

# Annual Review

April 2014 – March 2015



## About EASA

### **The European Advertising Standards Alliance**

EASA – the European Advertising Standards Alliance is the single authoritative voice of advertising self-regulation.

EASA promotes high ethical standards in commercial communications by means of effective self-regulation for the benefit of consumers and business.

As a non-profit organisation based in Brussels, EASA brings together national advertising self-regulatory organisations and associations representing the advertising industry in Europe.

For further information, please visit: [www.easa-alliance.org](http://www.easa-alliance.org)

### **EASA promotes responsible advertising by:**

- Promoting & developing advertising self-regulation
- Strengthening and extending SR in Europe and beyond
- Creating best practices
- Dealing with cross-border complaints
- Undertaking research and monitoring
- Providing education and training

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## Chairman's Intro

In William Shakespeare's time, a member of the cast of actors would open a play by proclaiming the prologue, thus acquainting the audience with the background of the drama about to unfold. Perhaps our EASA Annual Review doesn't contain quite the dramatic riches of Hamlet, but I'm going to set the scene in the same way.



First to Brussels, where last year new President Jean Claude Juncker announced his new Commission, constructed to deliver a European Union that is "bigger and more ambitious on big things, and smaller and more modest on small things". At its heart: First Vice-President Timmermans; in charge of Better Regulation. This is a great opportunity for EASA. With Angela, Dominic and Oliver at the heart of Robert Madelin's *Community of Practice for Better Self- and Co- Regulation*, we're well placed to advance ad self-regulation's merits as an essential piece of the regulatory puzzle, to ask for space to pursue our mission of promoting responsible advertising and to seek active support. And that is what we're doing.

Second to the wider stage, where the technological revolution is making the world an increasingly interconnected place, facing common challenges: obesity, harmful drinking, privacy, sustainability and concerns about advertising to children. These shared global problems call for global solutions and ad self-regulation should be a part of the answer. I call for us to be ambitious in building on the excellent foundation of ICAS, so admirably chaired by Linda.

Finally to home, where as each year passes we demand ever more from our wonderful Secretariat, so capably led by Oliver. We're at the transition point between our 2013-2015 and our 2015-2017 strategic objectives and much is now being done to set-up, develop and support the team so they're best placed to deliver them. I'd like to thank them all most sincerely for their devotion to the cause and the expertise they bring to their roles.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'GParker'.

Guy Parker  
EASA Chairman  
Chief Executive UK Advertising Standards Authority (ASA)

## Profile Building

### The Better Regulation Agenda

The European Commission has long recognised that more regulation is not necessarily better regulation. Since last year with the inauguration of the Juncker Commission and the appointment of a First Vice-President, Frans Timmermans, to guide the Institution's work in this area, the Commission's efforts to ensure regulation is appropriate and not burdensome have intensified [1].

EASA has continued to reach out to the Commission to convey the message that effective self-regulation needs to be considered by policy makers as an essential part of the regulatory toolbox. We welcomed the Commission's strengthened commitment to Better Regulation as highlighted in its *Political Guidelines* and *Better Regulation Agenda*.

Over the last year we have played an active role in discussions about better regulation, highlighting the benefits of advertising self-regulation for European consumers and business alike.

As well as providing input for the Commission's consultations on its Impact Assessment and Stakeholder Consultation Guidelines, EASA has taken part in four plenary meetings of the Commission's *Community of Practice for Better Self- and Co-Regulation*. EASA has also continued to provide its expertise in the field of

self-regulation as part of the Community's Steering Group.

In January, EASA was invited to share its experience in effective self-regulation at the European Economic and Social Committee's (EESC) public hearing *Self-Regulation and Co-Regulation in the Community Legislative Framework*. We were thrilled to see that the EESC subsequently published a favourable opinion on the benefits of self-regulation, and recommends that self- and co-regulation should be viewed as important instruments for complementing or supplementing hard law [2].

EASA's publication "*Ad Self-Regulation IS Better Regulation*", produced in spring 2015, summarises the key ways Ad Standards contribute to the Better Regulation Agenda.

*In 2014 the OECD and APEC respectively recognised the benefits of using self-regulation for consumers and business*



*EC Community of Practice for Self- and Co-Regulation*

[1] "When we act, we will always look for the most efficient and least burdensome approach" – Juncker Letter to Timmermans

[2] EESC (2015), "Opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee on Self-regulation and co-regulation in the Community legislative framework (own-initiative opinion)", INT/754, Rapporteur: Jorge Pegado Liz. [http:// www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.int-opinions.32859](http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.int-opinions.32859)

## Audio Visual Media Services

EASA has remained engaged in discussions around the review of the Audio Visual Media Services (AVMS) Directive. As well as taking part in the Commission's 'Media-Talks', which are designed to inform its direction in the review of the AVMS Directive, EASA met with representatives of DG CONNECT to discuss the effectiveness of ad standards.

One issue the Commission has focused on in discussions is the potential impact of technological developments in ads on minors. EASA explained the key role of effective ad standards at a Greek Presidency conference in April, and, alongside SRO and industry members, at a Commission workshop on advertising of HFSS foods to children in November.

## Unfair Commercial Practices

EASA has continued to engage with the Commission's Multi-stakeholder Dialogue on Environmental Claims (MDEC) discussing with a wide group of different stakeholders issues around green claims in advertising. The current focus of the MDEC is the development of guidance and compliance criteria for environmental claims.



### Awarding Best Practice

As always competition was tough at the annual EASA Best Practice Awards.

The Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) came out top this year and was awarded Gold for significantly reducing the average time it takes to handle complaints.

The UK's Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) and Clearcast were both presented Silver awards for the measures they had put in place to make their advice and guidance on compliance even more accessible for industry.

The Bronze Award was given to French Autorité de Régulation Professionnelle de la Publicité (ARPP) for its creative publicity campaign 'think out the box but stay in the frame'.

*2014 Best Practice Awards Winners*



# Capacity Building

## Future-Proofing Ad Standards

EASA began the revision of its Best Practice Recommendation (BPR) on Digital Marketing

Communications, which was approved by the Board in 2015.

Members and key stakeholders provided detailed input during the consultation process; EASA also engaged with DG CONNECT.

The update will ensure ad standards remain effective and relevant when it comes to the ever-changing digital landscape and interactive marketing techniques.



*EASA held a workshop with key stakeholders on Kids and Advertising in April 2014*

### **The Digital Marketing Communications BPR includes:**

- An explanation of what counts as a marketing communication
- Advice on 'non-paid for' online social media space
- A new definition for editorial content

## Enhancing SR Coherence on OBA

In 2014, EASA adapted its Cross-Border-Complaints mechanism to ensure consumers can register a complaint about a company's OBA practices to their national SRO in their own language. This will ensure a coherent and consistent self-regulatory approach to OBA and is a real example of a functional European Digital Single Market initiative.

In November 2014 EASA took part in the 8th EU Multi Stakeholder Round Table on OBA. The roundtable gave the opportunity for the OBA industry coalition to present the latest progress on the rollout of the EU Self-Regulatory Programme, including an assessment of achievements to date, challenges and next steps.



*Online Behavioural Advertising Icon*



*By end of 2014, 10 SROs had expanded remit to cover OBA*

## Developing Coverage

The nature of advertising means that global solutions are increasingly needed to ensure effective ad standards. In October 2014 EASA's Board approved a proposal to explore setting up an international advertising standards body. This work will be led by EASA's Spanish Member Autocontrol.

*EASA's self-regulatory network reaches across 38 countries and with 16 industry members covers all forms of advertising*



### Central and Eastern Europe

The EU's newest member, Croatia, has a self-regulatory committee responsible for local coordination and is in the process of drumming up support for a fully-fledged system. After launching an SR code in 2014, neighbouring Serbia is now working on setting up a self-regulatory organisation.

### Africa

Key stakeholders from the self-regulatory network and industry from around the world came together to discuss the importance of well enforced and functioning ad standards during the WFA's 2015 Global Marketer Week which took place in Morocco.

### Asia-Pacific

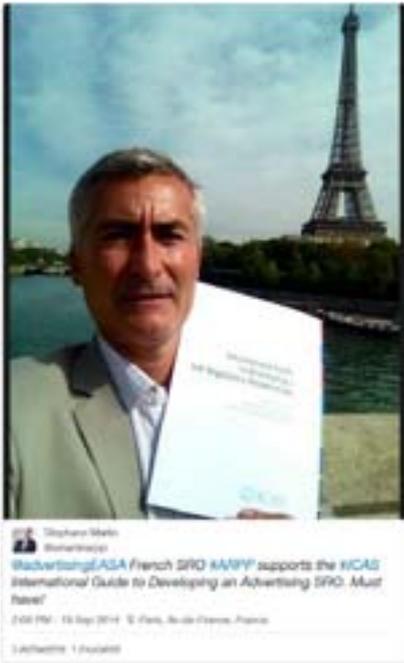
Work led by EASA's Australian member ASB, in partnership with IAA, WFA, CANA and the ICC has resulted in great developments in SR in the Asia-Pacific region. An APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) Capacity Building event held in Beijing saw ad standards being recognised by the APEC Heads of State as a way to "**reduce the cost of doing business**". They also endorsed the event's Action Agenda on Ad Standards and Practice Development which will further advance ad standards in the region.

# Products and Services

## Monitoring

EASA co-ordinates monitoring exercises to assess sectoral compliance in different markets. Over the last year EASA monitored industry compliance with voluntary commitments for three different sectors.

One example is the continued involvement of EASA in monitoring the compliance of marketing communications for food and beverage products as part of the industry voluntary commitment to the European Union Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health known as the EU Pledge. As signatories, leading Food and Drink Companies have committed to change the way they advertise to children in the EU.



## New 3E Module on Alcohol Advertising

EASA's 3E programme which helps to develop ethics in advertising through education was extended to include a special module on alcohol and advertising thanks to sponsorship from IARD – the International Alliance for Responsible Drinking. The module is now being rolled out by participating SRO's in the 3E programme.

*EASA revised its International Guide to Developing an SRO in 2014 - a key tool in developing SR systems around the world.*



## International Ad Compliance Training

The International Advertising Compliance Training (IACT) ran by Clearcast in partnership with EASA has gone from strength to strength over the last year. Three live sessions have taken place and users are now able to sign up for sector specific subscriptions.



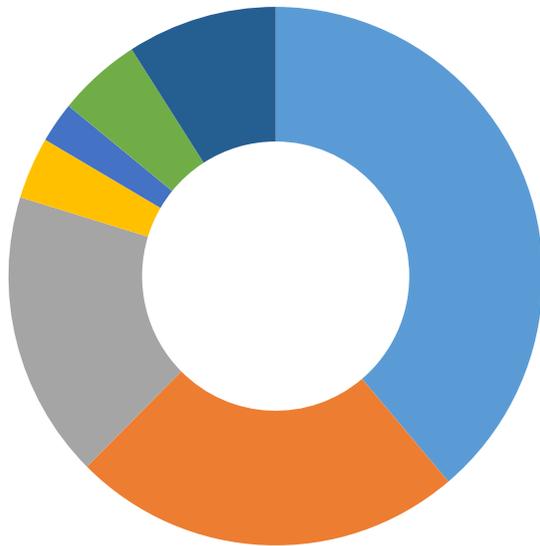
# Statistics

## European Complaint Figures 2013 \*

- 65,028 complaints related to 36,168 advertisements
- 88% of complaints handled within 2 months
- 80,067 requests for copy advice were submitted

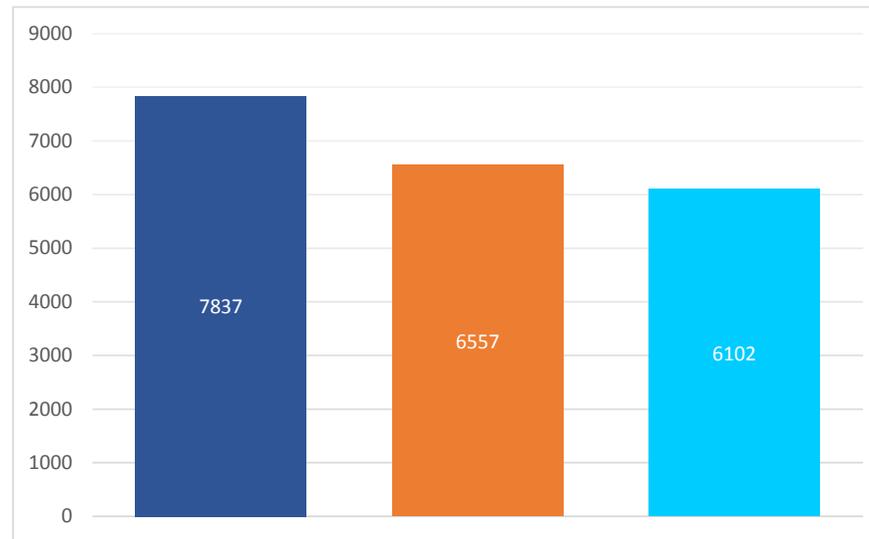
### Issues

European mean average



### Sectors

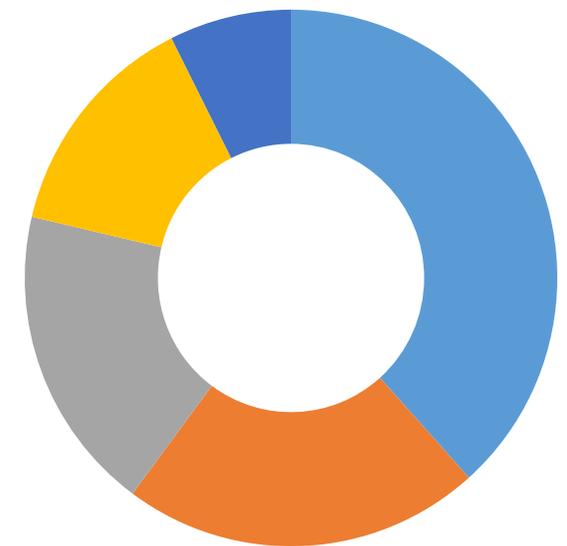
Number of cases



European mean average

### Media

European mean average



- Misleading - 38.82%
- Taste and decency - 23.68%
- Social responsibility - 17.24%
- Health and safety - 3.72%
- Privacy and data protection - 2.44%
- Denigration of competitors - 5.05%
- Other - 9.06%

- Telecommunications - 10.90%
- Food - 10.72%
- Leisure services - 10.42%

- AVMS - 32.20%
- DMC - 18.29%
- Outdoor - 15.55%
- Press/magazines - 11.69%
- Radio - 6.22%

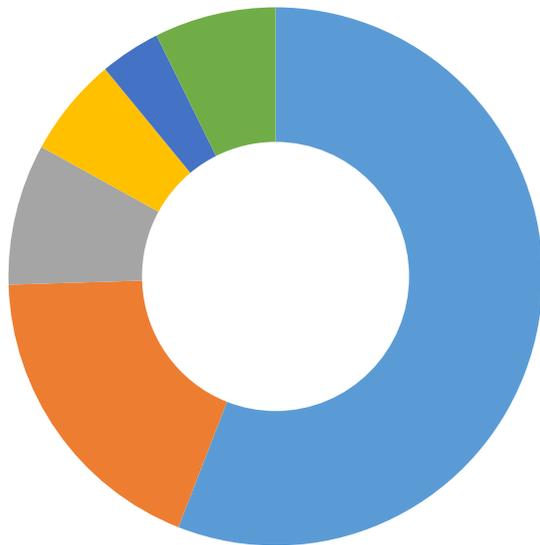
\*source: EASA 2013 Complaint Statistics Report

## International Complaint Figures 2013 \*

- 13,954 complaints related to 3,561 advertisements
- 89.35% of cases handled within 2 months

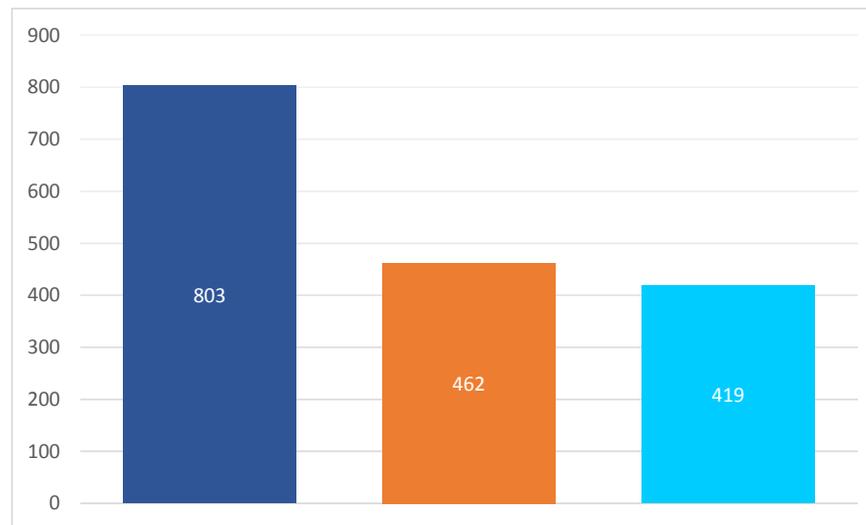
### Issues

European mean average



### Sectors

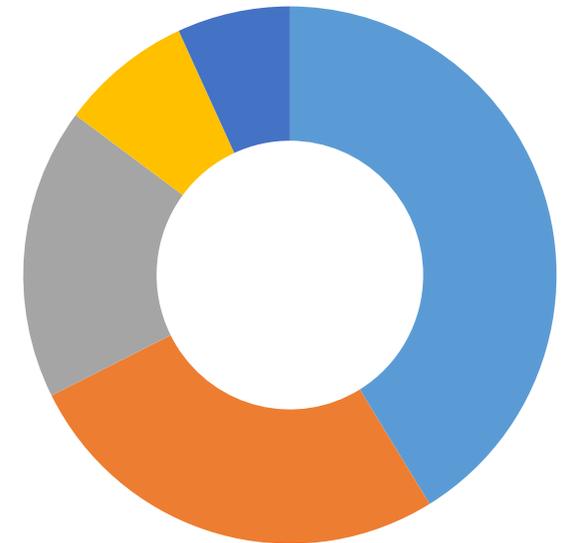
Number of cases



European mean average

### Media

European mean average



- Misleading – 55.93%
- Social responsibility – 18.59%
- Taste and decency – 8.48%
- Health and safety – 6%
- Denigration of competitors – 3.66%
- Other – 7.35%

- Health and beauty – 19.08%
- Food - 10.97%
- Retail – 9.96%

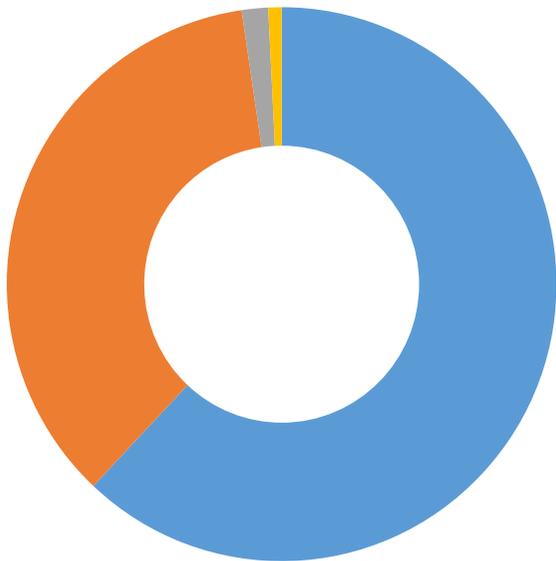
- AVMS - 36.39%
- DMC - 23.29%
- Press/magazines – 15.49%
- Outdoor - 7.07%
- Radio - 6.04%

## Cross-Border Complaints 2014 \*

- 158 cross-border complaints received
- 84% of complaints handled within 3 months

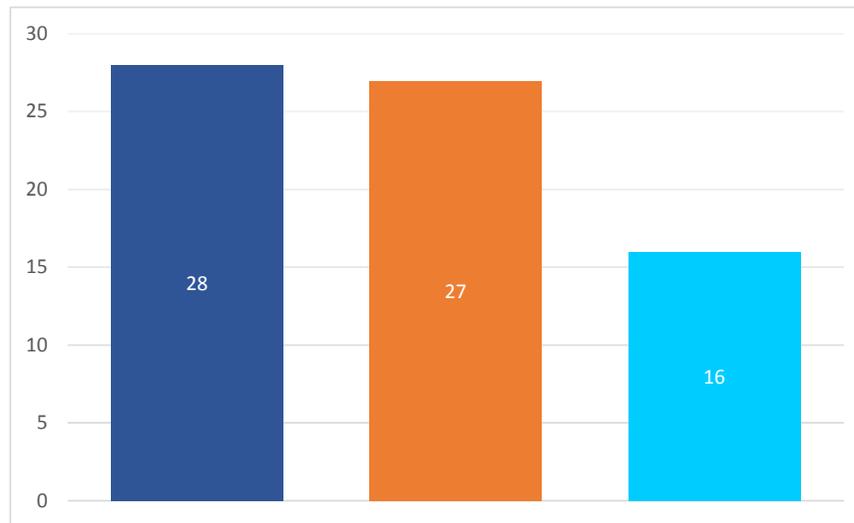
### Issues

European mean average



### Sectors

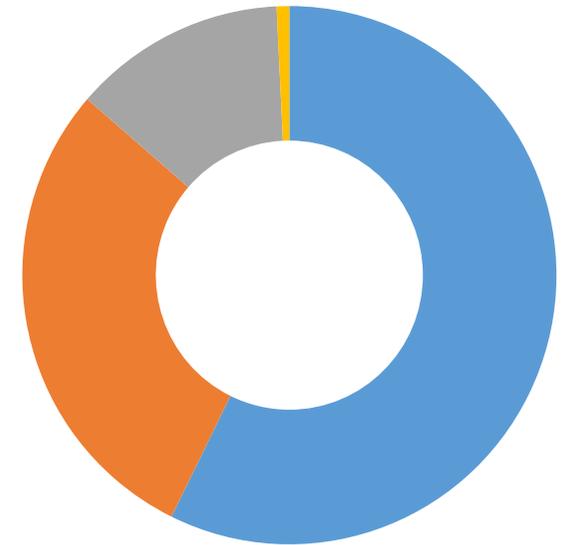
Number of Cases



European mean average

### Media

European mean average



- Misleading – 62.02%
- Taste and decency – 35.66%
- Social responsibility – 1.55%
- Privacy and data protection – 0.78%

- Leisure services – 21.70%
- Gambling and lotteries – 20.93%
- Financial services – 12.4%

- DMC – 58.14%
- Direct marketing – 27.91%
- AVMS – 13.18%
- Press/magazines – 0.78%

\*source: 2014 EASA Annual Cross-Border Complaints Report

# The Changing Face of EASA

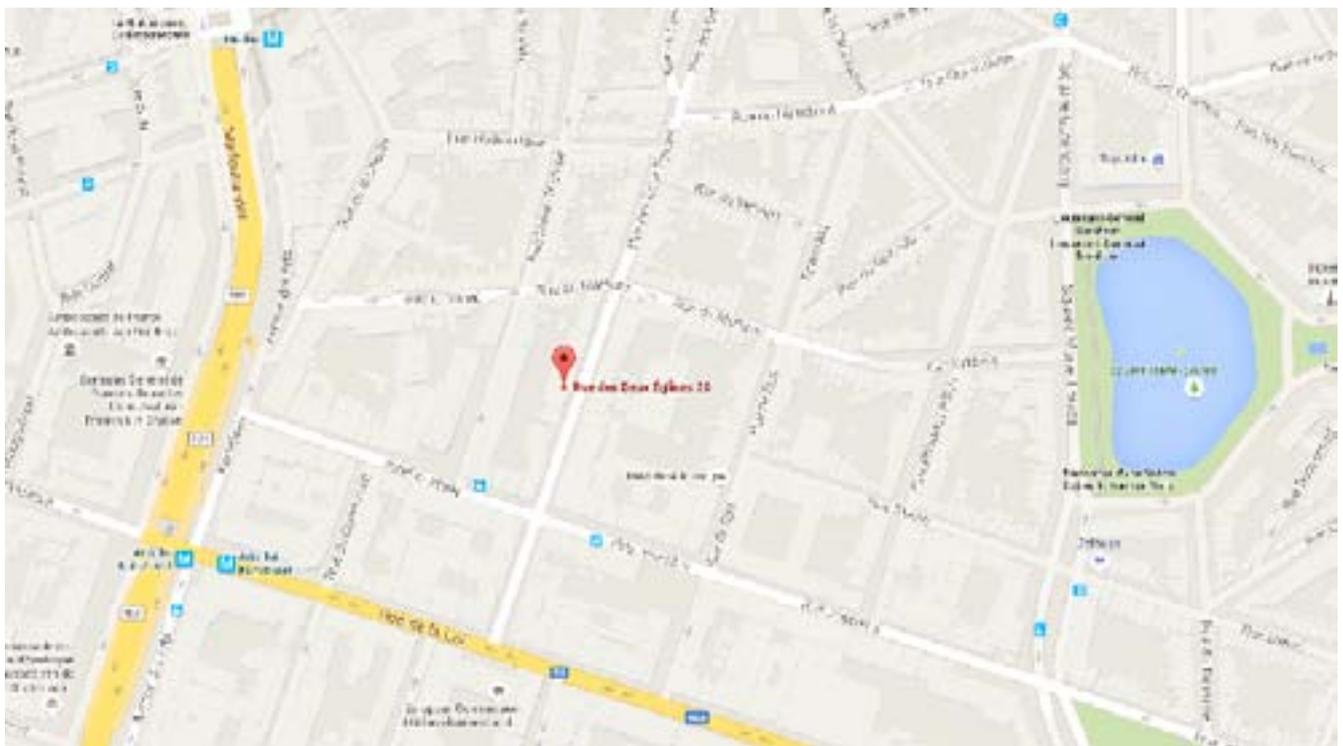
EASA moved offices to Rue des Deux Eglises 26 in September 2014, after over 20 years at Rue de la Pépinière 10A.

The move is a sign of just how far EASA has travelled over the last two decades – from its creation in 1992 to today’s vibrant network of 54 members in Europe and beyond.

Ways and means of advertising might have changed over this time, but EASA and its members remain committed to promoting high standards for advertising.



**EASA** (@AdvertisingASA) · 13 Aug 2014  
After 20 years at Rue de la Pépinière, EASA's moving office! Here's to promoting *high standards* at our new place!



# EASA Structure



## Executive Officers

Chairman Guy Parker (ASA, UK)  
 Vice-Chairman - SRO Markus Deutsch (ÖWR, Austria)  
 Vice-Chairman - Industry Dominic Lyle (EACA)  
 Treasurer Mathilde Fiquet (FEDMA)

## Self-Regulatory Committee (SR Co)

Chairman Katja Heintschel von Heinegg (DW, Germany)  
 Vice-Chairman Charo Fernando Magarzo (AUTOCONTROL, Spain)

## International Council on Ad Self-Regulation (ICAS)

Chairman Linda Nagel (ASC, Canada)  
 Vice-Chairman Fiona Jolly (ASB, Australia)

## Central and Eastern European Council (CEE Council)

Leader Konrad Drozdowski (RR, Poland)  
 Co-Leader Elly Guerganova (HCC, Bulgaria)

## Education Action Group (EDU AG)

Chairman Stéphane Martin (ARPP, France)

## Secretariat

Director General Oliver Gray  
 Director of Financial & Administrative Operations & CEE Council Coordinator Irina Little  
 European Affairs Manager Sibylle Stanciu  
 Project & Finance Coordinator Maria Tsoumou  
 Project Manager for OBA Dave Barron  
 Project & European Affairs Officer Chiara Odelli  
 Communications Manager & International Council Coordinator Jennifer Pearson  
 Administrative Assistant Ioana Mardare  
 Compliance & Digital Issues Officer Greg Mroczkowski  
 Communications Stagiaire Niklas Hjelm Smith  
 Projects Stagiaire Dimosthenis Tsioris

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