



29 August 2016

Mr Martin Mileham  
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PERTH WA 6839

Att: Strategic Planning

Email: [kathy.lees@cityofperth.wa.gov.au](mailto:kathy.lees@cityofperth.wa.gov.au)

Dear Mr Mileham

## **OMA Submission: City Planning Scheme No. 2 – Proposed Amendments to Signs Policy**

### **Introduction**

Thank you for inviting the Outdoor Media Association (OMA) to comment on the City Planning Scheme No.2 – Proposed Amendments to Signs Policy (Signs Policy). As the peak body for Out of Home (OOH) advertising in Australia, we are pleased that the City of Perth has asked the OMA to comment the Signs Policy.

The OMA has spoken with Kathy Lees, Senior Strategic Planner, about the role of the OMA and Kathy has made arrangements to meet with Charmaine Moldrich, CEO, and Tess Phillips, General Manager, Government Relations, of the OMA on Thursday 1 September 2016 to discuss the Signs Policy and other projects that we have recently completed. We understand that the Manager, Strategic Planning, the Manager, Development Approvals and the City Architect will also be attending the meeting.

The OMA has set out this letter in three parts. The first part provides background information about the OMA, the second part provides our comments on the proposed amendments to the Signs Policy and the third part details about the OMA's Model Advertising Device Code for Western Australia.

### **1. Background**

Advertising and marketing play a fundamental role in the Australian economy, and are significant drivers of economic growth, contributing some \$40 billion of value in 2014. This means that advertising is responsible for driving approximately 2.5% of Gross Domestic Product. For every person directly employed by advertising another three people are reliant upon advertising for their jobs. There are over 200,000 people in Australia employed due to advertising.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 2016, Deloitte Access Economics, *Advertising Pays - The economic employment and business value of advertising*

The OMA is the peak national industry body representing 90% of Australia's Out of Home (OOH) media display and media production companies, as well as some media display asset owners. Part of the role of the OMA is to develop constructive relationships with governments and stakeholders that lead to better policy decisions. The OMA advocates for regulation that is fair and equitable for governments, the community and the OOH industry.

The OMA's current media display members are:

- ADLED Advertising
- Adshel
- APN Outdoor
- Bailey Outdoor
- Bishopp Outdoor Advertising
- Executive Channel Network
- goa Billboards
- JCDecaux
- oOh!media
- Outdoor Systems
- Paradise Outdoor Advertising
- QMS Australia
- TAYCO Outdoor Advertising
- Tonic Health Media
- TorchMedia

OMA media display members advertise third party products on both digital and static signs across a variety of OOH formats and locations including, airports, bicycle stations, billboards, buses, bus stations, cafes, doctors' surgeries, free-standing advertisement panels, medical centres, office buildings and lifts, pedestrian bridges, railway stations, shopping centres, trams, universities and street furniture (bus/tram shelters, public toilets, telephone booths and kiosks).

The OOH industry plays an important role in supporting the arts, sports and charitable organisations and is widely used by government bodies to advertise community messages such as road safety alerts and health awareness campaigns. In 2015, the industry donated advertising space valued at more than \$34 million to more than 160 charitable and community campaigns.

The OOH industry also provides over 17,600 items of infrastructure to the community across Australia, including pedestrian bridges, bus shelters, kiosks, phones, park benches and bicycles. Total replacement value for this infrastructure is estimated at around \$352 million in December 2014.<sup>2</sup>

## **2. Proposed Amendments to Signs Policy**

The OMA congratulates the City for amending the Signs Policy and is pleased to see the positive approach to signage being embraced by the City. In particular, the wording of Clause 1.0 is supported by the OMA as this seeks to allow for the development of signage that

*"...is well designed and positioned, innovative, responds to its setting and makes a positive contribution to the public realm and the visual appeal of the city without adversely affecting amenity and safety."*

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<sup>2</sup> 2016 Deloitte Access Economics, *Out-of-Home Adds Value: Out-of-Home Advertising in the Australian economy*.



## 2.1 Third Party Advertising

While the OMA is supportive of the City's recognition that third party advertising is a legitimate land use, we are concerned about the level of restrictions placed on the positioning/orientation of third party signs.

The OMA acknowledges that under clause 6.6 c) i) of the Signs Policy, third party advertising will only be considered in the following locations: the Entertainment Area; the Retail Core Area; the Town Centre Area and the Terraces Area. We are concerned that signs can only be placed in a public space within these areas and orientated only for viewing within that space. We note that the City's reason for this is that third party signs adjacent or viewed from roads may cause a distraction to road users.

The OMA has undertaken research about driver behaviour around advertising signs. This research looked at the behaviour of drivers around roadside digital, roadside static and on premise signage. In summary, the research found that driver attention is not unreasonably diverted away from the road if roadside advertising is present. Key findings of the research were as follows:

1. People spend the same amount of time (average 78%) with their eyes on the road whether in the presence of digital, static or on premise signs. This is the same percentage reported by other studies even when there are no signs around.
2. Less than 1% of all looks (fixations) towards advertising signage was over 750 milliseconds, the safe time required to perceive and react to an unexpected event.
3. Drivers maintain the same safe average vehicle headway, (distance between their car and car in front) of 1.85 seconds in the presence of all three signage types. This is within the preferred safe headway of most drivers.
4. There may be some increase in lane deviation in the presence of different signage types but not enough to cause a single lane departure.

The industry is committed to road safety and willing to collaborate with councils and road authorities regarding road safety around advertising signs.

The Sign Policy also fails to address the importance of OOH companies providing public infrastructure like bus shelters, waste bins, bicycle stations and kiosks within cities. OOH companies supply, construct and maintain this infrastructure at no cost to local governments, with the understanding that third party advertising will be displayed on this infrastructure. The Signs Policy therefore, needs to make provision for this type of advertising, which is predominantly located on roadways.

### 2.1 Advertising Content

Clause 6.6 (iv) of the amended Signs Policy states the following:

*“Third party advertising content shall be related to products, services or events available within local government boundaries.”*

The OMA does not support this clause as advertising content is regulated through compliance with the standards and codes administered by the Australian Standards Bureau (ASB). Clause 2.5 of the Western Australian Roadside Guide clarifies this, as follows:

*“The Advertising Standards Bureau administers a national system of advertising self-regulation through the Advertising Standards Board and the Advertising Claims Board. This system is recognised by various authorities throughout Australia based on an understanding that advertisers have a common interest in promoting community-accepted standards of advertising.”*

The Bureau administers a general code of ethics for advertising developed by the Australian Association of National Advertisers, as well as specific codes for marketing to children; food and beverages; motor vehicles; alcohol and drugs and weight management.

The OMA notes that a Signage Management Plan may be required as part of a development application for a sign with third party advertising content. Clause 4.10 states that the Signage Management Plan should identify the operational and content management of a third party advertising sign, which is an impractical measure given the immediacy of OOH. This requirement is also not consistent with the role of the ASB in regulating advertising signage content.

### 2.3 Illumination of Signs

The OMA acknowledges that a Lighting Impact Assessment may be required to be submitted as part of a development application for illuminated signs.

The OMA does not support clause 6.7 (f) which states that the local government may limit the intensity of illumination of a sign. The mechanics of this have not been well thought through – if a sign is operating at approved levels, it should not be the responsibility of council to dim it. This instead should be done in collaboration with OMA members.

The OMA offers for consideration the following best practice guidance for luminance levels which have been developed by the OMA in conjunction with an industry luminance expert.

#### **OMA LUMINANCE LEVELS FOR DIGITAL SIGNS**

<b>Lighting Condition</b>	<b>Zone 1</b>	<b>Zone 2</b>	<b>Zone 3</b>
Full Sun on Face of Signage	Maximum Output	Maximum Output	Maximum Output
Day Time Luminance	6000-7000 cd/m <sup>2</sup>	6000-7000 cd/m <sup>2</sup>	6000-7000 cd/m <sup>2</sup>
Day Time Luminance Morning and Evening and Twilight and Inclement Weather	1000 cd/m <sup>2</sup>	700 cd/m <sup>2</sup>	600 cd/m <sup>2</sup>
Night Time	500 cd/m <sup>2</sup>	350 cd/m <sup>2</sup>	300 cd/m <sup>2</sup>

**Zone 1** covers areas with generally very high off-street ambient lighting, e.g. display centres, central city locations.

**Zone 2** covers areas with generally high to medium off-street ambient lighting.

**Zone 3** covers areas with generally low levels of off-street ambient lighting.



## 2.4 Variable Display

The OMA supports the policy outlined in clause 6.8 (c) which allows for variable content on large third party signs located within the Entertainment Area, the Retail Core and the Terraces Area. The OMA also advocates for variable content display on other third party advertising structures, including bus shelters adjacent to roadways.

OMA members display variable content in digital format. The OMA supports instantaneous transition from one message to the next avoiding transition effects and advocates for a 6-8 second display time for advertisements, although notes that most Australian authorities have a 10 to 25 second dwell time requirement.

The OMA does not support clause 6.8 (c) which states that the variable sign must not incorporate the following:

*“... any technology or mechanism that facilitates real time communication with ...pedestrians. This includes any interaction, transmission or receipt of data, telecommunication, internet or radio signals; or...”*

The OMA understands that this type of interaction between road users would not be supported by the City, but does not consider that this restriction should be extended to pedestrians. The utility potential of digital signage will be explained in the OMA's presentation on 1 September 2016.

## 2.5 Renewable Energy Sources

The OMA supports clause 6.9 to encourage the use of renewable energy to power illuminated signs, including those with animated or variable content.

## **3.0 Model Advertising Device Code**

The OMA has recently developed a 'Model Advertising Device Code' for Western Australia. This is for councils to use when preparing advertising signage policy. We would like to discuss the Model Code with the City at our meeting on 1 September 2016. A draft copy of the Model Code was sent to the City earlier this year.

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 Tess Phillips, General Manager, Government Relations on (02) 9357 9900 or [tess.phillips@oma.org.au](mailto:tess.phillips@oma.org.au).

Yours sincerely



Charmaine Moldrich  
**Chief Executive Officer**

