



# Creative City – Draft Cultural Policy and Action Plan 2014-2024

10 June 2014

## Outdoor Media Association Submission

### 01 ABOUT THE OUTDOOR MEDIA ASSOCIATION

The Outdoor Media Association (OMA) is the peak national industry body representing most of Australia's Out of Home (OOH) media display companies and production facilities, as well as some media display asset owners.

Outdoor media display companies advertise third-party products including:

- on buses, trams, taxis, pedestrian bridges, billboards and free-standing advertisement panels;
- on street furniture (e.g. bus/tram shelters, public toilets, bicycle stations, phone booths, kiosks); and
- in bus stations, railway stations, shopping centres, universities and airport precincts.

The OMA does not represent businesses that install 'on-premise' advertisements (vehicles, billboards and other structures that advertise the business, services and products on the advertiser's property). On-premise advertising is more prolific than third-party advertising. For example, in NSW, along Parramatta Road between Broadway and Leichhardt, there are about 2140 on-premise signs compared to 14 third-party advertisements.

Advertising and marketing plays a fundamental economic role in society and the advertising industry alone raises annual revenue of about \$10.9 billion. In 2012 the outdoor advertising industry raised revenue of \$503 million, making up approximately 5% of advertising spend in Australia.<sup>1</sup> OMA members also contributed over \$13 million in advertising space during 2013 to charitable organisations, much of which was in NSW.<sup>2</sup>

Part of the role of the OMA is to develop constructive relationships with Federal,

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<sup>1</sup> Commercial Economic Advisory Service of Australia (CEASA), for the year ending 31 December 2012.

<sup>2</sup> Outdoor Media Association, Annual Report 2013, pg 25.

State and Local Governments with the aim of ensuring that new laws and regulations for OOH advertising are fair and equitable.

## **02 SUPPORT FOR THE DRAFT CULTURAL POLICY AND ACTION PLAN**

The OMA supports the City of Sydney's development of the Draft Cultural Policy and Action Plan 2014-2024 with its aim of fostering creative life in all parts of the City, and is pleased to be able to provide comments about where we see OOH advertising adding value.

OOH advertising is an important part of a vibrant community and a 2011 AC Nielsen study found that it is a primary way for people to find out about local events and activities. Additionally the Coke sign in Kings Cross is a perfect example of how advertising can become iconic and important part of the city scape.

The OMA congratulates the City of Sydney for identifying the need to reduce regulation and embed the Draft Policy within all facets of Council business, including within planning regulation.

## **03 SIGNAGE AND ADVERTISING STRUCTURES DCP 2005**

OOH advertising within City of Sydney is currently regulated by the Signage and Advertising Structures DCP 2005 and the Sydney DCP 2012. While the both are generally supportive of advertising signage, 'these provisions also are intended to encourage well designed and well positioned signs which contribute to the vitality and legibility of the City of Sydney and which respect the amenity of residents and pedestrians and the safety of motorists.'<sup>3</sup> It does not extend to third party advertising signage and does not acknowledge the community benefit derived from it. In fact the Signage and Advertising Structures DCP 2005 goes as far to say that, 'Commercial Advertising Signs do not generally assist people to use the city'<sup>4</sup>.

The OMA believes that this is an outdated concept of OOH advertising and sees the Draft Policy as an opportunity to focus on the positive, creative and vibrant aspects of the medium and its contribution to life in Sydney. Specifically:

- Advertising can assist in the growth of local communities, supporting and advertising local businesses and offering affordable advertising solutions.
- Outdoor advertising subsidises public amenities such as bus shelters, public toilets, kiosks, phone booths, park benches and pedestrian bridges to an estimated value of over \$275 million. At last count, there are close to 7,000 pieces of public infrastructure provided by Outdoor companies across Australia which support the public good. These companies also provide additional infrastructure which does not include advertising such as bins and park benches.

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<sup>3</sup> City of Sydney, Signage and Advertising Structures Development and Control Plan 2005, pg 2/Sydney DCP 2012 3.16-1.

<sup>4</sup> City of Sydney, Signage and Advertising Structures Development and Control Plan 2005, pg 18.

- Advertising space is donated to a tune of over \$13 million (2013 expenditure) to a variety of charities, education, sporting organisations, the arts and cultural activities thereby providing a community service.
- Local community events and activities are also advertised using outdoor media, garnering community support and local knowledge of their environment. A 2011 AC Nielsen study found that Entertainment & Leisure advertising is one of the most preferred categories of outdoor advertising by consumers.

OMA members directly support a range of cultural events and institutions in Sydney, including The Sydney Opera House, The Art Gallery of NSW, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney Biennale and the Sydney Festival.

The development of digital OOH advertising will also increase the ability of the medium to promote arts and culture in Sydney. The innovation and agility that digital technology provides will enhance the experience for both the audience and advertisers, providing new and exciting ways to engage. The OMA is aware that City of Sydney is currently reassessing their signage regulations due to the expected changes to include digital technology in the SEPP 64 and the Transport Corridor Guidelines later in 2014.

The OMA submits that in light of the positive impact OOH advertising has both engaging people in and promoting cultural events, the red tape reduction aspect of the Draft Policy should also be extended to advertising signage. Currently within Sydney the development of any new signage or even to move or change any signage is an extensive process. The OMA is supportive of sensible regulation that provides good outcomes for both the community and the industry. However, by reducing the current high regulatory burden placed on third party advertising, it will allow the industry to provide better cultural outcomes for the community.

#### **04 CONCLUSION**

Once again the OMA would like to congratulate the City of Sydney on its Draft Policy and reiterate the industry's support for making creativity and culture an intrinsic part of the way Council does business.