

## 5.1 VIEWPOINTS OF INTERESTED AND AFFECTED PARTIES

### SECTION FIVE: HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

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**Sub-problem 6:** To elicit input and contributions from interested and affected parties and involve such parties in further phases of the study.

**Hypothesis 6:** 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.

Section five discusses the human environment in terms of the viewpoints and perceptions elicited from numerous interested and affected parties, under the following sub-sections:

- 5.1 VIEWPOINTS OF INTERESTED AND AFFECTED PARTIES
- 5.2 OPINION POLL
- 5.3 PRESS RELEASE
- 5.4 WORKSHOPS
- 5.5 QUESTIONNAIRE
- 5.6 PSYCHOLOGICAL PERCEPTIONS
- 5.7 CONCLUSIONS

### 5.1.3 THE HABITAT COUNCIL

An environmental problem that many South Africans have been blissfully unaware of is the visual pollution that is brought about by outdoor advertising. This is mainly due to the current legislation in force. Visual pollution is as important as its tangible forms of pollution such as that in water, air and on land. It has the potential to have a significant negative impact on the social environment as well as the tourism industry, if not effectively controlled.

## 5.1 VIEWPOINTS OF INTERESTED AND AFFECTED PARTIES

The following is a synopsis of the main viewpoints of certain interested and affected parties who were contacted directly with the view of eliciting their feelings concerning outdoor advertising.

### 5.1.1 DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND TOURISM

The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism believes that visual resources form an important component of human settlement and are important for sustainable tourism. It is important to thus manage visual resources carefully and that adequate control is exercised over outdoor advertising. The Department realises that outdoor advertising has an important role to play in economic development, but a balance must be maintained between economic development and the conservation of resources.

The Department believes it may be necessary for the controlled relaxation of laws, but this must only be done when it can be based on sound aesthetic principles. Self-regulation of outdoor advertising by the industry itself, is totally unacceptable to the Department. Certain responsibilities concerning control must lie with regional and central authorities. The Department also believes that sensitive areas need to be identified where a specific form of control needs to be exercised.

### 5.1.2 SOUTH AFRICAN CHAMBER OF BUSINESS

In principle SACOB favours a deregulatory approach. SACOB believes that local authorities are best placed to determine what is desirable within their own boundaries. They have the power and authority to make bylaws pertaining to activities that take place within their areas of jurisdiction. They have the means of policing such bylaws and ensuring compliance with them. Being democratically elected, they also have an obligation to ensure that the interests of local communities are catered for and they are subject to censure, particularly by ratepayers and residents' associations and by organised business and labour if they act in a manner deemed to be against such interests.

SACOB also believes, however, that it is essential that safety and environmental considerations be taken into account in matters relating to both advertising and trading. SACOB is therefore of the view that certain parameters have to be set within which autonomy is granted to controlling bodies.

### 5.1.3 THE HABITAT COUNCIL

An environmental problem that many South Africans have been blissfully unaware of, is the visual pollution that is brought about by outdoor advertising. This is mainly due to the current legislation in force. Visual pollution is as important as the tangible forms of pollution such as that in water, air and on land. It has the potential to have a significant negative impact on the social environment as well as the tourism industry, if not effectively controlled.

Nowadays the pressure from the advertising industry to change the policy governing outdoor advertising, is increasing by the day. The temptation for the authorities to submit to this pressure is extremely strong, as a substantial income can be derived from the letting of the area alongside public roads.

The Habitat Council is of the view that the current legislation has served the environment well, however certain amendments should be made. These include the implementation of a National Code of Practice to homogenise the control and regulation of outdoor advertising nation-wide and the inclusion of environmental bodies, such as the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism on a national level or the relevant Departments of Nature Conservation at a regional level, in the decision making process for advertisement permit granting.

The Habitat Council appreciates that outdoor advertising plays an important role in promoting economic development, however economic gains must not be given precedent over environmental protection.

#### 5.1.4 OUTDOOR ADVERTISING ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AFRICA

Outdoor advertising is acceptable worldwide. The National Roads Act, Act 54 of 1971, is impractical because it does not allow advertising along the total length of major roads, where it can be acceptable in certain areas where impact would be low, e.g. industrial and urban areas.

The OAASA would like to suggest the total deregulation of advertisements. The cumbersome process which takes years for applications to be approved is one of the reasons for the suggestion.

The OAASA firmly believes in the international acceptance of outdoor advertising as a legitimate business activity and a morally acceptable form of advertising. The OAASA is however fully aware of their industry's civic responsibilities and are sensitive to the impact the industry has on the environment and public safety. While the OAASA acknowledges the need for checks and balances to control excesses, they reject the call for absolute prohibitions that are the result of emotional hysteria rather than sound intellectual thought.

The outdoor advertising industry finds itself in a web of regulations and laws governing the industry. The OAASA strongly believes that the laws governing the outdoor advertising industry should be reviewed and that a deregulatory approach be followed regarding the industry. Local municipalities currently control the erection of signage in urban areas. To place additional restrictions is an unnecessary additional bureaucratic control. The OAASA accepts restrictions placed upon the industry in rural areas and believe such applications for signage must comply with regulations issued or in the event such applications go beyond the regulations be considered on appeal by the Transport Advisory Council.

This Association seeks, at all times, to ensure that a balance is maintained between

- the legitimate rights and needs of commerce and industry in a free enterprise economic system, on the one hand, and
- the principles and beliefs of organisations, bodies and individuals concerned with aesthetic values, and the environment and those concerned with aesthetic values and mental health of the population, on the other.

The OAASA believes that controls are necessary and these should be prescribed and administered by the local authority. The OAASA seeks to assist and co-operate with the local authority in establishing whatever by-laws and guidelines are necessary to control the outdoor advertising industry.

#### 5.1.5 CITY COUNCILS

The Johannesburg City Council's viewpoint was concluded from a telephone conversation with Mr. Hannes van Rooy. It therefore may not be representative of the Johannesburg City Council's viewpoint.

The Council is currently experiencing problems with the control of outdoor advertising as they have an estimated 40 000 illegal signs within the Johannesburg area. The Council has only a few inspectors to enforce regulation concerning outdoor advertising. Mr. van Rooy stated that they would require approximately 30 inspectors to keep the number of the illegal signs under control.

The Council believes in the self-regulation of the outdoor advertising industry and believes a code of practice would be an essential addition to the systems of control for outdoor advertising. The Council proposes a system where licences are issued to advertising companies, which allows them to practise outdoor advertising until any irregularity is detected, upon which the licence is revoked.

Correspondence was received from numerous other local authorities. Their views were canvassed at the workshops and via questionnaires.

#### 5.1.6 MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

The following comments were received from Mr Derek Yach, Group Executive of the Community Health Research Group of the above organisation, and are quoted in full:

"The Medical Research Council has carried out research which clearly shows how pervasive certain forms of advertising have become. In particular, there is grave concern about the blatant targeting of rapidly urbanising Black communities, children and young adults by the tobacco and alcohol industries.

The new legislation with regard to tobacco advertisements require warnings to be placed on billboards needs to be replaced by a total ban. Further, outdoor advertising should not be allowed to advertise events sponsored by the tobacco industry in any form. Worldwide evidence is now clear that this form of pervasive advertising and sponsorship encourages and targets children. For that reason, over twenty countries worldwide have totally banned all forms of outdoor advertising as part of a total ban on tobacco advertising and sponsorship.

With regard to alcohol, the issue is more complex. Alcohol is a product, unlike tobacco, which can be used safely. The reality however is that alcohol related death and disease costs the country R5 billion per year and alcohol is associated with a significant proportion of all motor vehicle injuries (including occupants, drivers and pedestrians) and also a significant proportion of inter-personal violence. While legislation already exists with regard to tobacco advertising, there

is currently no requirement with regard to having warnings placed on alcohol adverts nor is there any requirement with regard to the placement of alcohol advertisements in proximity to schools or places children frequent. Further, the imagery of many alcohol adverts helps to encourage children to start drinking at a young age.

For that reason, the Medical Research Council would strongly recommend that outdoor advertising of alcohol products should carry a clear warning with regard to the dangers of alcohol misuse and should only be allowed to be placed in restricted areas.”

### 5.1.7 GENERAL VIEWPOINTS

According to the proponents of outdoor advertising, the following points emphasise the immediate need for a National Code of Practice on advertising:

- Regarding the control of outdoor advertising, the perception is that the economic gains to be derived from advertising outweigh the negative impacts.
- Current legislation is fragmented.
- Legislation has been eroded with time and is perceived as outdated.
- Responsible road authorities are regarded as meddling bureaucracies.
- Sight has been lost of the intention behind the original legislation.

## 5.2 OPINION POLL

An opinion poll regarding the public's attitude towards and perception of outdoor advertising, was drawn up by Mr. C.P. Visser of the Department of Transport, in support of a Masters-thesis titled 'Attitude and Perception Study for Outdoor Advertising'. This poll revealed a few interesting discoveries, as illustrated by the responses below.

The following are some of the questions and answers:

Regarding advertisements in general:

- |   |     |      |       |
|---|-----|------|-------|
| • Advertisements furnish information:         |     | Yes- | 86,5% |
| • Advertisements help to reduce prices:       | No- | 55%  |       |
| • Advertisements are necessary in daily life: |     | Yes- | 81%   |

Regarding road safety in general:

- |   |  |      |     |
|---|--|------|-----|
| • We exceed the speed limit:                      |  | Yes- | 81% |
| • We adhere to the two second following distance: |  | No-  | 70% |
| • South Africans usually drive safely:            |  | No-  | 70% |

Regarding the effect of advertising on road safety:

- |  |  |      |       |
|--|--|------|-------|
| • Advertisements next to freeways cause accidents:                                 |  | Yes- | 36%   |
| • Advertisements distract motorists:   |  | Yes- | 58,6% |
| • Change lanes in order to read advertisements:                                    |  | No-  | 90%   |
| • Reduce speed to comfortably read advertisements:                                 |  | No-  | 85%   |
| • Changing signs negatively influence a driver's ability to concentrate:           |  | Yes- | 71%   |
| • Motorists should have a say in whether advertisements are allowed next to roads: |  | Yes- | 71%   |

Regarding advertisements and the environment:

- |  |  |      |       |
|--|--|------|-------|
| • Too many advertisements result in environmental pollution:   |  | Yes- | 56%   |
| • Advertisements conceal natural scenery:  |  | Yes- | 53%   |
| • Advertisers must be allowed to advertise as much as possible alongside roads:                            |  | No-  | 83%   |
| • There should be a national code of practice which limits advertising next to roads:                      |  | Yes- | 91,4% |
| • Advertisements should be placed in strategic locations to hide unsightly areas, for example train lines: |  | Yes- | 71%   |

Regarding advertisements next to roads in general:

- |   |  |      |       |
|---|--|------|-------|
| • Information on the advertisement board should be kept to a minimum: |  | Yes- | 81,1% |
| • Minimum letter sizes should be prescribed:                          |  | Yes- | 91%   |
| • Advertisement boards must adapt to the surrounding environment:     |  | Yes- | 87%   |
| • Advertisement boards in groups overwhelm:                           |  | Yes- | 80,3% |

A report prepared by Markinor (Pty) Ltd for Sayer and Associates in September 1993, titled "Acceptability of Billboards on the M1 North Freeway Between Braamfontein and Corlett Drive" gives further insight into the perceptions and attitudes of the residents of the area and users of the route. The findings are summarised as follows:

- Billboards are interesting / attractive, I really like them: 22%
- Billboards should be allowed if properly controlled: 39%
- Indifferent to billboards – I don't have strong feelings: 16%
- Billboards are a necessary part of business – I don't really mind them: 7%
- Billboards are unsightly and should be removed: 15%

The majority of residents and users interviewed were in favour of billboards with the proviso that they be properly controlled.

## 5.1 WORKSHOP STRUCTURE

### 5.3 PRESS RELEASE

A press release detailing the aim and scope of the study and inviting interested and affected parties to submit contributions in writing, was published in all major newspapers nation wide.

Although contributions were limited, a significant response was received from individuals and organisations requesting that they be included in further participatory exercises, and that they be kept abreast of developments and given the opportunity to review progress. This was affected by means of a mailing list, which included members of the public, governmental and non-governmental organisations, environmental protection agencies, business and the outdoor advertising industry.

#### Public consume session

To identify key issues of concern to residents of the study area regarding outdoor advertising in the media and built environment and group into broad categories

#### Group discussion session

To discuss the identified issues and to propose solutions to each of the key issues (participants split into four groups representative of all the major groups invited to the workshops)

#### Plenary discussions

Report back on group discussions; further discussion on issues and solutions.

#### Future communication

Distribution of questionnaires

## 5.4 WORKSHOPS

Regional workshops on outdoor advertising were held in Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Durban and Johannesburg. The aim of the workshops was to create a forum for identifying issues and concerns pertaining to outdoor advertising, analysing the issues and debating solutions. Interested and affected parties including national, provincial and local authorities, business, advertising, environmental, safety and transport and local community representatives were invited to the workshops.

### 5.4.1 WORKSHOP STRUCTURE

The workshops were structured as follows:

- **Orientation session**
- **Information session**

Broad discussion supported by examples of aspects mentioned in the discussion document.

  - To explain the background of the study,
  - to indicate the economic needs and benefits of outdoor advertising,
  - to explain the relation between outdoor advertising and tourism,
  - to indicate the sensitivity of the natural and built environment,
  - to indicate the nature of the built environment,
  - to indicate the safety aspects of advertising,
  - to explain current legislation and procedures,
  - to present typical guidelines and codes of practice to deal with outdoor advertising, and
  - to give an overview of outdoor advertising in certain centres in the USA.
- **Public response session**

To identify key issues in response to all aspects covered during the information session regarding outdoor advertising in the natural and built environment. Issues were raised and grouped into broad categories.
- **Group discussion session**

To discuss the identified issues and to propose solutions to each of the key issues (participants split into four groups representative of all the major groupings invited to the workshops).
- **Plenary discussions**

Report back on group discussions. Further discussion on issues and solutions.
- **Future communication**

Distribution of questionnaires.



## 5.4.2 WORKSHOP RESULTS

### WORKSHOP ONE: CAPE TOWN

28 June 1995 Goldfields Education Centre, Kirstenbosch

#### Participants:

The workshop was well attended by approximately 40 participants representing a host of interest groups including the signage and outdoor advertising agencies, the City Council, governmental and non-governmental environmental agencies, traffic engineers, the corporate sector, roads authorities, tourism agencies, town planning and architectural concerns, and the general public.

#### General discussion and recommendations

The public response and group discussion session realised issues and concerns that have been summarised as follows:

- A need exists for transparency on the way ahead for the study.
- National guidelines must be set.
- Local level of control: Local authority must discuss their unique position with the relevant communities. Should allow for flexibility. Special towns - no advertising or restricted advertising or does the town currently need the financial aid/benefit. Boils down to a freedom of choice.
- Local authorities should deem national and provincial guidelines as minimum standards. The local authority should have the power to impose stricter measures should the area and the communities warrant or desire stricter control measures.
- Different levels of control for first and third world signage.
- Morals and norms: adverts are seen by all, should be some level of content control in order not to offend any sector of a community.
- The recommendations of this study should make provision for the Proposed Code of Practice and guidelines to be under continuous review, should be able to be changed or adapted to current conditions every five or ten years.
- Lack of community involvement has to be dealt with by the study team.

## WORKSHOP TWO: PORT ELIZABETH

29 June 1995 Senate Hall, University of Port Elizabeth

### Participants:

The workshop was attended by approximately 20 participants representing the signage and outdoor advertising agencies, the local municipality, governmental and non-governmental environmental agencies, traffic engineers, the corporate sector, roads authorities, tourism agencies, town planning and architectural concerns, and the general public.

### General discussion and recommendations

The public response and group discussion session realised issues and concerns that have been summarised as follows:

- Advertising on the back of information type road signs. Comment: Signs would then be on the wrong side of the road for the driver.
- Most of the directional signage is in a position where the driver's attention is needed specifically for that purpose - mainly approach signs close to an intersection. When advertisements are placed on the back of road signs the oncoming traffic will see the advert when they enter an intersection, and when their attention is needing to concentrate on the driving task.
- Road median advertising: use advertisements to diffuse lights instead of planting.
- Advertising on side of road helps to keep drivers awake.
- Billboards are subliminal. 80% of the population do not notice billboards.
- The Advertising industry takes advantage of people who complain - use the complaint and media response thereof for additional free advertising.
- Schools: Currently an issue between the schools and the advertiser, not the advertising industry. Schools put up their own boards and deal directly with an advertiser.
- Industry should have their own code of practice to control themselves.
- The proposed code of practice should address any form of outdoor advertising, not only advertising practised by OAASA members.
- Sky ads are possibly dealt with by Civil Aviation. Sky ads should however also be controlled by the advertisers code of practice. Balloons also fall under Civil Aviation.
- Standard regulations exist to control advertising on street fronts. These regulations should include anything which is attached to the top of a building as well.
- Laser- advertising against a backdrop, i.e. Table Mountain. Will projected images also be regulated? Could present a possible ecological impact. Light quality of a laser is more intense. Laser works better on cloudy or misty nights. No EIA's have been done on this aspect to date. When the laser image is not clear it becomes a safety hazard. Any place where electric signs are already a safety hazard, no lasers should be allowed.
- How is the Code of practice going to be controlled, enforced? Comment: The proposed National guidelines will be enforced by the local authority. Minimum standards will be set on a national level, but each authority may decide how stringent these rules will be applied.
- Special attention should be given to mobile signs and the new drive for ads on billboards on SOS call boxes as a subsidising mechanism to maintain the SOS service. Comment: the advertising here should be to the benefit of the motorist. No prescriptions on

## WORKSHOP THREE: DURBAN

5 July 1995

Lecture Hall, Oceanographic Research Institute

### Participants:

The workshop was attended by approximately 30 participants representing the signage and outdoor advertising agencies, the City Council of Durban, governmental and non-governmental environmental agencies, traffic engineers, the corporate sector, roads authorities, tourism agencies, town planning and architectural concerns, and the general public.

### General discussion and recommendations

The public response and group discussion session realised issues and concerns that have been summarised as follows:

- Differentiate between first and third world signage.
- Perception: third world advertising might be the picturesque type (no wording)
- Info overload - does cause distraction.
- Guidelines should prohibit progressive/serial advertising along roadsides. They are distracting.
- Advertising should also be in relation to the character of the city. In-city advertising can only come about when the city itself decides what it wants.
- On-site advertising in USA is more distracting than off-site billboards. No control -- proliferation of signs.
- Traffic signage and the rest are lumped together as advertising. There is a grey area in-between, more directional type of signage and not advertising as such. Therefore a classification range will be developed.
- Vodacom tower's in the Karoo: are these positioned where they should be for maximum benefit to the cellphone user or are they positioned where people would notice them as advertising for Vodacom.
- Health hazard advertising - content of the advert is important. Any action or activity that is legal, has the right to be advertised.
- Language should be for the community at whom the advertising is aimed.
- Current legislation prevents advertising of, amongst others, cigarettes and alcohol (health hazards) in rural areas.
- Appropriateness of advertising: i.e. no liquor at bus stops outside schools, and no massage parlour outside a church.
- The OAASA code of standards, undertakes to support no advertising of cigarettes near schools.
- Currently no product may be advertised 50 m from an intersection, but shopping centres may advertise close to an intersection.
- How is the Code of practice going to be operated, enforced? Comment: by legislation. National guidelines will be enforced by the local authority. Minimum standards will be set on a national level, but each authority may decide how stringent these rules will be applied.
- Special attention should be given to mobile signs and the new drive for logo advertising on SOS call boxes as a subsidising mechanism to maintain the SOS service. Comment: the advertising here should be to the benefit of the motorist. No prescriptions are

currently in place for advertising trailers on the road, some of which are responsible and others not.

Advertising on the back of road traffic signs should be investigated.

Tourism signage: to indicate rest areas, service areas, ATM's.

In Mauritius there is no money for route marker signs. They used advertising (logo type) on these signs to raise the money for signage.

Logo type works well for companies with well known logos, what happens to the other guys? Comment: lesser companies could use the regular tourist signs, but logo advertising would challenge designers to produce meaningful logos.

Overseas practice where private enterprise is permitted to clean sections of roads and then advertise along that section. SA needs road cleaning - could the name/logo of the benefactor be displayed? Comment: How much of this would be permissible?

Study in Cape Town is being conducted on how local authorities operate and how they could generate income other than taxation to fund their operations. Study Group to get information on this project.

All applications for signage outside urban areas should have to comply with certain procedural guidelines that allows for authorities (the National Parks Board) and other interested parties to comment on the impact of any signage in those areas.

Legislation / regulations should be applicable to everybody. Hawkers on sidewalks make use of cardboard signs which block shop front signs. Shop owners must comply with strict regulations while the hawkers are free to do as they please.

Farmers and agricultural organisations were identified as interested and affected parties worth contacting.

## WORKSHOP FOUR: JOHANNESBURG

8 July 1995      Function Room, Delta Environmental Centre

### Participants:

The workshop was attended by approximately 40 participants representing the signage and outdoor advertising agencies, the City Council of Johannesburg, governmental and non-governmental environmental agencies, traffic engineers, the corporate sector, roads authorities, tourism agencies, town planning and architectural concerns, and the general public.

### General discussion and recommendations

The public response and group discussion session realised issues and concerns that have been summarised as follows:

- An application for advertising on a footbridge over a highway, linking a community to a school, was discussed. The advertising would help pay for the bridge. The application was rejected. The footbridge should not have been built in the first place. No community was supposed to exist on the other side of the freeway. Squatting occurred and a dangerous situation developed when children started crossing the road. The urban design issue should be addressed here and the environment should not be compromised by the ad-hoc solving of a problem.
- It has not been proven that billboards cause accidents. Some local authorities will not allow neon advertising - it causes accidents. But at certain times of the year Christmas decorative lights are put up in a city, the public is invited to come. Does this not pose the same danger? Law is not consistent.
- Should Outdoor Advertising be banned, a mini-economy will be done away with, and lead to unemployment.
- Pretoria had a history of advertising no-go zones. The few areas that were not controlled by the local authority, i.e. Spoornet and schools: lead to a clutter in those areas. Reason for that probably due to a skewed authority.
- Tender system is not a good system. It creates a 'monopoly' for the person who gets the tender and keeps other advertisers out of that area.
- Often numbers, position and fixing mechanisms are not controlled. Proposal that fixed brackets should be given out to tender on an annual review basis. The company who gets the tender will undertake to remove all illegal posters going up in his tender area.
- Model bylaws should be drawn up as part of the study. Local elements could then be added.
- More controlled spread should be allowed, - would reduce the clutter.
- National roads: control should be with the local authority where a national road runs through a local municipality. Comment: no, the same standards should be applicable on all national roads.
- Devolving all to the local authority is not always as neat as it sounds. In the USA the system is such that the national government states the guidelines, a state would get national funding if he applies the guidelines. If the state chooses not to, it does not get the funding.
- Cultural aspect of advertising: if anything with regards to advertising is allowed (on traffic and road signs) it would trigger a loss of respect for road traffic signs.

When talking of the 'industry': there are a number of players of which only one (OAASA) is represented. Be careful of lumping all together.

Clutter of newspaper selling points: each day a poster is added - pollution, clutter.

People who are not involved in the industry do not appreciate the difficulty to get approval for advertising applications. The industry is also extremely competitive.

Clutter is not caused by the 'industry' but by undisciplined advertisers. The industry will be well controlled (self-control) if given more room to operate in.

If a free market in advertising opportunity exists, the market will make the right adjustments. If one has an unnatural marketplace it will lead to clutter.

If control is relaxed, the good quality signage will go down. Top quality advertisers will leave the media. Second class advertising will go up, and in vast numbers.

General public participation: The consumer has a right to give its views without having to be an expert in urban design or on the advertising industry.

Local authority plants trees to beautify an area and then gives permission for posters to go up on those trees, up to three per tree - defies the purpose of the trees. Party political posters are a nightmare.

Current bylaws should be discussed. Intent to create model bylaw. The study should discuss and define current bylaws - missing in the discussion document. Most bylaws are antiquated. The good and the bad should be discussed and the good taken aboard in the model bylaw development.

Illegal signage: Signs go up without approval, low quality, of wood and paper. It takes 3 years to get to court, the contractor has already paid his bills after six months and makes a profit by the time the case is resolved.

Bylaws are drawn up by officials on instruction of the management committee of a council. The committee represents politicians as representatives of a community of the area. In effect the bylaws thus reflect the views of the community.

The term Outdoor Advertising is applied incorrectly: Should be Outdoor Signage. Distinguish between information signage, advertising signage, and commercial advertising signage.

The Association of Marketers has been left out and should be brought aboard in this project.

## 5.5 QUESTIONNAIRES

### 5.5.1 INTRODUCTION

A questionnaire was prepared and circulated to interested and affected parties in an attempt to encourage participation in the study and to gauge or scope perceptions and opinions on certain critical issues pertaining to the impact and control of outdoor advertising. Questionnaires were circulated to

- all participants at the regional workshops held in Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Durban and Johannesburg;
- individuals unable to attend the workshops;
- selected local authorities; and
- other interested and affected parties.

Respondents were categorised into six classes depending on their interest base, i.e.:

- national / provincial or local authority;
- the business sector and the advertising industry;
- environmental agencies;
- safety and transport agencies; and
- local communities.

Unfortunately, no response was received from the previously disadvantaged communities although they were invited to the workshops and provided with questionnaires. As this was identified as an important 'affected party' a decision was made to remedy the situation by eliciting response from a group of 36 black students at the University of Pretoria. The students were first enlightened about the problem and the study, after which questionnaires were circulated. The results of this exercise are included under "Student Community" in the table below.

From a total of 600 distributed questionnaires, 130 were completed were returned. The results of the questionnaire are illustrated on the table below. The table is arranged so that the response of each interest group can be gauged independently for each question. The numbers in each block opposite the alternative answers is a cumulative figure indicating the numbers of respondents who chose that answer.

## 5.5.2 RESULTS

RESPONDENTS A = National / provincial or local authority  
 E = Safety and transport

B = Business C = Advertising D = Environmental  
 F = Student community

QUESTIONS	A	B	C	D	E	F	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
1. Indicate the interest or affected group you represent.	75	6	7	5	1	36	130	
							130	
3. Do you think Outdoor Advertising in rural areas has a positive influence on the country's economy?								
Vital	4	2	1	0	1	8	16	12.31
High	5	1	5	0	0	12	23	17.69
Moderate	29	1	1	1	0	12	44	33.85
Omissible	20	1	0	2	0	1	24	18.46
Debatable significance	17	1	0	2	0	3	23	17.69
							130	100.00
4. Do you think Outdoor Advertising in urban residential areas has a positive influence on the country's economy?								
Vital	6	1	0	0	0	7	14	10.85
High	17	3	4	0	1	21	46	35.66
Moderate	28	1	1	2	0	3	35	27.13
Omissible	18	1	2	1	0	1	23	17.83
Debatable significance	5	0	0	2	0	4	11	8.53
							129	100.00
5. Do you think Outdoor Advertising in the CBD has a positive influence on the country's economy?								
Vital	12	1	1	1	0	10	25	19.23
High	31	3	5	0	1	17	57	43.85
Moderate	26	2	1	3	0	5	37	28.46
Omissible	3	0	0	0	0	1	4	3.08
Debatable significance	3	0	0	1	0	3	7	5.38
							130	100.00
6. Do you think Outdoor Advertising in urban industrial district has a positive influence on the country's economy?								
Vital	11	1	1	0	1	3	17	13.28
High	23	4	4	2	0	11	44	34.38
Moderate	29	1	2	1	0	13	46	35.94
Omissible	9	0	0	0	0	5	14	10.94
Debatable significance	2	0	0	1	0	4	7	5.47
							128	100.00
7. How would you rate the influence of Outdoor Advertising in rural areas on the tourism potential of the district?								
Vital	11	0	1	2	0	9	23	17.83
High	21	0	1	0	1	8	31	24.03
Moderate	28	4	4	1	0	15	52	40.31
Omissible	14	2	1	2	0	4	23	17.83
							129	100.00
8. How would you rate the influence of Outdoor Advertising in urban residential areas on the tourism potential of the district?								
Vital	6	0	0	0	0	1	7	5.30
High	8	0	2	0	0	15	25	18.94
Moderate	34	3	3	3	1	13	57	43.18
Omissible	29	3	2	2	0	7	43	32.58
							132	100.00
9. How would you rate the influence of Outdoor Advertising in urban CBD on the tourism potential of the district?								
Vital	14	0	1	0	0	7	22	17.32
High	25	3	0	0	1	17	46	36.22
Moderate	26	1	4	4	0	5	40	31.50
Omissible	8	2	2	0	0	7	19	14.96
							127	100.00



10. How would you rate the influence of Outdoor Advertising in urban industrial district on the tourism potential of the district?	Vital	5	0	0	0	0	6	11	8.46
	High	4	2	1	0	0	11	18	13.85
	Moderate	34	1	3	0	1	14	53	40.77
	Omissible	31	3	3	5	0	6	48	36.92
								<b>130</b>	<b>100.00</b>
11. How do you react towards Outdoor Advertising along scenic routes in the country?	Like	9	0	1	0	0	14	24	19.05
	Impartial	8	1	0	0	1	12	22	17.46
	Dislike	55	5	5	5	0	10	80	63.49
								<b>126</b>	<b>100.00</b>
12. How do you react towards Outdoor Advertising in tourist destinations of nature conservational significance (national parks, nature reserves, etc.)?	Like	9	0	0	0	1	21	31	24.41
	Impartial	5	1	0	0	0	6	12	9.45
	Dislike	59	5	6	5	0	9	84	66.14
								<b>127</b>	<b>100.00</b>
13. How do you react towards Outdoor Advertising in tourist destinations of natural/scenic beauty?	Like	9	0	0	0	1	17	27	21.09
	Impartial	3	0	0	0	0	10	13	10.16
	Dislike	62	6	6	5	0	9	88	68.75
								<b>128</b>	<b>100.00</b>
14. How do you react towards Outdoor Advertising in tourist destinations of historical significance?	Like	7	0	0	0	0	10	17	12.88
	Impartial	4	1	0	0	0	7	12	9.09
	Dislike	32	1	1	5	1	6	46	34.85
	Should be treated on merit	34	4	5	1	0	13	57	43.18
								<b>132</b>	<b>100.00</b>
15. How do you react towards Outdoor Advertising in centres of urban significance (Town Hall, City Square, etc.)?	Like	7	0	1	0	0	18	26	20.16
	Impartial	6	1	2	0	0	4	13	10.08
	Dislike	32	1	0	3	1	4	41	31.78
	Should be treated on merit	30	4	3	2	0	10	49	37.98
								<b>129</b>	<b>100.00</b>
16. How do you react towards Outdoor Advertising in areas of architectural significance?	Like	3	1	0	0	0	10	14	11.02
	Impartial	6	0	1	0	0	12	19	14.96
	Dislike	38	3	1	3	1	7	53	41.73
	Should be treated on merit	26	2	4	2	0	7	41	32.28
								<b>127</b>	<b>100.00</b>
17. How would you rate Outdoor Advertising as a safety risk factor in rural areas?	High	10	0	0	0	0	3	13	9.92
	Moderate	30	0	0	2	1	16	49	37.40
	Low	36	6	7	3	0	17	69	52.67
								<b>131</b>	<b>100.00</b>
18. How would you rate Outdoor Advertising as a safety risk factor in urban residential areas?	High	15	0	0	0	1	17	33	25.00
	Moderate	39	1	0	4	0	8	52	39.39
	Low	22	5	7	1	0	12	47	35.61
								<b>132</b>	<b>100.00</b>

19. How would you rate Outdoor Advertising as a safety risk factor in Central Business District?									
	High	20	0	0	1	0	16	37	28.24
	Moderate	30	1	0	2	0	15	48	36.64
	Low	26	5	7	2	1	5	46	35.11
								<b>131</b>	<b>100.00</b>
20. How would you rate Outdoor Advertising as a safety risk factor in the urban industrial district?									
	High	7	0	0	0	0	13	20	15.50
	Moderate	33	1	0	3	1	13	51	39.53
	Low	34	5	7	2	0	10	58	44.96
								<b>129</b>	<b>100.00</b>
21. Do you think Outdoor Advertising is a right?									
	Yes	27	5	7	1	1	30	71	55.04
	No	48	1	0	3	0	6	58	44.96
								<b>129</b>	<b>100.00</b>
22. Do you think Outdoor Advertising should be									
	banned totally	3	0	0	0	0	1	4	3.10
	banned in parts and controlled in others	71	5	7	5	1	19	108	83.72
	allowed everywhere?	0	1	0	0	0	16	17	13.18
								<b>129</b>	<b>100.00</b>
23. If Outdoor Advertising is to be controlled, who should be responsible for implementing the control measures?									
	Outdoor Advertising Association of South Africa	9	3	4	0	0	23	39	30.71
	Legislation	56	0	0	5	1	12	74	58.27
	Both	7	3	3	0	0	1	14	11.02
								<b>127</b>	<b>100.00</b>
24. Do you think guidelines and controlled Outdoor Advertising could assist in urban rehabilitation?									
	Yes	59	6	7	4	1	35	112	87.50
	No	14	0	0	1	0	1	16	12.50
								<b>128</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Note:** Question two is not included in the table, as it required a written response. The question “What do you think of Outdoor Advertising as a medium for transferring information?” elicited mixed reaction. Generally speaking, local and provincial authorities viewed outdoor advertising as a necessary evil. They believe it has a role to play in the socio-economic environment but needs to be strictly regulated. Environmentalists expressed concern regarding the visual and aesthetic impact of the medium. Business and outdoor advertising industry respondents were of the opinion that outdoor advertising has a vital role to play in the socio-economic environment and felt that the individual and business in general had the right to advertise his business and wares in a controlled manner. The black student group were by far the most supportive of outdoor advertising and made many references to the important role outdoor advertising played in the disadvantaged areas. Specific reference was made to the fact that billboards are capable of brightening up an otherwise drab township environment.

### 5.5.3 CONCLUSION

Certain deficiencies in the process of eliciting comment via questionnaires became evident:

- The questionnaire response was not representative of the groups it attempted to reach and was loaded in favour of the national, provincial and local authorities.
- A wide interpretation of certain salient terms (outdoor advertising, residential areas) resulted in many of the questions being ambiguous.
- The questionnaire was incomplete and skewed in that it was prepared before the workshops were held. It therefore did not reflect the dynamics of the workshops, nor did it cover some of the issues raised at the workshops.

Although certain deficiencies existed, the questionnaires were nevertheless of great value in determining general opinions and perceptions towards a host of issues.

### 5.6.2 LOCAL PERCEPTIONS OF AESTHETICS AND COMMUNITY NEEDS

Because of the challenges of the cultural diversity of South Africa, combined with the wide variety of landscape types present in South Africa, an acknowledgement of the importance of decision-making at the local level is also emphasised. Legislation governing the role of local authorities and the community should therefore make provision for a certain degree of freedom

## 5.6 PSYCHOLOGICAL PERCEPTIONS

Dr. André C. Fiedeldey of the Department of Psychology, University of Pretoria, undertook an independent study on the role of psychological perception and aesthetic appreciation of outdoor environments with respect to outdoor advertising. His report titled *“Recommendations on outdoor advertising: the role of and aesthetic appreciation of outdoor environments”* is summarised hereunder.

The express aim of the report was to provide a set of recommendations regarding the control of outdoor advertising in its various forms in different types of outdoor environments. Outdoor advertising is seen as having a potentially wide range of effects on the human perception of outdoor environments.

Human behaviour shapes and is shaped by environmental issues and their management. As a result, psychologists are needed by public policy makers whenever the outcomes of their policies either affect or depend on human behaviour. Concerning the applicability and design of outdoor advertising, the value of psychological expertise lies in the ability to determine how and **what** people value with regard to outdoor experiences and how these values can be incorporated in environmental policies.

On the basis of Dr Fiedeldey's report, the following recommendations are made for inclusion into guidelines governing the practice of outdoor advertising in South Africa.

### 5.6.1 GENERAL AESTHETIC VALUES

Any landscape evaluation programme or attempt to systematically categorise landscapes must recognise the general aesthetic values that the environment may hold for people. In order to protect the environmental aesthetics of the full spectrum of environments, a rigid and comprehensive programme should be considered if a national policy is envisaged. As the South African population consists of people from a diversity of cultures and socio-economic backgrounds, this diversity provides an added challenge to the evaluation of the aesthetics of the continuum of outdoor environments. However, it is clear that unrelieved incongruities produce ugliness in landscapes in most cases for a variety of samples of respondents, and the impact of outdoor advertising on landscape aesthetics can therefore be severe. Natural landscapes where man-made influences are absent are consistently more preferred than those where man-made influences are visible, so that a single man-made feature such as an outdoor advertisement in an otherwise pristine natural environment would paradoxically decrease the degree of preference for that landscape more dramatically than for outdoor environments where other signs of human development are already visible.

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with regard to the implementation of outdoor advertising. No two situations in which outdoor advertising is considered will be identical, and, even though guidelines can be supplied for general consideration and planning, decisions at the local level are best left to those people who will be most directly affected by these decisions, ideally in consultation with representatives from the advertising community and relevant government departments.

### 5.6.3 THE PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFITS OF UNSPOILT NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS

Researchers from a variety of *different* disciplines, using *different* perspectives on landscape aesthetics and psychological benefits, and focusing on *different* levels of human functioning, have provided consistent findings that natural landscapes in their unspoilt form, and especially in the case of a visible or known water presence, elicit higher aesthetic ratings than any other kind of landscape that has so far been investigated, together with consistent reports of highly restorative psychological benefits. The ability of different forms of outdoor advertising to impact negatively on these perceived landscape aesthetics and their accompanying psychological benefits cannot be overemphasised. To guard against the continual degradation of the natural and rural environments in South Africa, guidelines that intend to control the outdoor advertising phenomenon should, as far as possible, identify all environments that, apart from any vital ecological significance that they may have, also provide potentially high levels of aesthetic and psychological value. Outdoor advertising in such environments should be strictly prohibited, as the presence of even the slightest evidence of a built feature within a natural scene substantially lowers the aesthetic value and availability of accompanying psychological benefits.

### 5.6.4 RESEARCH AND OUTDOOR ADVERTISING

According to Dr Fiedeldej's research, the perceptual judgements of the public provide an appropriate basis for assessing scenic beauty, and a public survey or consumer evaluation approach is seen as valid for assessing the scenic beauty of landscapes. On that account, comprehensive research, incorporating a representative sample of the public, to view and respond to the applicability and aesthetic value of outdoor advertising in a variety of landscape types, is strongly recommended.

#### 5.6.4.1 Cross-cultural research

One of the most problematic aspects of outdoor advertising in South Africa relates to the cultural heterogeneity of its population, where differing standards of aesthetics would possibly be applicable between the different groups. All the research referred to in the review pertains to studies conducted in Western countries, mostly in the USA. Although some of the results may be applicable in a South African context, especially those pertaining to the evolutionary basis for patterns of landscape preferences that have been identified so far, no research that the author is aware of has been conducted in relation to human perception of landscape aesthetics in southern Africa, especially not with the aim of developing comparisons along the rural-urban residential continuum, including the issue of westernisation. The effect of different educational and literacy levels also needs attention. Research investigating cross-cultural issues is therefore a priority, if outdoor advertisers wish to make any claims about cultural sensitivity and context-specific, context appropriate activities.

#### 5.6.4.2 Information overload

The issue of visual stimuli as information requiring active human processing was also addressed in the literature review. There is an optimal level of stimulus information from any landscape, and over stimulation, through too much perceptual input, can contribute to an increase in environmentally related stress. Environmental stress may, in turn, lead to information overload. Wilderness, according to numerous studies, is one of the very few environments in which (cognitive) solitude, reflected by few encounters with people or human artefacts, and by an absence of evidence of previous use by others, is still obtainable. Wilderness and the wilderness experience is therefore, in a number of psychologically significant respects, an irreplaceable phenomenon in human life.

Care needs to be taken not to allow unrestricted activity by outdoor advertisers even in environments where, due to the absence of high aesthetic and psychologically restorative values, outdoor advertising would be seen as aesthetically acceptable. A balance thus needs to be achieved between a number of factors - in this case, between aesthetics and environmental stress. The problem of information overload can be seen as separate from the cross-cultural issue, but in the case of South Africa it requires an integrated approach to understanding the influence that outdoor advertising will have on South African landscapes.

#### 5.6.5 EDUCATIONAL AND PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAMMES

Public involvement is of the utmost importance in environmental decision-making and management issues such as the impact of outdoor advertising. Fischhoff (1990:p.648) states that "...if the public understands environmental risks well, then it may be entitled to a more active role in their management." Providing comprehensive and correct information on the potential short, medium and long-term influences of outdoor advertising to the general public, for consideration at local and national levels, is therefore seen as essential.

A further recommendation is to formulate a strong public relations programme that addresses issues arising from any implementation of outdoor advertising, e.g. from the initial stages of a roadside protection program, to the continuous monitoring of standards, so that a public relations programme becomes an ongoing component of the total program.

#### 5.6.6 THE CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT OF CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS

Because of the problem of the relativity of landscape aesthetics, any South African landscape categorisation system should be capable of distinguishing among locales serving different forms of human needs, so that the role of psychological, physical and behavioural expectations for different landscape types/categories are taken into account from the perspective of members of all local communities. At the same time, a trans-disciplinary approach, utilising ecosystems theory to understanding those person-environment transactions that lead to human perceptions of landscape aesthetics, could result in the development of a thorough and comprehensive system of local classification of landscape aesthetics and scenic values. Because the degree of naturalness of a landscape emerges as such a salient predictor of aesthetic preference across

diverse investigations, a clear prohibition on the development of outdoor advertising in such areas is currently the best way to safeguard against the future loss of landscape aesthetic values. A detailed classification system, incorporating qualitative data, is the best way to ensure that such landscapes are identified and protected against aesthetic degradation.

### 5.6.7 SOME SPECIFIC OUTDOOR ADVERTISING ISSUES

Because of the explicitly focal nature of outdoor advertising, a decrease in preference for natural scenes where outdoor advertising provides a strong focal point or number of focal points is inevitable, as indicated in the research on the influence of man-made objects on preference ratings. With regard to natural environments, outdoor advertising therefore cannot be justified under any circumstance as an improvement of environmental conditions or aesthetics. Although most of the literature summarised for review here has dealt with research on human transactions with wilderness and natural landscapes, the rural and urban environment is equally important as a factor in human quality of life. The main concern in environments where human presence, rather than nature, is a strong or dominant factor, is the extent to which outdoor advertising will contribute to the erosion of quality of life. Amongst others, this has occurred elsewhere through the influence of large concerns, which, with the necessary influence to achieve their aims, has caused many urban landscapes to lose aspects of their distinctive identity.

As previously stated, symbols of stability and continuity in modern urban life have great psychological attraction, and their replacement by modern constructions and standardised, ever-changing urban features contributes to the loss of identity of many present-day urban environments. Due to its very nature, outdoor advertising will contribute to the acceleration of the tempo of urban life, and exert an undesired influence on the perceived quality of life even in the least natural of environments. According to the author, clear guidelines with regard to the control, restriction or prohibition of outdoor advertising are therefore essential in any physical environment in which the human experience is influenced by aspects of that environment.

## 5.7 CONCLUSIONS

### SECTION SIX: SAFETY ASPECTS

The following conclusions are drawn and used in the development of a model for a National Code of Practice for Outdoor Advertising:

- The opinion polls, press release and regional workshops were essential tools that facilitated the involvement of over 500 individuals and organisations in the study. These interested and affected parties were able to play an ongoing role in the establishment of a model for the National Code of Practice by way of proposal review and comment.
- The results of the questionnaire were interesting and significant. Due to the absence of community leaders attending the workshops a special workshop with black students at the University of Pretoria in the Department of Psychology was arranged. These results differ significantly from the general results of the workshops in that a lesser sensitivity to aesthetic impact was illustrated. This clearly illustrates the subjective nature of aesthetic appreciation, and leads one to the conclusion that the control of outdoor advertising in different socio-economic areas should take cognisance of views and wishes of the local community.
- The vast majority of respondents regarded legislation as an important tool to control outdoor advertising. The results of question 22 and 23 are illustrations of this conclusion. Respondents were also generally averse to the idea of outdoor advertising in areas of natural beauty (questions 11, 12 and 13).
- Results of studies conducted in the section on the urban environment supports the establishment of areas of control and the implementation of guidelines through legal measures.
- The workshops were successful in that a large percentage of the maximum number of fifty people attended the workshops. The last two workshops were dominated by participants linked to the outdoor advertising industry. Many of the issues and discussions raised were therefore slanted towards the viewpoint of the industry. Although the leaders of local communities were selected and invited to attend, they had little interest in contributing to the study. In general, support for the establishment for the National Code of Practice was evident in the discussion sessions.