



PRESS RELEASE

Commissioner Kuneva endorses European advertising self-regulation

The European Advertising Standards Alliance (EASA) has today released a new publication which demonstrates the extent of progress in advertising self-regulation across the EU. The EASA Blue Book, released on a tri-annual basis, is designed as a tool for marketing communications practitioners to understand the codes of practice and systems self-regulation as well as giving regulators a comprehensive overview of self-regulatory systems in Europe.

The publication takes on added significance given the current pressure from regulators on the marketing communications industry in light of the European debates on alcohol, nutrition and health and the recent Advertising Roundtable. In the publication's foreword, Meglena Kuneva, European Commissioner for Consumer Protection, praises the efforts of EASA and the marketing communications industry. *"Self-regulation today has a truly European dimension, thanks to the work that has been carried out by the European Advertising Standards Alliance over the years. I am sure that we can go further together to establish advertising self-regulation as a living best practice model."*

Effective self-regulatory responses are being increasingly encouraged by the European Commission in its policy approaches to alcohol, nutrition and health, and in the draft text of the new Audiovisual Media Services Directive.

The launch of this book demonstrates the industry's real efforts to strengthen and extend the scope of advertising self-regulation and thereby ensure legal, decent, honest and truthful advertising. Effective self-regulation provides a complementary level of consumer protection and aims to inspire consumer confidence across the EU.

Since mid-2005, the advertising industry has been following a strategic plan, coordinated by EASA, with the aim of strengthening self-regulation. This publication shows concrete results across the EU with new self-regulatory organisations in place in Poland and Lithuania and systems expected to launch in Cyprus and Estonia in 2008. EASA pledged to report back to the European Commission on the results of this strategic plan later this year.

"Reflected in the pages of this book is the proof that the advertising industry can implement effective and transparent self-regulation systems across Europe and beyond. I am sure that readers will be convinced that self-regulation exists, that it works, that it ensures legal, decent, honest and truthful advertising and that it is capable of inspiring confidence in consumers", said EASA Chairman Jean-Pierre Teyssier.

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For further information about the Blue Book, EASA and advertising self-regulation, or to arrange an interview, contact Katie Carroll at communications@easa-alliance.org or visit www.easa-alliance.org.

Notes to editors

About EASA:

The European Advertising Standards Alliance (EASA) is a non-profit organisation based in Brussels and is the single voice of the advertising industry in Europe on advertising self-regulation. It acts as the European coordination point for advertising self-regulatory bodies and systems across Europe. EASA brings together 32 Self-regulatory organisations (SROs) - 26 from 22 European countries as well as SROs in Canada, South Africa, New Zealand, Australia, Brazil and India, and 15 organisations representing the European advertising industry (advertisers, agencies and the media).

About the Blue Book:

The Blue Book - officially known as *Advertising self-regulation in Europe* – is published every 2-3 years and is a unique publication aimed at advertising practitioners, regulators and researchers. It contains a comprehensive overview of the scope and activities of the self-regulation systems in place and provides detailed analyses of the role of self-regulation; global self-regulatory codes; national, European and cross-border complaints statistics; recent developments in the consideration of self-regulation by EU regulators; as well as an overview of European legislation affecting advertising. The 2007 edition includes new information on high-profile issues such as the promotion of food and alcohol and marketing to children.

About the Advertising Roundtable:

During 2005 and 2006 EASA participated in a series of three Advertising Roundtable meetings with European Commission representatives from DG Sanco, DG Infso and the Secretariat General and a selection of interested NGOs. Chaired by Robert Madelin, it provided a forum for an in-depth exchange between practitioners and stakeholders on the desired components of best practice in the advertising sector. The resulting report issued by Robert Madelin in July 2006, outlines the element of a best practice self-regulatory model which is effective, participatory, accountable and transparent. The effects of the report can be seen in the Commission's Alcohol Strategy and the White Paper on Nutrition in 2007, as well as influencing debates in the Parliament and Council on self-regulation in the revised Audiovisual Media Services Directive. The report is available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/overview/report_advertising_en.htm.

The EASA Blue Book is available for purchase on the EASA website

www.easa-alliance.org.