

SECTION ONE: PROBLEM ANALYSIS

PART ONE: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.2 THE PROBLEM AND ITS CONTEXT

1.3 THE IDENTIFICATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

SECTION ONE: PROBLEM ANALYSIS

This section serves to introduce the problem, nature of the problem and the method followed in undertaking the study. Section One comprises the following sub-sections:

1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.2 THE PROBLEM AND IT'S SETTING

1.3 THE IEM PROCEDURE

- Pressure from the private sector has arisen due to a relaxation of control over outdoor advertising and pressure is increasing for more advertising on roadsides. To date there has been little growth control inside the specific municipal areas - except for a quick and down by the roadside industries. Rural areas are also beginning to see the negative impact of advertising to the visual detriment of the environment.
- The new dispensation in South Africa has resulted in the spinning of an unclear and confused control function in terms of outdoor advertising, and little uniformity remains.
- Legislation on the topic is fragmented and outdated. The two pieces of primary national legislation, namely the Advertising on Roads and Ribbon Display Act (Act 107 of 1946) and the National Roads Act (Act 54 of 1971) are dated. The original function of these statutes was to protect the urban and rural environments from visual clutter and to ensure road safety for the motoring public. Outdoor advertising is still in large part controlled by bylaws instituted at the discretion of the local authority.
- The lack of control and ever increasing demand for outdoor advertising has led to insensitive and ill-considered approval of outdoor advertisements by town and rural local and rural authorities across the country.
- Dissatisfaction and concern expressed by environmental agencies, local authorities and certain community representatives regarding the poor control of outdoor advertising has noticeably appreciated over the last few years.
- Visual degradation resulting from outdoor advertisements has a perceived negative impact on the country's tourism potential. Outdoor advertising is, however, essential to the tourism industry as a marketing tool.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In a fast developing country such as South Africa, with its significant third-world component, outdoor advertising can perform an important social function in the efficient exchange of information. A large majority of the population does not have access to the media where most of this transfer of information occurs.

Outdoor advertising can, apart from the possible economic contribution, play an educational role and deliver a community service especially in the poorer areas of the country. It can also impact negatively on the environment, directly or indirectly. It is important that the perceived positive contributions outdoor advertising has for society be seen in context with the negative aesthetic and ecological impacts.

Performance standards aimed at guiding the industry are therefore important so that certain parties are not disadvantaged - especially in rural areas where healthy competition does not take place.

The problems experienced by advertisers, the public and controlling authorities alike were established in a pilot study preceding this study and are listed below:

- **Pressure from the private sector** has arisen due to a relaxation of controls over outdoor advertising and pressure is increasing for more advertising on roadsides. To date there has been little general control inside the specific municipal areas, except those guidelines laid down by the councils themselves. Rural areas are also beginning to feel the effects of the onslaught of advertising, to the visual detriment of the environment.
- **The new dispensation in South Africa** has resulted in the splintering of an already confused control function in terms of outdoor advertising, and little uniformity remains.
- **Legislation on the topic is fragmented and outdated.** The two pieces of provincial and national legislation, namely the Advertising on Roads and Ribbon Development Act (Act 21 of 1940) and the National Roads Act (Act 54 of 1971) are dated. The original function of these statutes was to protect the urban and rural environment from aesthetic degradation and to ensure road safety for the motoring public. Outdoor advertising in urban areas is controlled by bylaws instituted at the discretion of the local authority.
- The lack of control and ever increasing demand for outdoor advertising has led to **insensitive and ill-considered approval of outdoor advertisements** by town councils, local and rural authorities across the country.
- **Dissatisfaction and concern expressed by environmental agencies**, local authorities and certain community representatives regarding the poor control of outdoor advertising has noticeably appreciated over the last few years.
- Visual degradation resulting from outdoor advertisements has a perceived **negative impact on the country's tourism potential**. Outdoor advertising is, however, essential to the tourism industry as a marketing tool.

- **Ineffective guidelines** presently used by various town councils are not based on sound research and were compiled without specialist and public consultation. Smaller town councils generally do not possess guidelines and consequently exercise limited control over advertising. The possible compilation of standardised guidelines has met with support and interest from these authorities.
- **The outdoor advertising industry** is currently experiencing problems in operating without definite and uniform guidelines. Contractors have expressed frustration when dealing with differing guidelines and regulations from one authority to the next.

In summation, conflict has developed between the commercial sector on the one hand who advocate the loosening of control of, and therefore more advertising; and conservation organisations on the other hand where there is a growing concern that the weakening of legislation will be to the detriment of the country's scenic resources. The crisis is complicated by the fact that no uniform guidelines and control measures exist.

A balance must be maintained between the legitimate needs and the rights of the marketer in a free enterprise economic system, and the principles and beliefs of organisations and individuals concerned with the protection of the environment. It is proposed that a National Code of Practice supported by guidelines could provide a solution to the current impasse. A practical document should be made available which may prove useful to all controlling authorities, advertisers and other interested and affected parties.

1.2 THE PROBLEM AND IT'S SETTING

The goal of the study is defined in terms a study problem and sub-problems.

1.2.1 THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

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.

1.2.2 THE SUB-PROBLEMS

- 1.2.2.1 Sub-problem 1 is to incorporate certain salient aspects of the Integrated Environmental Management Procedure in the implementation of the study.
- 1.2.2.2 Sub-problem 2 is to undertake a comprehensive statutory, literature and case study review of outdoor advertising on a national and international scale.
- 1.2.2.3 Sub-problem 3 is to classify outdoor advertising based on appropriate criteria.
- 1.2.2.4 Sub-problem 4 is to classify urban and rural landscapes, based on appropriate criteria.
- 1.2.2.5 Sub-problem 5 is to classify roads and road signs based on appropriate criteria.
- 1.2.2.6 Sub-problem 6 is to elicit input and contributions from interested and affected parties and involve such parties in further phases of the study.
- 1.2.2.7 Sub-problem 7 is to investigate the relationship between outdoor advertising and road safety.
- 1.2.2.8 Sub-problem 8 is to evaluate the potential for ecological, social and economic impacts of outdoor advertising.
- 1.2.2.9 Sub-problem 9 is to develop a model for a National Code of Practice for Outdoor Advertising based on the findings of Part One of this dissertation.
- 1.2.2.10 Sub-problem 10 is to develop and specify the model for a National Code of Practice for Outdoor Advertising in order that such becomes functional and implementable.
- 1.2.2.11 Sub-problem 11 is to define the legal and administrative requirements of a National Code of Practice for Outdoor Advertising.

1.2.3 THE HYPOTHESES

- 1.2.3.1 Hypothesis 1 is that the appropriate aspects of the Integrated Environmental Management Procedure can be used to guide the public participation and independent review of the analyses, conclusions and proposals of the study.
- 1.2.3.2 Hypothesis 2 is that a comprehensive statutory, literature and case study review of outdoor advertising on a national and international scale can serve as basis and point of reference for the study.
- 1.2.3.3 Hypothesis 3 is that outdoor advertising sign types can be classified according to appropriate criteria and used in the development of a National Code of Practice for Outdoor Advertising.
- 1.2.3.4 Hypothesis 4 is that urban and rural landscapes can be classified according to appropriate criteria and used in the development of a National Code of Practice for Outdoor Advertising.
- 1.2.3.5 Hypothesis 5 is that roads and road signs can be classified according to appropriate criteria and used in the development of a National Code of Practice for Outdoor Advertising.
- 1.2.3.6 Hypothesis 6 is that all interested and affected parties can be identified, their input and contributions elicited and they can be and given the opportunity to become involved in further phases of the study.
- 1.2.3.7 Hypothesis 7 is that a relationship exists between outdoor advertising and road safety.
- 1.2.3.8 Hypothesis 8 is that the potential for ecological, social and economic impacts of outdoor advertising can be evaluated and used in the development of a National Code of Practice for Outdoor Advertising.
- 1.2.3.9 Hypothesis 9 is that a model for a National Code of Practice for Outdoor Advertising can be established based on the findings of Part One of this dissertation.
- 1.2.3.10 Hypothesis 10 is that the previously established model for a National Code of Practice for Outdoor Advertising can be developed and specified in order that such becomes functional and implementable.
- 1.2.3.11 Hypothesis 11 is that the legal and administrative requirements of a National Code of Practice for Outdoor Advertising can be defined.

1.2.4 THE DELIMITATIONS

1.2.4.1 The study is only concerned with outdoor advertising within South Africa.

1.2.4.2 The study is limited to outdoor advertising visible from:

- national roads and road reserves;
- provincial roads and road reserves;
- municipal roads and road reserves; and
- primary pedestrian and cycle routes.

1.2.5 THE DEFINITION OF TERMS

1.2.5.1 **Advertising** is defined as the act or process of notifying, warning, informing or generally making known. In other words, the term refers to information transfer in one form or another.

Outdoor advertising is traditionally associated with large billboards and posters advertising products and services. However, in its broadest interpretation, outdoor advertising will include all signs erected and displayed out of doors for the purpose of providing information, from small 'beware of the dog' signs on garden gates to the more familiar giant billboards advertising products.

Outdoor advertising is furthermore not restricted to the advertisement of products and services. Place names, notice of events and directional information can also be construed as outdoor advertising. The information can be communicated via painted, printed, projected or incised surfaces and can be internally or externally illuminated. Signs can be animated, including flashing signs, trivisions, electronics, and fibre-optics. Banners, flags and bunting are also regarded as advertising. Signs may be on buildings, fascias, windows, walls or roofs. Freestanding signs may be on frames, poles and pylons and on street furniture.

For purposes of the study a broad interpretation of outdoor advertising was established and adopted by the Outdoor Advertising Study Steering Committee (OASSC):

Outdoor advertising refers to any sign, model, placard, board, notice, hoarding, poster, flag, banner, bunting, light display, device, structure, or representation employed outdoors wholly or partially to:

- **advertise a facility, business, service or product that is available to the public (information on products and services), or**
- **make known an organisation's or individual's opinion, grievance or protest, or**
- **provide information on localities and activities.**

In other words, all signs, varying in size from large billboards to small placards and posters, erected or displayed for the purpose of providing information. It does not

apply to signs erected inside premises and not visible from the outside, with the exception of premises accessible to the general public such as large suburban shopping centres and sport and recreation facilities.

Road traffic signs and street or town name signs are not normally considered as outdoor advertising (although they function in the same way) and are excluded from this study with the following exceptions:

- Street names and place name signs incorporating commercial advertising of any sort are considered outdoor advertising and are included in the study.
- Brown tourism signs advertising tourist facilities and attractions.

The following signs shall be exempt from the scope of this study:

- Any sign displayed in an arcade;
- any sign displayed inside a building;
- all advertisements displayed on an article for sale, or on the container in or from which, an article is sold. This type of advertisement may take the form of price tickets and markers, or trade-names on branded goods or displayed on petrol pumps or vending machines
- any sign advertising a current event in a cinema, theatre or other place of public entertainment, displayed in a fixture on a building especially made for such display; and
- any national flag hoisted on a suitable flagpole.

1.2.5.2 A **National Code of Practice** is a framework that will standardise assessment criteria and application of control measures. The framework will enable decision-making authorities and advertisers alike to approach control and regulation with an equal understanding of the issues at hand.

1.2.5.3 The clear interpretation of the laws and bylaws supporting a National Code of Practice will require concise and unambiguous definitions of all words and expressions contained therein. Words and expressions particular to the outdoor advertising environment shall have the meanings assigned to them under List of Definitions, page (vi).

1.2.5.4 All other terms will have their Oxford English Dictionary meaning assigned to them.

1.2.6 THE ASSUMPTIONS

1.2.6.1 It is assumed that human likes and dislikes are largely based on social perceptions and that social perceptions vary.

1.2.6.2 It is assumed that humans perceive outdoor advertising and that outdoor advertising has different affects on humans.

1.2.6.3 It is assumed that humans perceive landscapes and that landscapes have different affects on humans.

1.2.7 THE STUDY METHODOLOGY

The method or approach to the study is graphically illustrated in Figure 1: Study Process Organogram. This organogram was developed by the author and approved by the OASSC to guide the course of the study and to ensure that all relevant aspects are adequately addressed. The study was divided into three phases namely; *Understanding the Problem*, *Evaluating the Problem*, and *Solving the Problem*. It is important to note that the direction, scope and scale of the study were largely determined by the OASSC.

Phase One: Understanding the Problem

The problem and sub-problems of this study were established by means of a pilot study and further defined by means of a statutory and literature review, as well as a case study investigation. The scope of the study was similarly defined, and ratified by the OASSC.

Phase Two: Evaluating the Problem

Three primary issues required analysis and evaluation, namely:

Outdoor advertising: The function, need and effectiveness of outdoor advertising was established in order to facilitate the classification of outdoor advertisements. This classification would later facilitate the assessment of potential impacts and the establishment of control measures.

Human environment: Safety aspects and perceptions of the public were evaluated.

Physical environment: Landscapes, including urban precincts, and roads or routes were described and classified.

The *economic, social and ecological impacts* resulting from the interaction of the above three issues i.e. outdoor advertising, human environment and the physical environment were evaluated.

Recommendations were made with respect to the above.

Phase Three: Solving the Problem

A National Code of Practice for Outdoor Advertising including control measures, performance requirements and specific guidelines was established based on the above analyses.

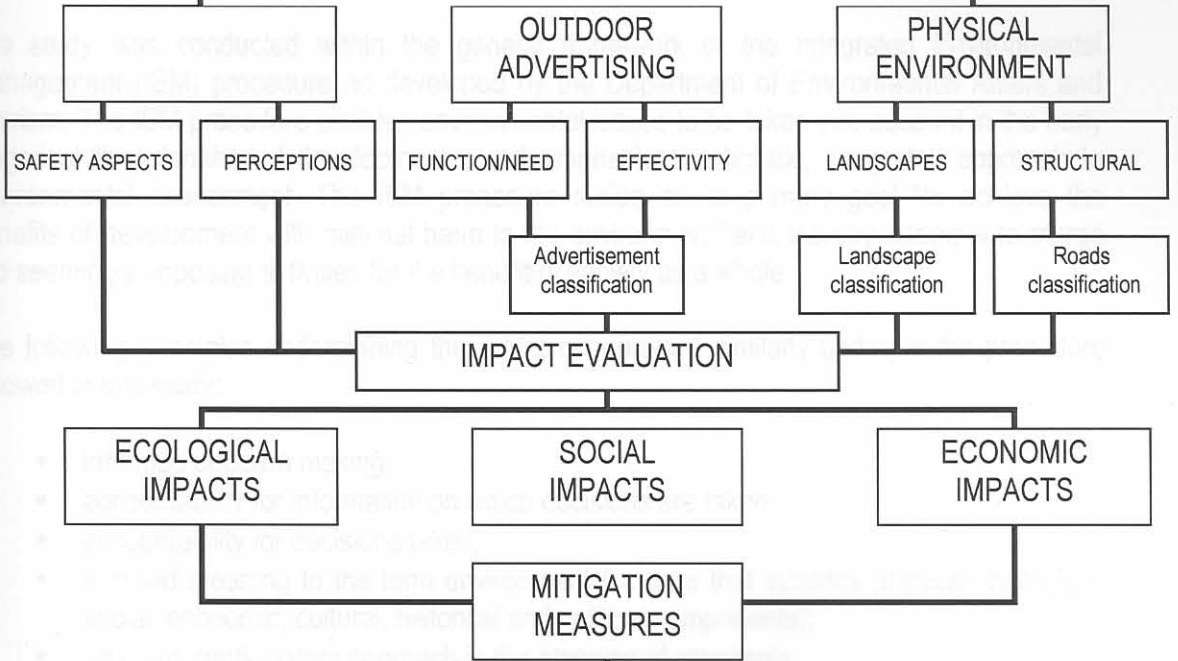
FIGURE 1: Study Process Organogram

1.3 THE IEM PROCEDURE

Sub-problem 1:

PHASE ONE: UNDERSTANDING THE PROBLEM

PHASE TWO: EVALUATING THE PROBLEM



PHASE THREE: SOLVING THE PROBLEM

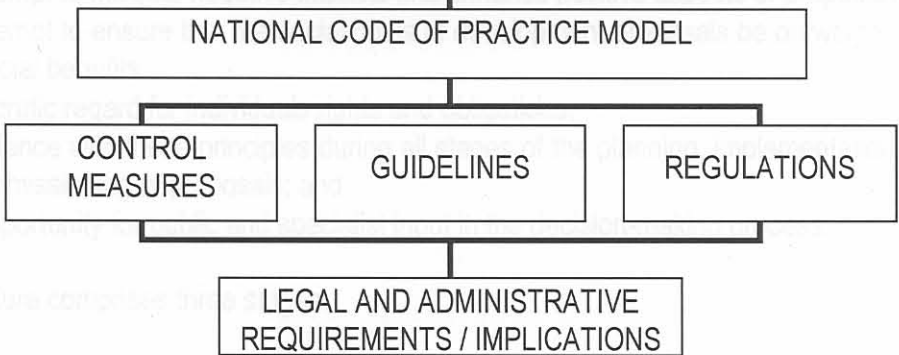


FIGURE 1: Study Process Organogram

1.3 THE IEM PROCEDURE

Sub-problem 1: To incorporate certain salient aspects of the Integrated Environmental Management Procedure in the implementation of the study.

Hypothesis 1: The appropriate aspects of the Integrated Environmental Management Procedure can be used to guide the public participation and independent review of the analyses, conclusions and proposals of the study.

The study was conducted within the general framework of the Integrated Environmental Management (IEM) procedure as developed by the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism. The IEM procedure enables environmental issues to be taken into account in the early stages of the planning of developments, and emphasises a holistic, integrated approach to environmental assessment. The IEM procedure states as its primary goal “to achieve the benefits of development with minimal harm to the environment” and thereby attempts to merge two seemingly opposing activities for the benefit of society as a whole.

The following principles underpinning the IEM procedure will similarly underpin the procedure followed in this study:

- informed decision making;
- accountability for information on which decisions are taken;
- accountability for decisions taken;
- a broad meaning to the term environment (i.e. one that includes physical, biological, social, economic, cultural, historical and political components);
- an open, participatory approach in the planning of proposals;
- consultation with interested and affected parties;
- due consideration of alternative options;
- an attempt to mitigate negative impacts and enhance positive aspects of proposals;
- an attempt to ensure that the social costs of development proposals be outweighed by the social benefits;
- democratic regard for individuals rights and obligations;
- compliance with these principles during all stages of the planning, implementation and decommissioning of proposals; and
- the opportunity for public and specialist input in the decision-making process.

The IEM procedure comprises three stages:

Stage 1: Planning and Assessment of Proposal

This stage involves the planning of the proposal and the assessment of the development in terms of the environmental impacts. Alternative options to the development as a whole and/or various aspects of the development are also sought during this stage.

Stage 2: Decision

This stage involves the determination and formal approval of the conditions under which the development may proceed in a method in the best interests of society as a whole.

Stage 3: Implementation

This stage involves the effective implementation of the approved environmental strategy and the monitoring and auditing thereof.

The involvement of interested and affected parties effectively occurs in stages 1 and 2 by means of public consultation at inception of the study, scoping of opinion and an independent review of proposals generated. Unfortunately, past experience has seen the procedure impede or paralyse the planning of numerous projects due to its cumbersome nature. In order to facilitate expediency, an adapted and simplified version of the IEM procedure was developed by the author and adopted by the OASSC with primary emphasis on public participation and an independent review process. The adapted procedure, hereafter referred to as the "Public Participation and Independent Review - PPIR Procedure", is illustrated in figure 2 overleaf.



FIGURE 2 PPIR Procedure

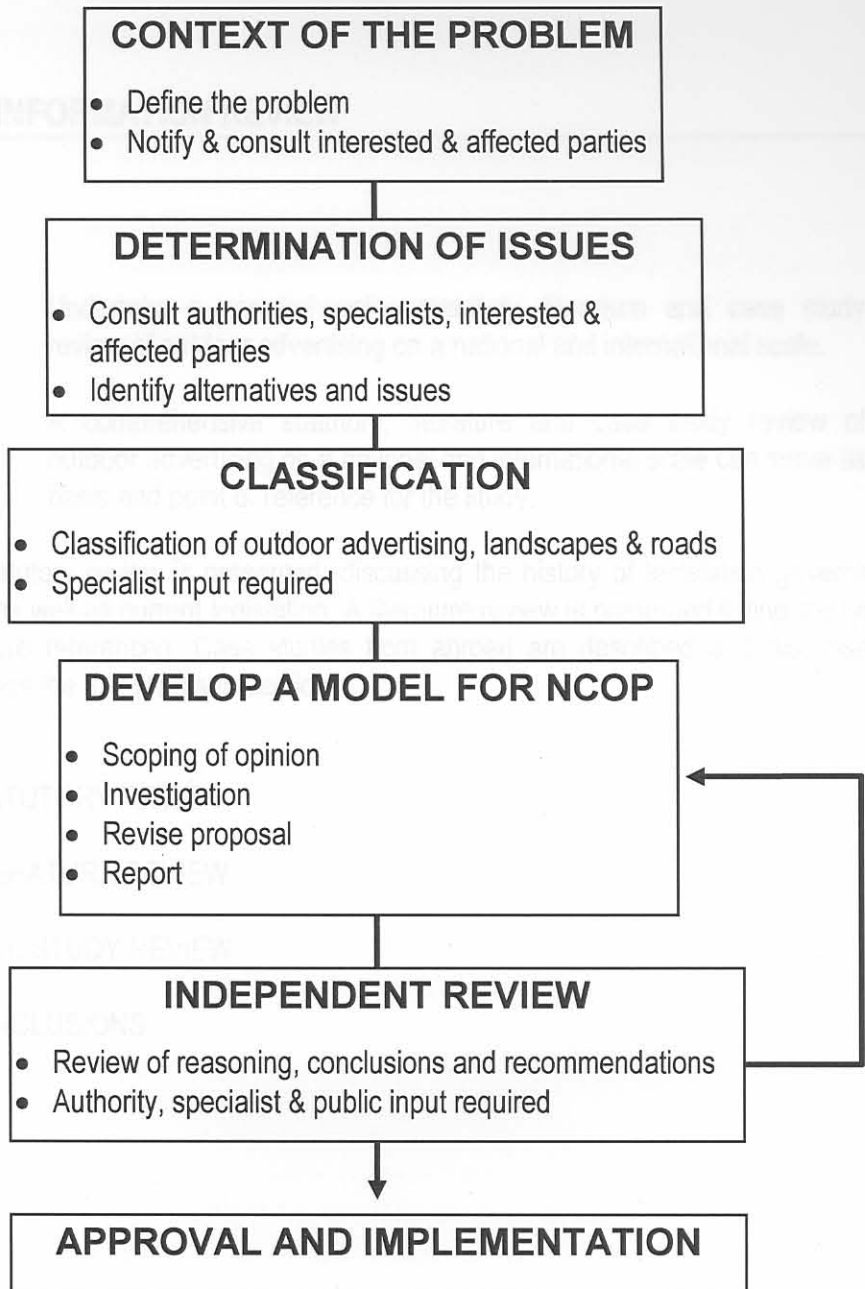


FIGURE 2: PPIR Procedure