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Media Release

OMA welcomes first day of inquiry hearings



The peak body for the outdoor advertising industry, the Outdoor Media Association (OMA), has welcomed the Queensland Government's Inquiry into sexually explicit outdoor advertising as public hearings commence today.

The Inquiry will review the effectiveness of the outdoor advertising industry's current self-regulatory system which has been balancing community and economic responsibilities – a balance the OMA believes it is getting right and will present as evidence at the hearings.

CEO of the OMA, Charmaine Moldrich, says the outdoor advertising industry is community-minded, particularly in regard to children, and is compliant with all State and Local Government regulations.

“The OMA shares the view that children are an important stakeholder when reviewing the appropriateness of outdoor advertising,” Ms Moldrich said.

“We have worked closely with the Australian Association of National Advertisers (AANA) and the Advertising Standards Bureau (ASB) to improve the self-regulatory system over the last two years – in 2012, 99.99 per cent of the outdoor advertisements that ran in Queensland were deemed compliant¹.

“We take breaches very seriously and any advertisements found to be in breach of the industry's 12 self-regulatory codes are removed as quickly as practicable and are not re-posted.

“This proven track record demonstrates the outdoor advertising industry can be relied upon to comply with self-regulatory systems, and it is this current record that we'd like this Inquiry to focus on.”

The Queensland Government Inquiry will report on whether reform, including legislative reform, is necessary.

There have previously been calls for the \$115 million outdoor advertising industry in Queensland to move to a legislative framework – a move that the OMA says would have a far reaching impact, for minimal results.

“The impact of a legislative framework, like a classification system, would be minimal as the industry is already achieving a near-perfect record, especially given the significant resourcing requirements a system like this requires,” Ms Moldrich said.

“The outdoor advertising industry ran more than 12,000 different advertisements in Queensland in 2012. Under a classification framework, each of these advertisements would need to be reviewed, and approved.

“Introducing this kind of red tape would prove costly for the government, taxpayers, and the many small businesses that use and work within the outdoor advertising industry.

“We'd like to see the current self-regulatory system maintained so the industry can quickly respond to changes in circumstance, or community attitudes.

¹ The Outdoor Media Association (OMA)

“Furthermore, legislative regulation will put Queensland out of line with other states in Australia, and goes against international best practice.”

Following a similar Federal Parliamentary Committee Review in 2011, the OMA contributed \$1.6 million to the ASB to assist the Board in promoting their complaints process, introduced a new Content Review Policy to regulate questionable advertising, and conducts content training with the ASB and AANA.

The outdoor advertising industry saves Local Governments \$10.43 million per year in capital expenditure, including upgrades and maintenance on outdoor advertising sites including bus shelters, bench seats, and bicycle stations.

The OMA is the peak national industry body that represents most of Australia’s Out-of-Home (OOH) media display companies and production facilities, as well as some media display asset owners.

ENDS

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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.

Members of the OMA adhere to a Code of Ethics and abide by the regulatory frameworks in which they operate.