

ANNUAL REVIEW

15 | 16



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 marketing 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

EASA promotes responsible advertising by:

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

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A word from our Chairman



This year, EASA has settled into its new office and pushed ahead on three key fronts.

In Brussels, we've been busy advancing ad self-/co-regulation's merits as an essential piece of the regulatory puzzle, asking for space to pursue our mission to promote responsible advertising and seeking support. We weren't able to persuade the institutions to include an explicit reference to self-/co-regulation in the Interinstitutional Agreement, but we secured positive references in the guidance for environmental claims/compliance criteria and the European Parliament's Towards a Digital Single Market Act motion. We promoted the role and value of self-/co-regulation in the AVMSD refit and in discussions on children and advertising, food advertising and alcohol advertising. We worked with the EDAA on extending the OBA programme to mobile. We continued to produce our excellent monitoring reports. And we made the most of Oliver Gray's, Dominic Lyle's and Angela Mills Wade's close involvement in the Community of Practice (CoP), including sending the very clear message to CoP and AVMSD officials

that a prescriptive standard clause on self-/co-regulation, ironically which differs in content to the CoP's own principles for better self-/co-regulation, is not the way to go.

On the international front, it's been two steps forward one step back. But the progress we've made is almost entirely due to Jose-Domingo Gonzales Castallo's passion and skill leading our International Working Group. I don't want to jinx it, but we're hopeful we're on the way to creating a beefed-up ICAS, which for the first time includes in membership the US's Advertising Self-Regulatory Council, and which benefits from its own funding and staffing, albeit within the legal structure of EASA.

And on the home front, Oliver Gray and his wonderful team have worked hard on becoming an even more cohesive, motivated and professional Secretariat. There have been set-backs and distractions, including the departure of long-standing members of staff like Irina Little. But progress is being made and, on behalf of all EASA members, I'd like to thank the Secretariat for their devotion, their expertise and their forbearance in this challenging year.

What an honour it's been to Chair EASA and I must also thank my fellow officials Markus Deutsch, Mathilde Fiquet and Dominic Lyle for their hard work, their wisdom and their support over the past three years. We look ahead with optimism to a year of (mostly) new officials, more work on the AVMSD refit, work-to-come on the e-privacy directive and the review of the consumer acquis, our usual focus on the regulation of sensitive sector ads, a greater understanding of the implications of the new General Data Protection Regulation on the OBA programme and more progress on our international project.

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

EASA's structure

up to 31 March 2016

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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

Chairman **Katja Heintschel von Heinegg** (DWR, Germany)
Vice-Chairman **Charo Fernando** (AUTOCONTROL, Spain)

International Council on Ad Self-Regulation

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

Central and Eastern European Council

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

Education Action Group

Chairman **Stéphane Martin** (ARPP, France)

Have also been with us during 2015/16:

Jennifer Pearson Communication Officer and
ICAS Coordinator

Niklas Hjelm Smith Communication Stagiaire

Gabriel Patrick Doran Policy Stagiaire

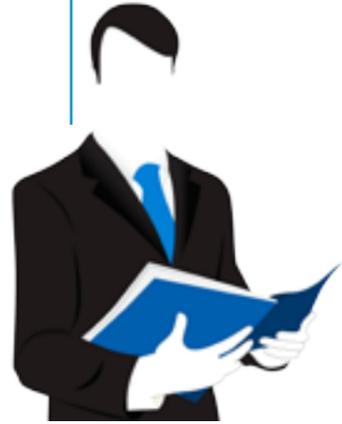
Ioana Madare Office Administrator Assistant

Irina Little Office Administrator and PA to DG

Kerensa Van Laer Office Administrator

Profile Building

Better Regulation Agenda



For almost 25 years, EASA and its members have promoted advertising self-regulation as an effective alternative policy option to detailed legislation in the field of advertising and marketing communications. We have continued to engage in the EU Commission's own Community of Practice for Better Self- and Co-Regulation (CoP) and its Steering Group.

We have welcomed the Commission's focus on better regulation and have stressed via EU consultations that early stakeholder consultations and effective impact assessments are essential. We have, therefore, supported the draft Motion for a Resolution on the Regulatory and Fitness Performance Programme: State of Play and Outlook (2014/2150(INI)) and welcomed many of the proposals put forward by the European Parliament.

We have been thrilled to see that the Commission's Better Regulation Package, which was published in May 2015, recognized the value of effective self-regulation. Both the Communication, the Better Regulation Guidelines and the "Regulatory Toolbox" that accompanies the Guidelines clearly state that well-designed non-regulatory alternatives should always be considered when designing policy options

Throughout these texts, the Principles for Better Self- and Co- Regulation, as developed by the CoP), are provided as the reference point for "well-designed non-regulatory means". We are proud that since 2004 EASA has upheld the main principles of such an approach in EASA's own Advertising Self-Regulation Charter.

Our new publication "Ad Self-Regulation IS Better Regulation", issued in April 2015, has been translated into 7 languages and has been circulated to key representatives across all EU institutions.

Advertising self-regulation is increasingly recognized as an alternative policy option at European and also international levels.

"Industry self-regulation (ISR) can play an important role in addressing consumer issues" and recommends: "The use of ISR to help address consumer issues needs to be considered systematically when policy makers and enforcement authorities are developing options for taking action".

OECD 2015

Digital Single Market

EASA has written in 2015 to many MEPs to share its thoughts about the implementation of the Digital Single Market and the role of self-regulation. We were pleased to see that the final text of the EP's response to the Digital Single Market included reference to well-designed non-regulatory means, which the EP saw as "particularly relevant and crucial in the digital environment, where technological developments often outpace legislation." The text underlined that "...it is therefore important to ensure that the legal framework is future-proof and principle based, while giving space to the relevant stakeholders to lay down more detailed rules and codes of conduct without stifling innovation and growth. Self-regulation ensures shared responsibility of all stakeholders across the EU, frees up legislative circuits and removes thus obstacles to the single market."

Audio Visual Media Service Directive

As a key stakeholder, EASA has submitted its detailed position on the EU Commission consultation on Directive 2010/13/EU on audiovisual media services (AVMSD) and has engaged with the EC's services on a continuous basis to underline the effectiveness of advertising self-regulation and the importance of self-regulatory organisations (SROs) in the enforcement of the advertising provisions of the AVMSD. In October 2015, EASA organized a workshop on the AVMSD in Brussels with all its members, stakeholders from the wider industry and the European Commission to discuss the importance of advertising self-regulation on audiovisual media and beyond. EASA was also heavily involved in providing evidence as part of dedicated EU workshops and consultations on advertising and the effectiveness of self-regulation.

EASA has presented at numerous EU and national forums on the AVMSD, highlighting the role of self-regulation in ensuring a high level of consumer protection and asking for better consideration in the new draft.



Environmental Claims

Since the EC's Multi-stakeholder dialogue on Environmental Claims (MDEC) has been set up, EASA has actively engaged with a wide range of stakeholders and European Commission representatives to discuss issues around green claims in advertising. The work of the MDEC on guidance for environmental claims was finalised in January 2016 and will be used in the general UCPD guidance issued in 2016. The result of the work was not only a study which highlighted the effectiveness of SR, but also led to the establishment of clear EU Compliance Criteria for environmental claims agreed among all stakeholders, which will be officially published by the EC in 2016.



Capacity Building

Best Practice Awards



The Austrian Werberat and the Polish SRO, Rada Reklamy, were both Gold winners in the 2015 EASA Best Practice Awards, an unprecedented tie for the top prize, highlighting the variety and quality of the entries.

Following closely, Silver was presented to the Spanish SRO Autocontrol, for the development of their national SR Programme "Guide on the use of Cookies" which complemented the EDAA OBA system. Bronze was awarded to Advertising Standards Canada for their impressive and innovative "Truth in Advertising Matters" ad-awareness campaign created by students.



Konrad Drozdowski from Rada Reklamy - Poland



Andrea Stoidl and Michael Straberger from OWR - Austria



The 2015 BPA winners

"This year's entries are about action, not just words. I really want to congratulate the SROs for the sheer quality of their entries for this year's awards and it was an absolute pleasure to discover and learn about each one."

Oliver Gray

Self-Regulatory Organisations

Following internal restructuring of the staff into principal work areas, EASA created a new focus for the support and development of SR and best practice. SRO projects are underway in Croatia, Serbia, Morocco and the United Emirates with EASA support.

Digital and Interactive Advertising

EASA led best practice discussions with SROs and industry members concerning apps, native advertising and adblocking in 2015.

2015 has seen a huge positive development for the Online Behavioural Advertising programme, led by the EDAA and supported by EASA. 12 countries and EASA SROs have now fully extended their remit to OBA and handled a number of consumer complaints, several through the EASA CBC system. An EDAA brochure on *Why should EDAA's self-regulatory programme matter to you* targeted at SROs and IABs was developed with EASA's help.

A new consumer awareness campaign was launched in 2015 with local SRO and IAB support in 3 new countries: Bulgaria, Hungary and Spain. A second wave of the consumer campaign with the new visuals was run in Germany and Portugal.

At least 1 in 4 users have clicked on the Icon in ten of the European markets surveyed

EASA and select SROs were heavily involved in both the coordination and participation in working groups looking at OBA compliance, reporting and monitoring issues. The groups led by of James Tebbett and James Craig from ASA were able to come up with a number of key recommendations for action by SROs, Certification Providers,

EASA and EDAA. A consumer complaints plugin principally for OBA was discussed and is currently undergoing testing by SROs.

EASA and the Austrian SRO, OWR and IAB supported EDAA's local OBA roadshow in Vienna, in November 2015 which helped refocus and relaunch the efforts to extend the Austrian SR system to OBA.

An independent study by TRUSTe for EDAA showed that awareness of the OBA Icon continued to rise and those who have seen the Icon are choosing to find out more with at least 1 in 4 consumers in ten European markets clicking on it. Further info can be obtained by contacting EDAA at info@edaa.eu.



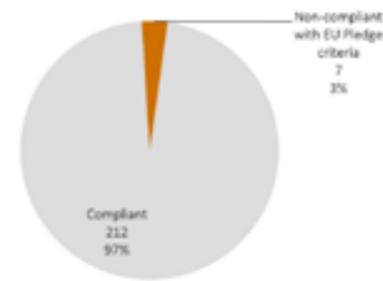
Products and Services

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 - Food, Cosmetics, Alcohol.



EU Pledge

As in 2014, EASA monitored in 2015 the compliance of marketing communications for food and beverage products as part of the industry voluntary commitment to the EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health - known as the EU Pledge. The results were presented at a workshop attended by companies, SROs and representatives of industry associations. Discussions touched upon improving compliance and the support SROs can provide to companies.



Compliance with the EU Pledge criteria



Cosmetics

EASA conducted an independent audit of the cosmetic industry's compliance with the Cosmetics Europe 2012 Charter and Guiding Principles on Responsible Advertising and Marketing Communications. The audit checked the compliance of ads against the national self-regulatory advertising codes and laws, as well as the European legal requirements across six representative European countries: France, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Sweden and the UK. The report found that 91% of the ads for cosmetics were in compliance with all relevant advertising codes/laws. A total of 1,861 advertisements were reviewed, including 577 television and 1,284 print ads aired/published over a three months period – September 2014, March and June 2015.

To improve the visibility of EASA and its members, a leaflet explaining the benefits of advertising Self-Regulation has been produced and translated into seven languages with the support of local SROs – English, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Bulgarian, German and Greek.



International Ad Self-Regulation

A specific WG was constituted under the leadership of Jose-Domingo Gomez-Castallo and has produced several designs for a reinforced international organization. Discussions have been undertaken particularly with the US SRO Advertising Self-Regulatory Council to obtain a structure that would gain their participation and support.



Fiona Jolly has continued to lead detailed work in relation to the APEC capacity building for self-regulation together with other organisations including WFA and ICC. Building on the Hanoi and Beijing meetings a further self-regulation capacity building event is being planned in Peru in the second half of 2016.

International Council of Ad Self-Regulation

ICAS was busy both in discussing the implications of the proposals to enhance international self-regulation capability, sharing best practice on funding issues and the increasing interdependency of issues relating to the regulation of advertising (food, alcohol, children, privacy) across the world.

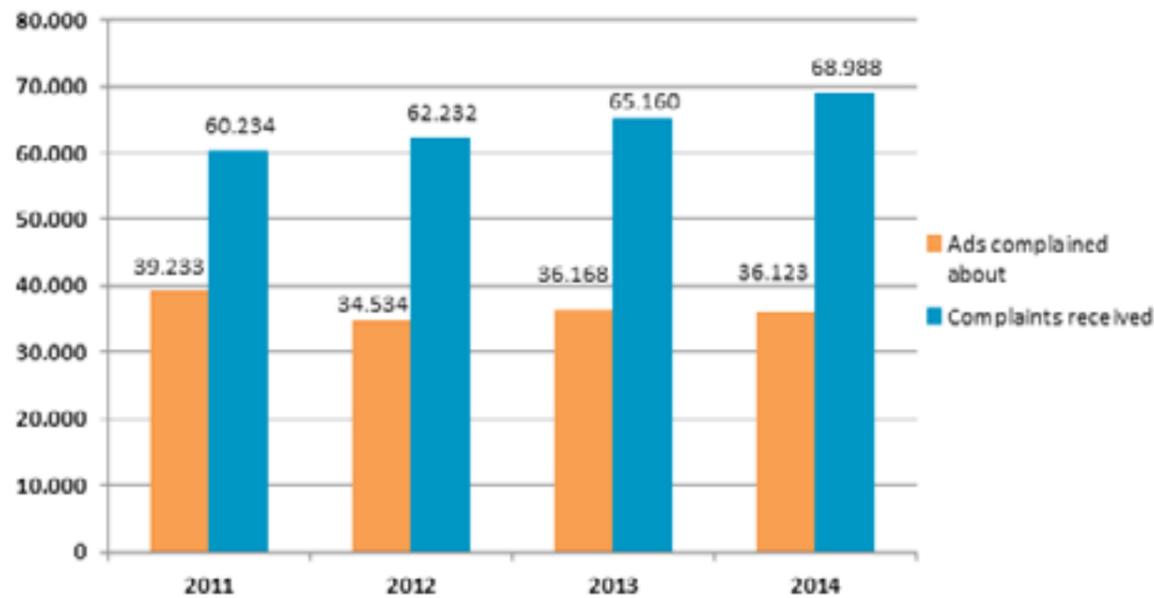
International Chamber of Commerce

As co-chair of the ICC Code Revision Taskforce, the EASA DG Oliver Gray has with Anders Stenlund led and supported the pre-assessment of the need to review the current ICC consolidated code on advertising marketing communications. A decision on the scope and timing of the revision is expected in the latter half of 2016. EASA has also participated in the ICC discussions on digital advertising and the elaboration of guidance on native advertising.

European Stats

EASA's 2014 Stats Report shows the main trends in advertising complaints and requests for copy advice and pre-clearance. Some of the key numbers are shown below.

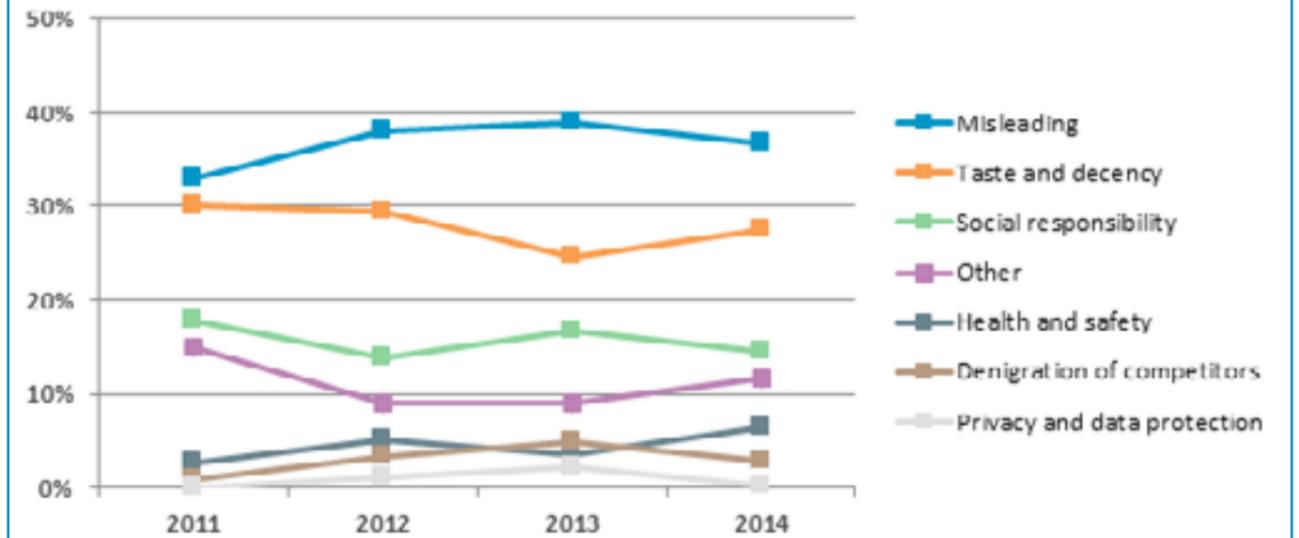
- 68,988 complaints about the content of advertisements were received in 2014 by EASA's 26 European SROs in 25 countries
- The UK and Germany accounted for 73% of all complaints received in Europe
- 39% of complaints resolved were upheld, 33% were not upheld, while 6% were resolved informally
- Misleading advertising was the most complained about issue
- Advertisements for food, leisure and telecommunication services were the most complained about on average
- Audiovisual Media Services was the most complained about medium on average but online ads received the highest share of complaints
- 158 complaints were cross-border in nature
- 77,889 requests for copy advice were submitted
- 87,960 ads were pre-cleared by the 3 SROs providing this service before going live



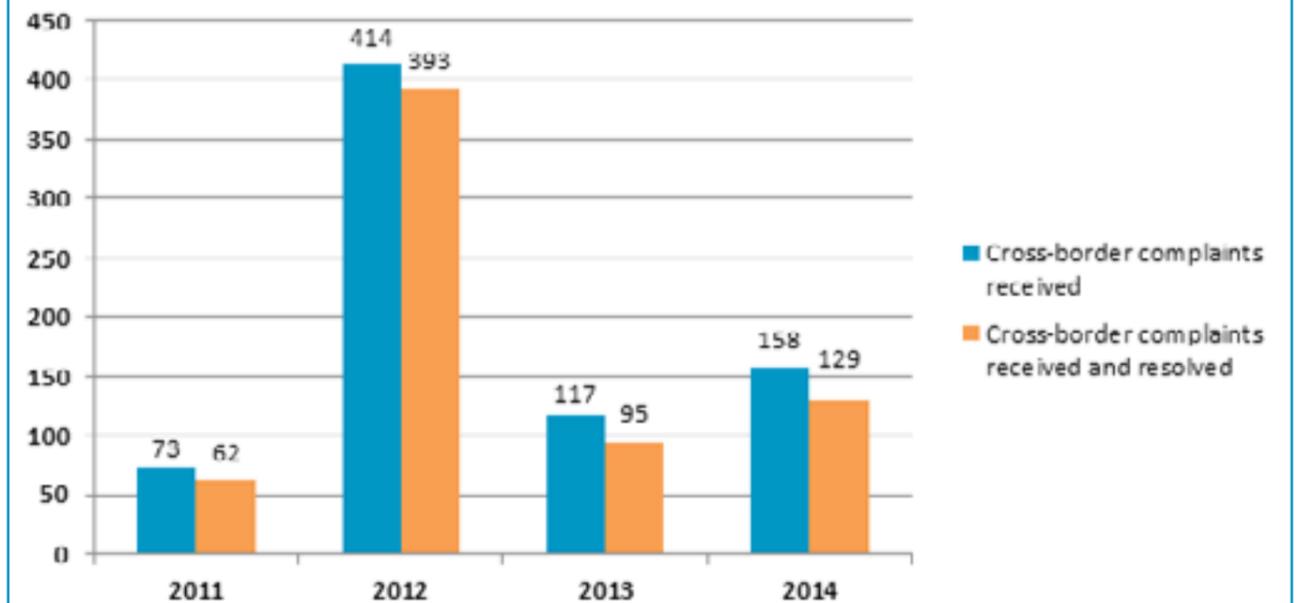
In 2014, 68,988 complaints about 36,123 advertisements

Cross Border Complaints

In 2014, SROs received a total of 158 cross-border complaints, 35% more than in 2013. Of all the cross-border complaints received, 129 were resolved over the course of 2014, and 29 were left for investigation in 2015.

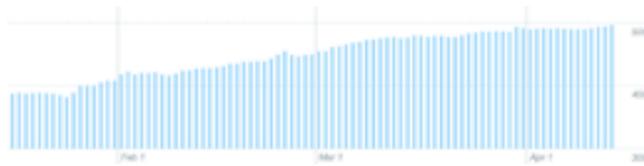


In 2014, SROs received 158 cross-border complaints, 35% more than in 2013



Social Media

EASA has been working on its visibility on the internet and on Social Media. In particular, its presence on Twitter and LinkedIn has attracted hundreds of followers. Over the last year, followers and interactions have doubled, evidence of the rising interest in Self- and Co-Regulation practice.



Twitter audience from January 2016. During the last year, EASA doubled its followers

Future Challenges

What can we expect in 2016?

- Tangible evidence that the EU will provide a standard reference to effective self- and co-regulation in legislative initiatives;
- That the AVMSD and the e-privacy directive take account of credible ad self-regulation;
- Active participation in the Consumer Acquis REFIT;
- Discussions in sectors such as food, cosmetics and alcohol advertising take account of the value of effective self-regulation
- Clarity on the implications of the new GDPR text on the existing OBA SR programme and adapting this where necessary.

And to do all of this we will need continued intellectual, moral and financial support. We hope that together we can spread the word.



25th anniversary

Yes, almost a quarter of a century has passed since EASA was born. Many things have changed from that first meeting in Athens, where the basis for a European Advertising Self-Regulatory umbrella was set. Next year EASA will be returning to Greece for its Biannual Meetings and will celebrate its 25th anniversary and the road to EU recognition of effective self-regulation.

It will be a great occasion to share memories, best practice and new perspectives with members and partners.

Contacts



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