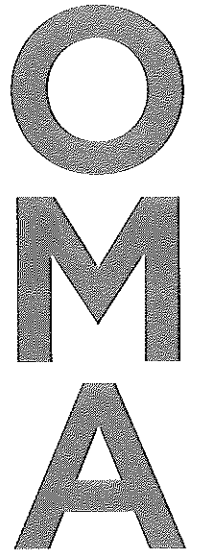


17 December 2015

Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning  
Plan Melbourne Refresh Project Team  
GPO Box 2392  
Melbourne Vic 3001

planmelbourne@delwp.vic.gov.au



Dear Plan Melbourne Refresh Project Team

## Plan Melbourne Refresh

### Introduction

The Outdoor Media Association (OMA) is pleased to participate in the Plan Melbourne Refresh Project. The OMA has a long history of engagement with the Victorian Government in relation to planning matters and most recently met with Mr Peter Keogh, Chief of Staff for Richard Wynne MP, Minister for Planning, on 24 August 2015.

The purpose of this letter is to provide an introduction to the OMA and also to provide some general comments about the Plan Melbourne Refresh Discussion Paper.

### Background

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

OMA members display advertisements on billboards, free-standing advertising panels, buses, trams, taxis, pedestrian bridges and street furniture (including bus/tram shelters, public toilets, phone booths and street kiosks). OMA members also display advertisements in bus stations and train stations, at shopping centres, universities and airport precincts.

Advertising and marketing plays a fundamental role in the Australian economy, contributing \$7.2 billion a year in revenue to the economy and employing 183,270 people throughout its industries.<sup>1</sup> In 2014, the OOH industry experienced unprecedented growth, posting a 10% overall increase on net revenue, taking the industry's net revenue to \$602.1 million, from \$547.6 million in 2013. In 2014 OOH contributed to just over 5% of the advertising spend in Australia<sup>2</sup>.

Outdoor advertising is used by many businesses in Australia, with a range of clients from small organisations through to established multi-national companies. The benefits of advertising also have a knock-on effect for employment extending beyond consumers

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<sup>1</sup> Valuing Australia's Creative Industries, Creative Industries Innovation Centre December 2013

<sup>2</sup> Commercial Economic Advisory Service of Australia (CEASA)

and brand owners, to manufacturers, retailers, suppliers, printers, production houses and many others.

In Australia, the OOH industry contributes over 17,000 items of infrastructure to the community, including pedestrian, bus shelters, kiosks, phones, park benches and bicycles. The replacement value of these items to date is approximately \$275 million.

Government and superannuation funds profit from OOH through rents paid on leasing inventory stock from roads, railways and buildings.

The OOH industry plays an important role in promoting the arts, sports and charitable organisations. In 2014, OMA members donated over \$22 million worth of advertising space to community campaigns. The Outdoor industry is very conscious of its responsibility to the community and that's why it gives back. In 2014, the industry's investment into building infrastructure, as well as donating advertising space to not-for-profit organisations, amounted to approximately \$1 in \$5 of revenue.

Part of the role of the OMA is to develop constructive relationships with state and local governments and to contribute to the process of developing policies for outdoor advertising that are fair and equitable to governments, the community and the industry. It is for this reason that the OMA is making this submission to the Plan Melbourne Refresh Project.

### **Support for Plan Melbourne Refresh Discussion Paper**

The OMA recognises that the purpose of the Plan Melbourne Refresh Discussion Paper is to promote conversations with stakeholders, experts and the community about the challenges facing Melbourne within the strategic planning context, including:

- A changing economy;
- The demands of providing infrastructure across a greater area to more people;
- A growing and aging population;
- A changing climate; and
- Meeting demands for diverse housing.

Populations and cities have been a focus for the OMA this year. By 2050, UNICEF predicts that 96% of our population will be urbanised and for Australia's capital cities this means a doubling of current populations in the next 35 years. Now is a time of vast growth and change for cities and the OMA believes OOH can play an important role in providing utility to the cities of the future. Increasingly, Federal and State Governments are acknowledging the benefits of partnering with industry to tackle big issues facing cities such as housing, congestion, sustainable development, pollution, public transport, infrastructure, safety and security.

The OMA believes that technology will help cities tackle these challenges, and that smart Out-of-Home will play its part in making cities more sustainable and livable.

Outdoor advertisers are increasingly transitioning from being producers of static advertising posters to also providing the following types of inventory and utility:

- Digital inventory that utilises interactive technology;
- Street furniture that creates social urban spaces for the community;
- Bike schemes which improve public mobility and fitness goals, and reduce congestion;
- Interactive mobile technology that helps people experience and navigate cities; and
- Structures that have self-maintenance technology built-in to ensure they are working, up-to-date, clean and safe.

The OMA believes there is an opportunity for Governments to enter into a dialogue with the OOH industry to allow the industry to positively contribute to the operation of cities, while also providing an opportunity to make cities and towns vibrant.

The OMA notes that neither the Plan Melbourne 2014 document nor the Plan Melbourne Refresh Discussion Paper include any commentary on the role of the OOH industry, or signage generally, in Melbourne. Given the important role of the industry within the economy and society, the OMA advocates for Victorian State planning policy, and planning systems across Australia, to deliver the following:

- Provisions within legislation to allow for the evolution of advertising signs to meet the digital age that we are in;
- The recognition of outdoor advertising signage as a legitimate land use;
- Provision of a set of fair and reasonable development policies that are appropriate for signage land use;
- Provision for the responsible display of outdoor advertising signage within mixed-use zones, commercial and industrial zones and along transport corridors;
- Guidance in strategic and statutory plans on the installation and operation of digital signage; and
- The removal of the distinction between 'on-premise' and 'third-party' signage in planning policy and local laws.

Out-of-Home advertising in Victoria is regulated by section 52.05 (Advertising Signs) of the Victorian Planning Provisions (VPPs). The OMA has previously made representations to the Victorian Government advocating for a review of section 52.05 of the VPPs to embrace the ongoing changes to the industry, including the development of digital technology.

## Conclusion

Cities are changing at an unprecedented rate and the OMA believes they will need to become more user-friendly and interactive to meet the needs of citizens. The OMA submits that the OOH industry can make an important contribution to the utility of cities in the future and that it would be useful if this was acknowledged in planning policy and legislation.

The OMA requests that the discussions around the Plan Melbourne Refresh Project recognise the important contribution that the OOH industry can play in Melbourne's future and that the updated plan provide strategic planning policy to recognise and facilitate digital OOH.

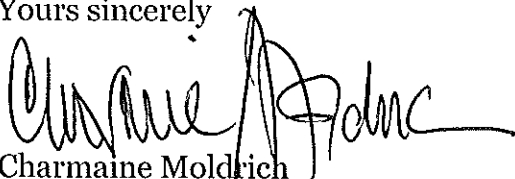
The Out-of-Home industry can make cities smarter and help cities tackle some of the challenges of the future by:

- Improving public transport;
- Giving tourists and residents the confidence and tools to navigate the city;
- Creating and enhancing public spaces;
- Providing revenue stream for governments; and
- Providing communication channels for governments and not-for-profits.

Thank you for the time that you have taken to review this submission. Should you wish to discuss any of the issues raised in more detail, please contact either myself or the OMA's Senior Policy Adviser, Tess Phillips on 02 9357 9900 or [tess.phillips@oma.org.au](mailto:tess.phillips@oma.org.au).

We would also be pleased to arrange a time to meet with you to so that we can provide more detailed information about the contribution of the industry to the economy and community, and to discuss the challenges and opportunities the industry faces in Victoria.

Yours sincerely



Charmaine Moldrich  
**Chief Executive Officer**