

30,000 liquor outlets audited in Responsible Trading Programme

The South African Breweries (SAB), in partnership with other alcohol manufacturers, has implemented the Responsible Trading Programme (RTP) - an initiative designed to address the issue of harmful alcohol consumption and help mitigate Covid-19 transmission. More than 30,000 liquor outlets are being audited as part of the programme.



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SAB says that as the alcohol industry recovers from the fourth blanket ban on alcohol, it aims to empower its value chain and communities, and focus its efforts on ensuring that retailers and outlets are equipped to trade responsibly and with compliance.

Kgosi Mogotsi, the regional corporate affairs director at SAB says, “It’s time that South African alcohol retailers lead by example. The Responsible Trading Programme is the beginning of a new era for alcohol consumption countrywide. As SAB, we recognise the important role we play in ‘saving lives and livelihoods’, by recognising and rewarding responsible outlets for serving as pillars within their communities.”



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Incentives and rewards

The Responsible Trading Programme – which is modelled on international best practices and principles surrounding the serving of liquor – recognises alcohol traders and retailers for their efforts to encourage responsible drinking, particularly as South Africa is currently experiencing the ‘third wave’ of Covid-19 infections. Retailers will be assessed according to their level of compliance, which falls into three levels of certification, i.e. silver, gold and platinum.

Kgosi explains: “The programme is one of incentives and rewards. When taverns comply with the legal requirements of serving alcohol, they will be rewarded. When they do not comply, we will do everything we can to educate them on how to comply. We are conscious of the fact that while the RTP has been rolled out due to the pressures we’ve faced as a result of Covid-19, it is a necessary step towards a better, more accountable industry in the long run.”

Approximately 32,000 outlets across the country will undergo an audit. Piloting the programme in taverns, these outlets will be audited to check for compliance against liquor licence and Covid-19 regulations for silver certification. Outlets that are certified silver will be visited and evaluated by 'mystery shoppers', who will test for compliance in refusing to sell to underage persons or to visibly intoxicated patrons. Silver certification audits have been initiated and will continue as soon as the alcohol ban is lifted.

Outlets that show compliance in all the different certification levels, will be certified accordingly along with access to rewards from the participating manufacturers for the betterment of their outlets. Outlets that do not pass the audits will be granted access to content that will inform tavern owners on what they are required to comply with by law, giving them the opportunity to close the gaps before the next audit.



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Outlets that are certified silver, stand an opportunity to be certified gold, which will increase the value of their rewards. Gold audits is taking place over July and August. Taverns that pass the mystery shopper audit and certified gold, will then be considered for platinum certification which looks at the safety of the outlet, community involvement of the outlet owner and harmful consumption reduction messaging in the outlets.

“As an organisation, our commitment to responsible behaviour and trading is unwavering. In these times of pandemic pressure and economic disparity, we know that a message of responsibility is more important than ever,” says Kgosi.

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