

4.1 RECAPITULATION

SECTION FOUR: CONCLUSION

Section Four comprises the following sub-sections:

4.1 RECAPITULATION

4.2 CONCLUSIONS

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

4.1 RECAPITULATION

The problem was the establishment of 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.

Part One of this dissertation comprises seven sections, which address a host of related issues and subjects.

Section One describes and defines the problem and establishes a method of incorporating salient aspects of the Integrated Environmental Management Procedure in the implementation of the study. The processes of public participation and independent review were accommodated within this procedure and were critical to the success of the study.

In Section Two the hypothesis 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, was explored. A significant amount of information was gathered from case study reviews and a literature search.

Section Three explores the hypothesis 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. Outdoor advertising sign types were classified into four distinct groups, based largely on the size, location and type of sign. The concept of 'areas of control' was broadly established by linking each of the four classes of advertising to various landscape types.

Section Four explores the hypothesis that the 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. The South African landscape was classified into three distinct areas, namely natural, rural and urban areas. The latter was further classified according to land use. This classification system, based largely on the landscapes sensitivity to visual disturbance, further facilitated the development of a model for a National Code of Practice for Outdoor Advertising.

Section Four also investigated the hypothesis 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. A simplified classification of South African roads was established. Adding a further dimension to the concept advertising control. It was now possible to link certain types of signs to certain types of landscapes and certain classes of roads.

Section Five dealt with the identification of interested and affected parties, and the extraction of input and contributions from such. This was an invaluable exercise. Information gleaned from workshops, opinion polls and direct correspondence was used extensively in the establishment of the National Code of Practice. At the same time, a comprehensive contact list of interested and affected parties was developed. These individuals and organisations were kept abreast of all further developments and given every opportunity to review progress and comment. The final draft report was circulated to over 600 interested and affected parties.

Section Six addressed the relationship between outdoor advertising and road safety. Although the common perception is that outdoor advertising, specifically billboards, causes driver distraction and therefore road accidents, no conclusive evidence was found to support this. As this does not disprove the hypothesis, a precautionary approach was adopted and a number of common sense mitigation measures incorporated into the National Code of Practice.

Section Seven discusses the potential for ecological, social and economic impacts resulting from outdoor advertising. The potential for significant ecological impacts resulting from the erection and operation of advertising boards is negligible. However, as on-site conditions can vary considerably, a precautionary approach was proposed. This could ideally be implemented by adopting a system of zoning and control whereby sensitive areas (natural and rural areas) are protected by restricting the type of advertising structure and the performance requirements of such. Furthermore, it was proposed that an EIA become compulsory for larger billboards.

Research supported the assertion that outdoor advertising boards and structures have a high potential to degrade the aesthetic value of the environment. A number of procedures were recommended to effectively mitigate this potential impact, including zoning of sensitive areas, the establishment of design guidelines, and the incorporation of obligatory impact assessments focussing on visual impact.

The possible economic benefits of outdoor advertising could not be easily defined and may require further study, especially with regards to impact on the tourist industry. The concept of zoning South Africa into areas of control was offered as the most suitable method of mitigating the aesthetic impact of outdoor advertising and therefore reducing the economic impact resulting from a decline in tourism.

Part Two of this dissertation describes the development of the National Code of Practice based on the previous research.

Part Two, Section One, discusses a model for a National Code of Practice for Outdoor Advertising. The model is based on three steps;- classification, evaluation and control. The model effectively incorporates the functional requirements established in Part One of the dissertation.

Section Two takes the model a step further by developing and specifying the concepts of classification, evaluation and control. Types of landscapes, types of signs and areas of control are described in detail, and the relationship of one to the other described. This interrelationship between type of landscape, type of sign and area of control forms basis for the evaluation phase, the results of which are tabulated as advertising opportunities. The control measures, including types of consent, principles and guidelines are described and detailed. The guideline sheets established for each type of sign offers the greatest level of performance requirement detail.

Section Three details certain legal and administrative requirements of the National Code of Practice. Procedures for application and implementation, and the powers of decision-making authorities are described. The legal implications of the National Code of Practice are discussed by Professor A Rabie of the Faculty of Law, University of Stellenbosch, and Dr Jacques de Ville, Faculty of Law, University of the Western Cape. The latter sub-study

highlighted certain seemingly expedient approaches to effectively legislating the National Code of Practice for Outdoor Advertising. In essence, an attempt should be made to rely on existing legislation albeit with a number of revisions. Consideration should also be given to establishing a general environmental policy on outdoor advertising, in terms of the Environment Conservation Act, Act 73 of 1989.

4.2 CONCLUSIONS

A National Code of Practice is essential in order to achieve effective control of a burgeoning outdoor advertising industry;- an industry that can potentially destroy the aesthetic harmony of the environment and impact on traffic safety.

The NCOP, once implemented, will realise numerous direct benefits for the planning authorities, advertising contractors and marketers:

- The NCOP will facilitate the processing and approval or disapproval of outdoor advertising applications by the relevant planning authority.
- The NCOP can be used by prospective advertisers to plan their advertising strategy.
- The NCOP provides a reference document for dealing with outdoor advertising issues.
- The NCOP provides advice and assistance to marketers and advertisers for preparing specific applications.
- The formulation of guidelines will enable the planning authorities to evaluate applications on their merits and make an informed decision based on the guidelines.
- The NCOP will encourage standardisation of assessment criteria and a uniformity of application of these criteria.

The ultimate success of this study can be measured in the response from interested and affected parties. In this respect, the study has achieved its goal. Environmental agencies, both governmental and non-governmental, national and local authorities, and the Outdoor Advertising Association of South Africa have embraced the proposals made in this study. The NCOP was published in manual format in 1998 under the title "South African Manual for Outdoor Advertising Control" or SAMOAC. This document has been adopted and implemented by numerous authorities including the National Roads Agency, the City Council of Pretoria and many other local councils.

4.3.4 SCENIC BYWAYS PROGRAMME

By linking the primary and secondary roads and the scenic landmarks into a GIS database a scenic byways program can be developed. This is similar to the established programme in the USA and it is suggested that the road authorities in the RSA investigate the possibilities of establishing such a programme.

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

4.3.1 INADEQUATE DATA

This study undertook an exhaustive international search for related literature that would assist in the establishment of a National Code of Practice for Outdoor Advertising. Where information was lacking, additional sub-studies were commissioned. Although a huge amount of literature is available on the subject, it became apparent that research regarding certain subjects is inconclusive and may require additional study.

In light of the above, it is recommended that the following subjects be studied further:

- **The economic impact of outdoor advertising.** Such a study should include the potential positive impact in terms of revenue generation, and the potential negative impacts on tourism.
- **The relationship between road safety, specifically road accidents, and billboard type advertising.** Although this subject has been studied locally and abroad, no definitive results have been achieved.

4.3.2 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

The National Code of Practice makes provision for obligatory impact assessments for the larger billboards within certain areas of control. This issue could be addressed in a separate study that focuses primarily on the parameters and requirement of an environmental impact assessment for billboards.

4.3.3 IMPLEMENTATION ON MUNICIPAL SCALE USING A GIS

The implementation of the National Code of Practice for Outdoor Advertising on municipal scale requires that the municipal area be zoned according to the three areas of control (minimum, partial and maximum control). This exercise should ideally be undertaken on a Geographic Information Systems platform, and linked to the relevant authorities central land use database. The use of a GIS in this regard will realise a number of other advantages for the controlling authority and the advertising agencies and marketers alike. Such advantages include access to real time data, internet hosting, digital application procedures and online processing capabilities. It is recommended that a separate study be undertaken to address the subject of a GIS based implementation of the National Code of Practice for Outdoor Advertising on municipal scale.

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