

## Background Paper AANA Code of Ethics Review

On 18 May 2010, the AANA Board formally approved a review of the content of the Code of Ethics. The objective is to update and, where necessary, develop the Code with the aim of meeting all stakeholders' requirements and expectations. The revised Code will articulate world's best practice standards against which it can be measured and published.

The AANA Advertiser Code of Ethics was published in 1997. Since 2004, minor changes to the Code of Ethics that have been adopted are the inclusion of definitions and references that have come about with the adoption of other AANA codes, for example, the Advertising to Children Code. The most noteworthy change was the revision to the definition of advertising to "advertising and marketing communications".

### Rationale for Review

- To advance AANA's position as a leader in responsible advertising self-regulation. Given the role of the AANA Codes in the Australian community, a regular review, with public input, will ensure maintenance of codes that are held in high regard by advertisers, governments and the community.
- International (ISO) and national (ACCC) best practice self-regulation guidelines recommend regular review of codes. AANA codes should be benchmarked against best practice guides.
- The context in which Australia's advertisers operate is constantly changing. Developments in public policy and regulation apply to advertisers and these must be considered to maintain the relevance of AANA codes in Australia's 'regulatory framework and ensure self-regulation meets community expectations.
- International developments in self-regulation should be considered in a 'best practice' framework e.g. the World Federation of Advertisers and International Chamber of Commerce guidelines on marketing.
- A review will identify the need for Guidance or Practice Notes to assist advertisers, their agencies and other suppliers, and the Advertising Standards Board in applying and interpreting the codes.

### Scope of the Review of the Code of Ethics

This review is to be as broad and comprehensive as necessary to ensure that the aim and expected outcome of the review are met. The review will not be limited to the current content of the code. New clauses for the code can be proposed and adopted by the Board where appropriate.

An independent expert will conduct the review with assistance by the AANA secretariat. The review will draw on past AANA and Advertising Standards Bureau reports and include an open public consultation process. The public consultation phase is anticipated to commence in July 2010 with the publication of a discussion paper, which will be available for comment by all interested stakeholders. It is anticipated that the final report and recommendations for a revised Code of Ethics will be submitted to the AANA Board for their consideration. An announcement regarding the outcome of the review together with any revisions to the Code is anticipated by December 2010.