

# **TOWARDS A NATIONAL CODE OF PRACTICE FOR OUTDOOR ADVERTISING**

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ABSTRACT

# TOWARDS A NATIONAL CODE OF PRACTICE FOR OUTDOOR ADVERTISING

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The research was conducted under the direction of the Outdoor Advertising Study Steering Committee (OASSC), chaired by Professor Ray Smith of the University of Pretoria.

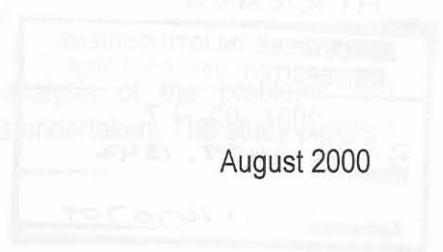
The study is split into two definable parts. Part One deals exclusively with research. This research is based on a comprehensive literature review as well as personal interviews conducted from interested and affected parties, and independent sub-studies.

The following issues and subjects were researched in Part One:

In Section One, Problem Analysis, a comprehensive analysis of the problem and the complexities surrounding the control of outdoor advertising was undertaken. The study objectives and sub-problems and methodology were established.

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## ABSTRACT

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This dissertation formulates a National Code of Practice for Outdoor Advertising in South Africa, based on an analysis and understanding of all related issues and influences, including sign types, the physical environment, the human environment, safety aspects, environmental impact, and legal and administrative requirements.

A National Code of Practice for Outdoor Advertising is an important tool required to address the problems and frustrations experienced by legislators and advertisers, in managing an industry in the absence of uniform guidelines and regulations. The adoption of a new constitution in South Africa and resultant commercial sector pressure for relaxation in the control of outdoor advertising, has placed even more emphasis on the need for a National Code of Practice.

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The study is split into two definable parts. Part One deals exclusively with research. This research is based on a comprehensive literature review as well as personal interviews, input from interested and affected parties, and independent sub-studies.

The following issues and subjects were researched in **Part One**:

In **Section One, Problem Analysis**, a comprehensive analysis of the problems and complexities surrounding the control of outdoor advertising was undertaken. The study problem and sub-problems and methodology were established.

In **Section Two, Information Review**, literature sourced locally and internationally was studied. Case studies were conducted as a means of analysing and evaluating problems and solutions experienced in neighbouring countries and abroad.

In **Section Three, Outdoor Advertising**, outdoor advertising was studied as a form of media and as an industry, and sign types were classified. The classification of outdoor advertisements was an important step towards establishing control measures, and involved a summary and collation of existing classification systems.

**Section Four, Physical Environment**, deals with the classification of the physical environment in terms of landscapes and roads, thereby facilitating the establishment of areas of control.

**Section Five, Human Environment**, addresses the viewpoints and perceptions of numerous interested and affected parties. These were elicited via correspondence, opinion polls, workshops and questionnaires. A specialist in the field undertook a sub-study on the role of perceptions and aesthetics.

**Section Six, Safety Aspects**, looks at the relationship between outdoor advertising and road safety. This includes a sub-study by a specialist in the field.

In **Section Seven, Impact Evaluation**, the potential ecological, social and economic impacts relating to outdoor advertising are discussed.

**Part Two** of this study can be considered a culmination and collation of the results of Part One, and sees the formulation of a National Code of Practice for Outdoor Advertising. This is achieved by developing a model for a National Code of Practice (Part Two, Section One), based on the concepts of classification, evaluation and control. In Section Two of Part Two, the model is embroidered upon, adding such detail as is required to establish a usable and practical National Code of Practice. This detail includes an evaluation of sign type versus landscapes and areas of control, the description of principles and guidelines, and a discussion regarding the administrative and legal implications of the National Code of Practice.

Classification, evaluation and control form the functional base of the National Code of Practice. South Africa's natural, rural and aesthetically sensitive urban areas have been protected by defining such as areas of maximum control. Outdoor advertising in these areas is restricted and only signs expressing a message essential to the travelling public are permissible. Areas of partial and minimum control are assigned to the commercialised sections of our urban environment. In these areas, most types of outdoor advertising are permitted. Control mechanisms include areas of control, classes of consent, principles and guidelines.

In conclusion, the National Code of Practice is a practical framework and guideline document that effectively standardises the assessment criteria and application of outdoor advertising control measures in South Africa. It enables decision-making authorities and advertisers alike to approach control and regulation with an equal understanding of the issues at hand. The task ahead will include the formulation of appropriate legislation to provide statutory force to the National Code of Practice.

## FOREWORD

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The problems and frustrations experienced by legislators and advertisers in managing an industry in the absence of uniform guidelines and regulations, as well as the adoption of a new constitution in South Africa and resultant commercial sector pressure for relaxation in the control of outdoor advertising, necessitated an investigation into the control of outdoor advertising along road networks in South Africa.

A meeting regarding advertising along road networks was held in April 1994 involving, amongst others, representatives of the University of Pretoria, the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, and the Department of Transport. It was decided that a research project be launched to investigate the control of advertising along road networks, as a matter of urgency. Insufficient time, manpower and specialist knowledge required the Departments to appoint a consultant to undertake the study.

In June 1994, the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism and the Department of Transport commissioned Professor Willem van Riet of the Department of Landscape Architecture, University of Pretoria to conduct a research project on outdoor advertising.

The goal of the study was primarily to **develop an understanding of the current situation regarding the control of outdoor advertising, to analyse it and make recommendations as to how to rectify problems arising from outdoor advertising and problems experienced by the industry.**

The study culminated in the establishment of a National Code of Practice for implementation by the various authorities as well as the outdoor advertising industry; and this will serve as basis for the revision of existing control measures and legislation.

The main study was preceded by a pilot study, undertaken in order to obtain an idea of the nature and extent of the issues relevant to advertising along road networks. The goal of the pilot study was to ensure that all aspects relevant to outdoor advertising along roads were identified prior to the main study.

The results of the study were well received by legislators, administrators and advertisers alike. It was circulated for comment by the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism and subsequently published in April 1998 by the Department under the title "South African Manual for Outdoor Advertising Control (SAMOAC)".

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The development of a National Code of Practice for Outdoor Advertising was reliant on the assistance and advice of numerous specialists and interested and affected parties. The input of the following persons and organisations is acknowledged:

- The Outdoor Advertising Study Steering Committee, under the chairmanship of Professor Ray Smith of the University of Pretoria.
- Client representatives, Mr PF Jordaan of the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism and Mr H Visser of the Department of Transport.
- Mr A Davidson of the Outdoor Advertising Association of South Africa.
- The various consultants and specialists who assisted or contributed to the study.
- Van Riet and Louw Landscape Architects.
- Mrs M Drodskie of the South African Chamber of Business.
- Professor Willem van Riet of the University of Pretoria, Department of Landscape Architecture.

All photographs in Part Two, Section 2.3, are courtesy of Mr PF Jordaan, unless otherwise mentioned. All other photographs, in the rest of the dissertation, are by the author.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

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AA of SA	Automobile Association of South Africa
CSIR	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
CSRA	Committee of State Roads Authorities
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
IEM	Integrated Environmental Management
NCOP	National Code of Practice
NRSC	National Road Safety Council
OA	Outdoor Advertising
OAASA	Outdoor Advertising Association of South Africa
OASSC	Outdoor Advertising Study Steering Committee
PPIR	Public Participation and Independent Review Procedure
RSA	Republic of South Africa
RSC	Regional Services Council
SACOB	South African Chamber of Business
SATOUR	South African Tourism Board

Bus shelter displays mean posters positioned as an integral part of a free-standing, curved structure at a bus stop

Canopy means a structure in the nature of a roof protruding from the facade of a building or cantilevered from that building or anchored otherwise than by columns or posts

Clear height means the vertical distance between the lowest edge of the sign and the level of the ground, footway or roadway immediately below such sign

Copy means the complete advertising message to be displayed on the advertising structure

Cut-outs / embellishments / add-ons means letters, packages, figures or mechanical devices attached to the face of an outdoor sign which extend beyond the rectangular area for greater attention value. Can provide a three dimensional effect.

## LIST OF DEFINITIONS

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The clear interpretation of the laws and bylaws supporting the National Code of Practice will require concise and unambiguous definitions of all words and expressions contained therein. The following words and expressions shall have the meanings respectively assigned to them hereunder:

**Advertisement** means any visible representation of a word, name, letter, figure or object or of an abbreviation of a word or name, or of any sign or symbol; or any light, which is not intended solely for illumination or, as a warning against any danger.

**Advertising hoarding** means a screen, fence, wall or other structure in a fixed position to be used, or intended to be used, for the purpose of posting, displaying or exhibiting any advertisement.

**Advertising structure** means any physical structure built to display advertising.

**Aerial sign** means any sign attached to a kite, balloon, or similar device whereby it is suspended in the air over any part of the area.

**Affix** includes to paint onto and "affixed" shall have a corresponding meaning.

**Animation** involves special treatment such as moving units, flashing lights, etc. and is used to gain added attention and awareness. Animation is more commonly used in rotating permanent or spectacular size sites.

**Backlight units (backlit)** are advertising structures which house illumination in a box to throw light through translucent advertising printed on plastic or heavy-duty paper for a higher visibility and extended night viewing.

**Building** means any structure whatsoever with or without walls, having a roof or canopy and a normal means of ingress and egress there under, covering an area in excess of 4,6 m<sup>2</sup> and having an internal height of more than 1,650 m.

**Bus shelter displays** mean posters positioned as an integral part of a freestanding covered structure at a bus stop.

**Canopy** means a structure in the nature of a roof projecting from the facade of a building and cantilevered from that building or anchored otherwise than by columns or posts.

**Clear height** means the vertical distance between the lowest edge of the sign and the level of the ground, footway or roadway immediately below such sign.

**Copy** means the complete advertising message to be displayed on the advertising structure.

**Cut-outs / embellishments / add-ons** means letters, packages, figures or mechanical devices attached to the face of an outdoor sign which extend beyond the rectangular area for greater attention value. Can provide a three dimensional effect.



**Depth of a sign** means the vertical distance between the uppermost and lowest edges of the sign.

**Directional sign** means a sign indicating the way to a place, undertaking or activity for the purpose of advertising or directing public attention as contemplated in the definition of "advertisement".

**Display of a sign** includes the erection of any structure if such structure is intended solely or primarily for the support of such a sign.

**Display period** means the exposure time during which the individual advertising message is on display.

**Flashing sign** means a sign in which a symbol, figure, message or illustration intermittently appears and/or disappears and/or is illuminated with light of varying colour or intensity.

**Flat sign** means any sign that is affixed to or painted directly on a main wall and which at no point projects more than 230 mm in front of the surface of such wall.

**Ground sign** means any sign detached from a building, other than an aerial sign.

**Illuminated** means the installation of electrical equipment on an outdoor structure for illumination of the message at night.

**Illuminated sign** means a sign, the continuous or intermittent functioning of which depends upon it being illuminated.

**Main wall of a building** means any external wall of such building, but shall not include a parapet wall, balustrade or railing of a veranda or a balcony.

**Natural landscape or area** means relatively unspoilt areas outside urban and rural areas and may include wilderness areas, national parks, game reserves, nature reserves, marine reserves, extensive agriculture, subsistence agriculture and scenic corridors.

**Poster and notices** means any placard announcing or attracting public attention to any meeting, event, function, activity or undertaking or to the candidature of any person nominated for election to parliament, the local government or similar body or to a referendum.

**Projected sign** means any sign projected by a cinematograph or other apparatus, but does not include a sign projected onto the audience's side of a drive-in cinema screen during a performance.

**Projecting sign** means a sign, whether stationary or actuated, attached to and protruding from the facade of a building, projecting more than 230 mm from the surface of the main wall of the building.

**Pylon sign** means any sign whether stationary or actuated, displayed on or forming an integral part of a pylon or mast or similar structure other than a building or advertising hoarding.

**Road traffic sign** means any road traffic sign as defined in Section 1 of the Road Traffic Ordinance, 1966 (Ordinance 21 of 1966).

**Rotating sign** means a sign, which rotates about any axis.

**Running light sign** means a sign or portion of a sign in the form of an illuminated strip, the illumination of which varies periodically in such a way as to convey the impression of a pattern of lights moving steadily along such strip.

**Rural landscape or area** means an area of transition between developed urban areas and relatively unspoilt natural areas. Typical rural land use forms include intensive agriculture, rural centres of economic activity and peri-urban smallholdings of a rural nature with relatively low population density.

**Sign** means any advertisement and any object, structure or device that is in itself an advertisement, in or in view of any street, or which is used to display an advertisement.

**Sky-sign** means any sign erected or placed on or above any roof, parapet wall or the eaves of a building, but does not include a sign painted on a roof of a building.

**Spectacular sign** is an industry term for a giant, modern, illuminated advertising billboard.

**Temporary sign** means a sign not permanently fixed and not intended to remain fixed in one position.

**Tri-vision** means a display embellishment, which, through use of a triangular louver construction, permits the display of three different copy messages in a pre-determined sequence.

**Urban landscape or area** means an area of human settlement with a population of more than 2500 people.

**Veranda** means a structure in the nature of a roof attached to or projecting from the facade of a building and supported along its free edge by columns or posts.

**Window signs** are signs, which are permanently painted on, or attached to, the window-glass of a building.

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