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For immediate release

## Media Release

# Out-of-Home industry opposes the introduction of unwarranted government regulation.



The Health and Community Services Committee's Report in response to the Queensland Government's Inquiry into Sexually Explicit Outdoor Advertising delivers a heavy-handed approach for the Out-of-Home (OOH) industry.

"While we respect the Committee for its thorough examination of the OOH industry in this Inquiry and welcome assistance in dealing with the less than 1% non-compliance rate experienced by the Advertising Standards Board (ASB) following its decisions, we believe the call for government regulation is very heavy handed," said Charmaine Moldrich, CEO, Outdoor Media Association (OMA).

The committee acknowledges in the report that "the self-regulatory system is generally effective" and acknowledges that "limited reform is needed to ensure that the content of outdoor advertising in Queensland more accurately reflects community views on sex, sexuality and nudity" but goes on to introduce a government regulation that will make Queensland the first State in Australia to introduce government legislation for Outdoor advertising.

If taken up by the Government, this recommendation by the Committee would severely impact, not only the industry in Queensland, but it would also have implications for national and international advertising campaigns.

The outdoor advertising industry currently operates under 12 self-regulatory Codes developed in line with prevailing community standards, including standards on sexuality, nudity, violence, and health and safety. In 2013 there was only **one** upheld complaint from the 12,000 plus advertisements that were displayed in Queensland and over 30,000 advertisements displayed nationally.

In its report the committee acknowledges that it "...identified very few examples of Outdoor Advertising in Queensland that were sexually explicit in the period 2012 to 2013"

"We feel that the report is at odds with its recommends, and adds a burden of upwards of \$3.5 million per year in Queensland if government regulation is introduced. An extremely high cost for those small businesses who not only operate in the industry, but also those who advertise," said Ms Moldrich.

It is especially questionable when "OMA members are 100% compliant with decisions made by the ASB and remove any advertisements that attract an upheld"

"The Committee's decision to recommend government regulation is also at odds with the Newman government's mandate to reduce red tape and seems extraordinary and costly for government and the industry. The OMA already works closely with the Australian Association of National Advertisers (AANA) and the ASB to ensure that advertising content is in line with prevailing community standards and to identify and implement improvements.

“The OMA looks forward to working with the Queensland Government to deliver the best standards and outcomes for the community, advertisers and the local economy. However, introducing government regulation won’t change the way we currently manage content but will only add a cost of millions to our current process,” concluded Ms Moldrich.

The Committee’s Report will now go to the Queensland Government and its actions will determine the next steps.

**ENDS**

**FURTHER INFORMATION:**

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**Editor’s Notes:**

The OMA is the peak industry body which represents most of Australia's Outdoor Media Display companies and production facilities, and some Media Display asset owners.

The OMA operates nationally and prior to July 2005 traded as the Outdoor Advertising Association of Australia (OAAA). It was first incorporated in 1939.

The OMA's charter is to serve its members by promoting the OOH industry and developing constructive relations with its primary stakeholders. Its core functions are Marketing and Research (including audience measurement), Government Relations and Regulatory Affairs, Media Relations, and Member Services.

The OMA is governed by a Board of Directors which is elected by the membership.