

PRESS RELEASE

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British advertising watchdog wins EASA gold award for public code consultation

In the 7th edition of the European Advertising Standards Alliance (EASA) Best Practice Awards, the Gold prize was presented to the British self-regulatory system represented by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA). This prestigious prize was awarded for the extensive three-month public code consultation and subsequent evaluation undertaken by the Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) and the Broadcast Committee of Advertising Practice (BCAP) as part of a comprehensive review of the Advertising Codes that are independently applied by the ASA. The public consultation involved a wide cross section of stakeholders, including members of the public, the industry, the media, government and NGOs, to ensure the Codes are fit-for-purpose across all media, both now and into the future. Consumer protection and social responsibility have been maintained at the heart of the Advertising Codes to ensure that all ads are legal, decent, honest and truthful.

The EASA Best Practice Awards are presented to initiatives that implement the EASA Best Practice Recommendations in an effective and efficient way. On receiving the gold award, Shahriar Coupal, Secretary of CAP and BCAP highlighted that they had received 5,000 substantive responses to the consultation, including a large number of responses from the public. *“Winning the EASA Best Practice Gold Award is an acknowledgement that this process of consultation and evaluation has enriched the British self-regulatory system and has helped develop comprehensive and effective cross-media codes that are fit for purpose for years to come”*, said Mr Coupal.

The *Reklamombudsmannen* (Swedish self-regulatory body) won the silver award for the launch of its new website. The website not only features typical best practice characteristics such as an online complaints form, a section where all adjudications are published as well as information on advertising self-regulation, but is also extensively used as a tool to get additional funding, which has enabled the body to get over 100 new contributors.

The Bronze Award was presented to the *Österreichischer Werberat*, the Austrian self-regulatory body for the effective way in which it had consulted with a number of key stakeholders including women rights groups for the revision of its advertising code. The revised Code emphasises social issues in commercial communications such as sexual discrimination, gender neutrality and special rules of conduct (women, children, senior citizens).

The awards were presented on 15 April in Sofia, Bulgaria during a three-day series of meetings, which brought together representatives of 48 EASA members. The event was kindly hosted by the newly launched Bulgarian self-regulatory body *Национален съвет за саморегулация* (*National Council for Self-Regulation (NCSR)*).

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Notes to editors:

The **European Advertising Standards Alliance** (EASA) is a non-profit organisation based in Brussels and is the single voice of advertising self-regulation in Europe. It acts as the coordination point for advertising self-regulatory bodies and systems across Europe and beyond. EASA brings together 33 advertising self-regulatory organisations (26 from 24 European countries as well as advertising self-regulatory organisations in Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, India, New Zealand and South Africa) and 15 organisations representing the advertising industry (advertisers, agencies and the media) both globally and in Europe.

The **EASA Best Practice Award** is presented each year to the self-regulatory organisation that has most effectively implemented an element of the EASA Best Practice Model – a set of operational standards for advertising standards bodies. The jury is composed of representatives from the advertising industry associations (advertisers, agencies and media) in membership of EASA. The annual award was previously won by Turkey in 2004, South Africa in 2005, the Netherlands in 2006, Ireland in 2007, Belgium in 2008 and Slovakia in 2009.

The **EASA Best Practice Recommendations** are intended to provide detailed guidance to SRO and industry members of EASA on how to go about advertising self-regulation. They are designed to stimulate and assist national discussions on the development of self-regulation according to the Best Practice model. The Best Practice Model was put together in 2004 and describes ten component parts of the model self-regulatory systems that EASA wishes to see in place in all existing EU member states and its extended SRO membership. Having such a model helps EASA and its members to evaluate, initiate and develop effective and efficient systems across a wider Europe. It also allows the identification of areas where investment is needed to develop existing national arrangements in order to improve the provision and operation of self-regulation.