

### **ASCI takes cognisance of gaming ad violations during IPL broadcast, notifies brands to take corrective action**

*~ 14 ads found to be in potential violation of the ASCI code in first week of cricket extravaganza; gaming industry bodies urged to ensure companies abide by ASCI guidelines ~*

**Mumbai, April 12, 2022:** The Indian Premier League (IPL), the latest edition of which kicked off on March 26, has witnessed high-decibel advertising from the online real-money gaming industry. Unfortunately, many of the commercials do not pass scrutiny when it comes to the guidelines prescribed by the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI).

In the first week of the IPL alone, March 26 to April 3, ASCI screened 35 ads from the category and identified 14 as being in potential violation of its code. ASCI is keeping a tab on TV as well as OTT ads.

In addition, in March alone, 285 social media ads of online real-money gaming companies were identified as being in violation of the ASCI code.

ASCI noted that in some instances dubious claims such as 'India's biggest 1st prize' were being made, and in many cases the disclaimer informing consumers of the risks was flashed very quickly rather than at a normal speaking pace. In some cases, the advertisements had celebrities acting while the disclaimer was being spoken, distracting consumers from important information about risks. Some advertisements had disclaimers that were smaller than what has been prescribed.

These attempts at glossing over the disclaimers required to be carried in the prescribed manner, informing about the risks of financial loss or game addiction, can severely compromise consumer interest. ASCI has urged gaming industry bodies to take up this issue with their members.

ASCI guidelines on real-money gaming came into effect on December 15, 2020. The guidelines require advertisements to not be aimed at minors, not present gaming as a source of livelihood or link it to success. In addition, the guidelines require all advertisements to carry a prominent disclaimer regarding the risk of financial loss and the addictive nature of such games. These guidelines were backed by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, which issued an advisory asking that advertisements adhere to the guidelines.

**Manisha Kapoor, CEO & SG, ASCI, said:** "ASCI is concerned to note that, despite clear guidelines, some online real-money gaming firms are attempting a shortcut. For an industry that is under significant regulatory scrutiny, such acts by some companies paint the entire industry as irresponsible. IPL, being a massive platform, requires responsible behaviour from all parties – including gaming firms, broadcasters, celebrities and ad creators. We hope that all parties play their roles to ensure that consumers are not exposed to misleading advertising."

**To know more about ASCI's real-money gaming advertising, please reach out to [advisory@ascionline.in](mailto:advisory@ascionline.in)**

# PRESS RELEASE



## About The Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI)

The Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI), established in 1985, is committed to the cause of self-regulation in advertising ensuring the protection of the interest of consumers. ASCI seeks to ensure that advertisements conform to its Code for Self-Regulation, which requires advertisements to be legal, decent, honest and truthful and not hazardous or harmful while observing fairness in competition. ASCI looks into complaints across ALL MEDIA such as Print, TV, Radio, hoardings, SMS, Emailers, Internet / website, product packaging, brochures, promotional material and point of sale material etc. In January 2017, the Supreme Court of India in its judgment affirmed and recognized the self-regulatory mechanism as an effective pre-emptive step to statutory provisions in the sphere of advertising content regulation for TV and Radio in India. ASCI's role has been acclaimed by various Government bodies including The Department of Consumer Affairs (DoCA), Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), Ministry of AYUSH as well as the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB). MIB issued an advisory for a scroller providing ASCI's WhatsApp for Business number 77100 12345, to be carried by all TV broadcasters for consumers to register their grievance against objectionable advertisements. In 2021, ASCI signed an agreement with FSSAI to track and report potentially misleading advertisements from the food & beverage sector. On the international front, in 2021, ASCI Secretary – General, Ms. Manisha Kapoor was elected as one of the four Vice-President's on the Executive Committee of the International Council on Ad Self-Regulation (ICAS). Among several awards bestowed by the European Advertising Standards Alliance (EASA), ASCI bagged a Gold Global Best Practice Award for the Mobile App "ASCIonline" (2016), a special recognition for its "Guidelines for Celebrities in Advertising" at the first-ever 'Global Awards for Effective Advertising Self-Regulation' hosted by the ICAS (2019). In 2021, ASCI also won two ICAS awards, one for the ASCI scroll telecast across television in the 'Best Awareness Raising Initiative' and for its extensive digital suo-motu monitoring through NAMS initiative, in the 'Special Category'. It also got a special mention in the 'Best Sectoral Initiative' category for its efforts and regulatory recognition of its Gaming Guidelines.

### For further information, please contact:

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