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Wednesday, 24 January, 2001, 01:32 GMT

### Energy drink claims rejected



The Advertising Standards Authority has upheld complaints about the claims made for the "energy" drink Red Bull.

The makers of the drink will in future have to seek prior approval for advertisements of the product.

Some 265 million cans of the drink were sold in the UK last year.

Promoted using the slogan "Red Bull gives you wings", it is popular among some club goers, who drink it in a cocktail with alcoholic drinks.

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*The consumer makes up their own mind if it works*

**Harry Drnec, Red Bull UK**

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The ASA ruling follows complaints about advertisements for the drink dating back to 1997.

The newspaper, magazine and poster advertisements all contained claims that the drink could help improve concentration, reaction time and endurance.

#### **Lack of evidence**

But the ASA said the Austrian-based manufacturers company could not provide satisfactory evidence to

back up its claims for the period when the complaints were made.

Red Bull produced more than 20 studies to substantiate its claims.

But the ASA said much of the research suggested that it was necessary to drink four cans of the drink to enhance performance - not just the one implied in the advertisements.

The ASA said it had also noted that a single can of Red Bull contained only about as much of the stimulant caffeine as a cup of coffee.

Red Bull will now have to run future claims past the Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) copy advice team for approval before placing future adverts.

Red Bull said its drink derived its energy-giving powers from a mixture of caffeine, taurine (an amino acid) and a special sugar, glucuronolactone.

It said it had carried out recent research, not admissible to the ASA, which backed up its claims.

### **'Pleased'**

Red Bull UK managing director Harry Drnec said: "Although Red Bull do not agree with this decision, we are pleased that the situation is finally concluded and that the ASA have now acknowledged the existence of the recent research studies, which could not be taken into consideration in the investigation process.

"Red Bull's claims and product ingredients have been subject to ongoing scientific research into both functional benefits and safety, the published results of which confirm the product statements.

"We do not force volumes of scientific evidence down the consumers throat.

"Our principle is to make the product available in the right places at the right time with the right message.

"The consumer then tries it and makes up their own mind if it works."

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