiving complaints from the public about breaches of its alcohol-related code of practice. Over 2,400 shops in Ireland are signed up to the RRAI voluntary code, which promotes the responsible display and sale of alcoholic drinks in participating convenience stores, supermarkets, and service stations. Consumers can now submit formal complaints by calling 1800 84 80 80 free of charge.

Commenting on the launch of the hotline, the RRAI’s independent chairperson, Padraic White said: “The RRAI’s new free-phone hotline provides an important channel of communication between the RRAI and the public.  It represents a major expansion of our complaint mechanisms available to consumers.  The RRAI encourages consumers to learn about our code of practice, which should be on display in all participating outlets, and to report any perceived breaches.”

The contents of the RRAI Code can be viewed in participating shops nationwide or on the RRAI’s website, [www.rrai.ie](file:///C%3A%5CDocuments%20and%20Settings%5Cmaryd%5CLocal%20Settings%5CTemporary%20Internet%20Files%5CContent.IE5%5CGJX190RD%5Cwww.rrai.ie).  Where a consumer wishes to make a complaint about a breach of the code in-store, the code states that they should notify the store-manager in the first instance.  If the matter is not resolved to the consumer’s satisfaction, they can then lodge a formal complaint by phone via the hotline, by email to chairman@rrai.ie, or by post to the Chairman, RRAI, 84-86 Lower Baggot Street, Dublin 2.

The key elements of the code are that the display of alcohol must be confined to one part of the shop (although alcohol can also be displayed behind the counter for security reasons), alcohol should be displayed separately from food products and non-alcoholic drinks, and customers should not have to pass by alcohol in order to access food products or non-alcoholic drinks. In addition, the in-store advertising of alcohol is confined to the area where alcohol is displayed, whilst the display of alcohol or alcohol-related advertising in the shop-windows is not permitted.

The code was agreed in late-2008 between the Irish retailing industry, the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, and the Department of Health and Children. The RRAI was then established in 2009 to oversee both the operation of the code and an annual independent audit of compliance. The body has an independent Chairperson, Mr Padraic White, who is a former managing director of the Industrial Development Authority.

Following the annual audit, the RRAI Chairperson presents an independent report on compliance each year to the Minister for Justice and Equality. The report for 2010 can be seen on the RRAI’s website, and shows an overall compliance rate of 84.30% in last year’s annual audit.

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