**PRESS RELEASE**

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**BELFAST NIGHTCLUB BREACHES DRINKS CODE**

The Independent Complaints Panel that oversees the Northern Ireland Responsible Promotion and Retail of Alcohol Code in Northern Ireland has upheld a complaint against T-Street Warehouse nightclub.

A complaint received by the Independent Complaints Panel raised concerns that the ‘3 Way’ promotion operated by T Street nightclub breached Section 11(g) of the code.

*11(g) No alcohol promotion in Northern Ireland will: ’suggest that alcohol consumption enhances sexual attractiveness or include promotional material that is linked to sexual imagery implying sexual success or prowess’.*

Having considered the available information the Independent Complaints Panel has upheld the complaint and found that the promotion breached Section 11(g) of the code.

**Debbie Donnelly, Vice Chair of the Independent Complaints Panel overseeing the Code, said:**

“Following a detailed process, the Independent Complaints Panel has upheld the complaint against T Street Warehouse nightclub. Whilst we are not against licensed premises offering good value promotions to their customers, it is the responsibility of every licensee to ensure they do so within the terms of the Code.”

“We would like to note however that T Street Warehouse has not been subject to any previous complaints, ceased the promotion immediately and have been extremely cooperative throughout the review process”.

The Joint Industry Code for the Responsible Promotion and Retail of Alcohol in Northern Ireland, which aims to address the current attitude and culture in Northern Ireland in terms of alcohol misuse and abuse, applies to all suppliers and retailers of alcohol in Northern Ireland. It has been developed with the support of the Minister for Social Development, Nelson McCausland as well as the representative bodies of the drinks industries in Northern Ireland. It is hoped that compliance with the Code will eventually become a condition of the granting or renewal of both liquor and entertainment licenses across Northern Ireland.

Full details of the Responsible Retailing Code can be found at [www.responsibleretailingcodeni.org](http://www.responsibleretailingcodeni.org)

**ENDS**

For further information, please contact Arlene O’Connor at MCE Public Relations on 028 90 267099/ 07736 049 754 or [Arlene@mcepublicrelations.com](mailto:Arlene@mcepublicrelations.com)

**NOTES TO EDITOR:**

**ABOUT THE CODE**

* The Joint Industry Code for the Responsible Promotion & Retail of Alcohol in Northern Ireland (2012) was launched on 23rd May 2012.
* Following its launch it was rolled out for a three month adjustment period to allow the industry to adapt to the new measures.
* The code came into full effect on 1st September 2012.
* A copy of the full code can be found at [www.responsibleretailingcodeni.org](http://www.responsibleretailingcodeni.org)

**HOW THE CODE WORKS**

* If an individual thinks that an alcoholic drink promotional activity or sales practice might breach the Code, they can complain to an Independent Complaints Panel. All they have to do is send a letter enclosing a flyer or describing the promotion or sales practice in question, with as much information as possible.
* The individual lodging a complaint will be notified (within 7 working days of receipt) if the complaint is one which can be dealt with under the Code.
* If it is, it will be investigated by the Independent Complaints Panel which meets regularly and is independent of the alcohol industry. If it is not, it will be explained why.
* The Panel will inform the company that a complaint has been made and ask for their response.
* The complaint and the company’s response are then adjudicated on by the Panel. The individual will be informed when the Panel is meeting to consider the complaint.
* If the Panel does not uphold the complaint it will be explained why not. The decision is final.
* If the Panel does uphold the complaint, the decision is provisional and the company is given the opportunity to make further representations. This is because finding against a company may have serious business and reputational repercussions. The Panel will then meet again to consider any further representations before a final decision is made. If the company does not challenge the provisional decision, then the decision becomes final.
* The individual who initially lodged the complaint and the company are then informed of the Panel’s final decision.
* Further information on how to make a complaint and the timescales involved can be found on the website [www.responsibleretailingcodeni.org](http://www.responsibleretailingcodeni.org)