CONTENTS

		Page
1.	Introduction and background	1
2.	Results of research 2.1 Media used by product categories 2.2 Compliance by media 2.3 Non-compliance	3
3.	Poster analysis	6
4.	Conclusions	7
Appendix 1: Sample and method		8
Appendix 2: Publication list		10
Appendix 3: Explanation of product categories		13
Appendix 4: Statistical charts		14

1. Introduction and background

In December 1995, the Advertising Standards Authority published a review of advertising in the UK. The representative sample of advertisements was selected from the regional and national press and magazines, and spanned product categories. This was the first review of its kind and over 6,000 advertisements were checked for compliance with the British Codes of Advertising and Sales Promotion. The survey found that 96% of the advertisements examined were acceptable under the Codes.

In order to establish whether the compliance level has been maintained at this high level, another national advertising review was conducted in July 1998, updating the previous survey. The same methodology was used to check a representative sample of 1,060 advertisements. Full details of the methodology are outlined in Appendix 1.

In the sample of 1,060 advertisements, 57 appeared in magazines, 114 in the national press, and 889 in the regional press. A sample of 299 posters was also examined.

The 1998 Code compliance level for press and magazine advertisements was 97%; a small increase since 1995 of 1%. None of the posters examined broke the Codes but since they were selected to no statistical pattern it is not possible to declare a 100% compliance level. Nevertheless, the high compliance rate in the sample was welcome and it confirms that the poster industry has maintained the high standard of 98% achieved in the 1995 survey.

Several of the issues raised in the 1995 review were repeated in 1998. For example, the majority of the unacceptable advertisements were those that contained prices excluding VAT or were mail order advertisements which failed to give the company's full address outside the response coupon. However, other issues arising in 1995 were no longer a problem. In the 1995 survey , 30% of advertisements for alcoholic drinks were found to be unacceptable but in 1998 none of the advertisements in this category broke the Codes.

No one medium stood out as being a problem area in the 1998 review, all three media had the same high compliance rate. Again, this is an improvement since 1995, especially for magazines and the national press, which had previously carried a relatively high number of unacceptable advertisements.

There was no significant change in the media used by different sectors of advertising. Not surprisingly, a high number of advertisements for health and beauty products appeared in women's magazines and the majority of

advertisements for financial services were placed in the national press. The regional press carried the larger proportion of advertisements for property and motoring companies.

2. Results of research

2.1 Media used by product categories

Of the 1,060 advertisements in the sample, 5% appeared in magazines, 11% appeared in the national press and 84% appeared in the regional press. The weighting system used in the survey reflects the greater number of regional titles in circulation than the number of national newspapers or magazines.

Figure 1: Media choice by product category

Product Category	Magazine	National press	Regional press	Grand Total
Alcohol	0	1	0	1
Charities	2	4	10	16
Children	0	1	4	5
Clothing	2	2	37	41
Education	0	1	19	20
Electrical	4	5	23	32
Employment	1	0	52	53
Financial	3	23	30	55
Food & Drink	5	3	13	21
Fuel	0	0	4	4
Health & Beauty	12	9	46	67
Household	9	13	136	158
Industrial	0	0	14	14
Leisure	5	13	142	160
Motoring	4	16	149	169
Office	1	8	32	41
Pets	1	0	1	2
Property	1	0	88	89
Publishing	3	4	11	18
Retail	3	4	38	45
Services	0	5	27	32
Slimming	0	0	2	2
Tobacco	1	0	0	1
Transport	0	0	10	10
Travel	1	1	0	1
Grand Total	57	114	889	1060

As in the 1995 survey, there are several product categories that appear predominantly in the regional press. For example, 99% of all advertisements for property appeared in regional titles, as did 88% of motoring advertisements. Advertisers in these media target a local readership and the products and services appearing in the survey reflected that.

The only products in the sample that did not feature in the regional press were alcoholic drinks and tobacco. Advertisements for these products were mainly concentrated in magazines with an adult readership.

Advertisements for other product categories were concentrated more in other media, for example, a significant proportion (41%) of the advertisements for financial services appeared in the national press. These included advertisements by national banks and building societies for mortgages and insurance, for example.

Unsurprisingly, a large number of advertisements for health and beauty products appeared in women's magazines. These tended to be advertisements for manufacturers of household name products for skin creams and cosmetics, while the regional press carried a number of advertisements for local health and beauty services such as salons and hairdressers.

2.2 Compliance by media

The primary reason for conducting this survey was to establish the overall compliance level of advertisements with the Codes. In order to ascertain this, each advertisement was individually examined and assessed for compliance.

It was reassuring to find that, of the 1,060 advertisements assessed, 1,031 (97%) were acceptable under the rules in the Codes. Although not statistically significant the improvement since 1995 of 1% demonstrates high standards of compliance with the Codes.

Figure 2: Compliance by media

Media	**Acceptable**	**Unacceptable**	**Grand Total**
Magazine	55	2	57
National press	111	3	114
Regional press	865	24	889
Grand Total	1031	29	1060

It is significant that all media carried approximately the same proportion of unacceptable advertisements, a compliance level of around 97%. In the 1995 sample this was not the case: Magazines had the lowest compliance level at only 90%, the national press level was 94% and the regional press had the highest level with 97%. Both magazines and the national press have made a substantial improvement in compliance since 1995.

2.3 Non-compliance

As in 1995, the unacceptable advertisements in 1998 fell into two distinct categories, technical and substantive. Technical problems are those which require only a slight alteration to make the advertisement acceptable. A substantive breach, however, is where the whole platform on which the advertisement is based is unacceptable.

The unacceptable advertisements in the 1998 sample were made up of 74% technical breaches and 26% substantive breaches. This also shows an improvement since 1995 when 45% of all unacceptable advertisements contained substantive problems. Although technical breaches are no less serious than substantive ones they are usually easier to correct and, although they can be irritating for consumers, such problems are less likely generally to mislead.

The technical problems fell into two categories; advertisements containing prices that exclude VAT and mail order advertisements that failed to give the advertisers' address outside the response coupon. These problems appeared in advertisements across several product categories and did not appear to be concentrated in any one particular industry. Similarly, these advertisements appeared in all media.

The substantive breaches were predominantly in the health and beauty sector and related to claims for improved health or pain relief for which the ASA has not yet seen sufficient substantiation. For example, one advertisement offered relief from rheumatism by using emu oil and another claimed to calm nerves by taking a herbal concoction. The ASA Research team has contacted the advertisers about these claims to check the evidence held in their support. Where there was insufficient substantiation the advertisers have been asked to amend their claims in line with the Codes.

In contrast to the 1995 survey, none of the advertisements for alcoholic drinks broke the Codes in the1998 sample.

3. Poster analysis

In addition to the survey of press advertisements, a sample of posters was checked for Code compliance. Unlike the press survey, which was conducted using a statistical sample of advertisements, the poster methodology was selected to no statistical pattern. As a result no direct comparison can be made with the 1995 poster compliance rate of 98%. However, it was reassuring to find that none of the posters checked in 1998 revealed a problem under the Codes.

The sample

In total 299 advertisements were collected for the poster sample, including 129 duplicates. Most of the posters used in the sample were collected by external consultants. They randomly selected a number of posters that appeared in the first two weeks of July and the sample covered approximately 90% of the campaigns that appeared in all sizes during the survey period. TDI Advertising also provided a selection of posters that appeared on transport media.

The sample was weighted to provide a more accurate representation of the likely exposure gained by each type of poster.

Although the advertisements gave a reasonably varied sample which represented the different categories sufficiently, in view of the fact that the selected sample was not representative, the findings for posters are only indicative of the levels of compliance.

The findings

Of the 299 posters examined in 1998, none broke the Codes. In the representative sample of 195 advertisements collected in 1995, 2% broke the Codes.

The most frequently advertised product in 1998 was cars (22%) which is not surprising given that the sample was collected just prior to the arrival of the new number plates in August. 20% of posters were for health and beauty products and 11% of the advertisements were for food and drink.

Thanks are given to Site Reports and TDI Advertising for their help in compiling the sample.

4. Conclusions

This survey updates the National Advertising Review of 1995 which checked levels of compliance with the British Codes of Advertising and Sales Promotion for press and poster advertising in the UK.

The 1998 compliance rate of 97% for advertisements in newspapers and magazines is encouraging and, while the poster sample was not based on a statistical pattern, the lack of problems revealed in that high profile medium is indicative of the outdoor advertising industry's commitment to high advertising standards. The ASA will continue to work with the advertising industry to keep these standards high.

The 1998 survey revealed some familiar problems, such as failing to include VAT in advertised prices and the omission of details in mail order advertisements. The ASA will continue to advise advertisers and the media of their obligations in this respect and regular checks are carried out to identify and address these problems.

The health and beauty industry has been working with the ASA to ensure that advertisers are aware of the Codes' requirements and are able to substantiate claims made. A comprehensive survey of health and beauty advertisements was carried out in 1997 which revealed an improvement in compliance in this industry. This sector did not feature as a problem in the 1998 national advertising review. However, it is essential that advertisers and publishers remain vigilant to maintain these improvements.

The ASA Research team will continue to monitor advertising across all non-broadcast media and all sectors of the industry to ensure that this high compliance level is maintained.

Appendix 1 - Sample and method

The sampling technique for the 1998 survey is based on the same methodology as that used in 1995. This was devised for the ASA using the services of an independent research consultant from Macdonald Research.

The technique used provided a sample of 1,060 advertisements including duplicates, which was representative of those appearing across newspaper and magazines. Within the sample, 465 were taken from magazines, 235 from the national press and 360 appeared in the regional press. A list of the publications used in the sample is provided in Appendix 2. Every effort was made to use the same publications as the 1995 survey, in some cases, however, this was not possible. Since 1995, some new titles have been launched and others have ceased publication.

The national and regional titles and weekly magazines appeared between 1-14 July 1998 and monthly magazines appeared throughout July 1998. Five, ten or fifteen advertisements were selected according to the size of readership. The criteria for selecting advertisements from publications were as follows:

1. The number of pages in the publication were counted
?
2. Irrespective of the frequency of advertisers per page or their relative size, the interval between pages from which advertisements were to be taken was calculated by taking the number of pages and dividing by the number of advertisements required from the publication. This was rounded to the nearest whole number.
?
3. A page number was selected at random between one and the interval number.
?
4. The page was read alternately from top left or bottom right of the page and the first advertisement reached was selected (if none appeared on that page, one would be selected from the next page of advertisements).
?
5. When an advertisement was selected, the number of pages given by the interval was counted and the process repeated. If the end of the issue was reached before the required number of advertisements was obtained, the counting continued from the beginning of the publication.

For each advertisement examined, the following information was noted: publication type, title, issue date, product category and type of breach of the Codes, where applicable.

A list of product categories is provided in Appendix 4. The most appropriate product category from the list was chosen for each advertisement. Weights were applied to the figures in each stratum so that cross-strata comparisons could be made. The coefficients applied were as follows:

Strata	**Weights**
National daily newspapers	0.72
National Sunday newspapers	0.17
Regional daily newspapers	4.42
Regional paid weekly newspapers	0.82
Regional Sunday newspapers	0.09
Free newspapers	1.36
Weekly/fortnightly women's magazines	0.18
Weekly/fortnightly general interest magazines	0.12
Weekly/fortnightly special interest magazines	0.14
Monthly/bimonthly/quarterly women's magazines	0.11
Monthly/bimonthly/quarterly general interest magazines*	
substratum 1	0.05
substratum 2	0.02
Monthly/bimonthly/quarterly special interest magazines	0.14

These weights were obtained by dividing the proportion of all issues examined in each stratum by the average across all strata. This procedure keeps the number of weights across the whole sample to a minimum since the average of the weights across all strata is one.

*As three general monthly magazines had proportionately higher circulation figures, they would have dominated this stratum. This stratum was therefore substratified.

Appendix 2 - Publication list

National dailies

Daily Express
Daily Mail
Daily Mirror
Daily Record
Daily Star
Daily Telegraph
Guardian
Independent
The Sun
Times

National Sundays

Independent on Sunday
Mail on Sunday
News of the World
Observer
The People
Sunday Express
Sunday Mirror
Sunday Telegraph
Sunday Times

Regional Dailies

Belfast Telegraph
Birmingham Evening Mail
Birmingham Post
Brighton Evening Argus
Colchester Evening Gazette
Derby Evening Telegraph
Dundee Evening Telegraph
Evening Standard
Express & Star
(Glasgow) Evening Times
Greenock Telegraph
(Glasgow) The Herald
Leicester Mercury
Manchester Evening News
Northern Chronicle & Echo
(Darlington) Northern Echo
Norwich Evening News
Portsmouth The News
Scarborough Evening News
Shropshire Star
South Shields Gazette
Southern Daily Echo
(Cardiff) South Wales Echo
Swindon Evening Advertiser
Teeside Evening Gazette
Western Mail
(Plymouth)Western Morning News
Yorkshire Evening Press

Regional paid weeklies

Aldershot News
Banbury Guardian
Blackpool Evening Gazette
Burnley Express
Chester Chronicle
Clitheroe Advertiser and Times
Dumfries & Galloway Standard
Essex Chronicle
Farnham Herald
Grantham Journal
Malvern Gazette & Ledbury Reporter
Nelson Leader

Regional paid weeklies (cont)

Newbury Weekly News
Oban Times & W Highland Times
Oxford Times
Ripley & Heanor News
Somerset County Gazette
Surrey Herald/News
Tamworth Herald
The West Briton
Western Gazette
Whitehaven News

Regional Sundays

Sunday Post

Regional Frees

Ashford - KM Extra
Ayrshire World
Bolton Journal
Bridgend Post
Bristol Observer
Cheltenham News
Darlington Advertiser
Dearne Valley Weekender
Ealing Leader
East Belfast Herald & Post
Leicester Mail
Peterborough Citizen
Plymouth Evening Herald
Sale & Altrincham Messenger
Sheffield Weekly Gazette
Solihull News
West Lothian Herald & Post
Wirral Globe

Woman's Weeklies/Fortnightlies

Bella
Best
Chat
Hello!
Just Seventeen
More!
My Weekly
People's Friend
Take A Break
Woman
Woman's Own
Woman's Weekly

General Weeklies/fortnightlies

Daltons Weekly
The Economist
New Scientist
Radio Times
TV Quick
TV & Satellite Week
TV Times
The Weekly News
What's On TV

Specialised weeklies/fortnightlies

Amateur Photographer
Anglers Mail
Autocar & Motor
Autotrader
Big!
Country Life
Garden News
Match
Melody Maker
Motorcycle News
Shoot!
Smash Hits

Women's monthlies/quarterlies

19
BBC Good Food
Company
Cosmopolitan
Elle
Essentials
Family Circle
Good Housekeeping
Homes & Gardens
House Beautiful
Living
Marie Claire
New Woman
OK! Magazine
Practical Parenting
Prima
She
Vogue
Woman & Home

General monthlies

Arena
Choice
Empire
Esquire
Fiesta
GQ
Moneywise
Premiere
Satellite TV Europe
The Scot's magazine
Viz

General monthlies/bi-monthlies

Candis
Readers Digest
Saga Magazine

Specialised monthlies/bi-monthlies

BBC Gardener's World
BBC Music Magazine
Classic Cars
Garden Answers
Performance Bikes
Q
Today's Golfer
Yachting World

Appendix 3 - Explanation of product categories

Alcoholic drinks
more than 1.2% alcohol by volume

Audiovisual & electrical appliances
including audio equipment, photography, television, video equipment and household appliances

Children
including baby equipment and toys

Clothing
including footwear

Education
including language courses

Employment
including business opportunities and recruitment

Financial
including accountancy, banks and building societies, credit, insurance, investments, loans, mortgages and taxation

Food and drink
non-alcoholic drinks and all food including confectionery

Fuel
including heating, insulation, petrol stations and energy saving

Health & beauty
including cosmetics and toiletries, dental, hair products, health equipment, medical, medical care and nutrition

Household
including cleaning materials, furnishings, furniture, gardening, house fittings, jewellery and collectibles

Industrial and engineering including agricultural, construction and industrial safety

Leisure
including entertainment, holidays, musical instruments, sewing, sports, clubs and hobbies

Motoring
including car accessories, driving tuition and motoring associations

Non-commercial
including charities, government departments, local authorities, pressure groups and trade unions

Office
including stationary, computers, copiers and telecommunications

Pets
including food and health care

Property
including estate agencies and housing associations

Publishing
including books, newspapers and subscriptions

Retail
including auctions and sales

Services
including advisory, domestic services, funerals, introduction agencies, legal and postal services

Slimming
including all products advertised on a slimming platform

Tobacco
including accessories

Travel and transportation
including freight, hire, rail, luggage and season tickets

Appendix 4 - Statistical charts

Unweighted sample

Product by media:

Product Category	Magazines	National press	Regional press	Grand Total
Alcohol	5	2	0	7
Charities	3	9	3	15
Children	2	1	1	4
Clothing	17	7	14	38
Education	1	1	6	8
Electrical	37	8	10	55
Employment	6	1	21	28
Financial	27	35	10	72
Food & drink	41	5	6	52
Fuel	0	0	1	1
Health & beauty	100	21	19	140
Household	70	25	60	155
Industrial	1	0	8	9
Leisure	46	28	51	125
Motoring	36	35	63	134
Office	8	18	8	34
Pets	3	1	1	5
Property	6	1	47	54
Publishing	25	9	5	39
Retail	24	15	11	50
Services	0	9	10	19
Slimming	1	1	1	3
Tobacco	3	0	0	3
Transport	0	1	4	5
Travel	3	2	0	5
Grand Total	465	235	360	1060

Compliance by product:

Product Category	Acceptable	Unacceptable	Grand Total
Alcohol	7	0	7
Charities	15	0	15
Children	2	2	4
Clothing	38	0	38
Education	8	0	8
Electrical	52	3	55
Employment	28	0	28
Financial	72	0	72
Food & drink	52	0	52
Fuel	1	0	1
Health & beauty	129	11	140
Household	151	4	155
Industrial	7	2	9
Leisure	123	2	125
Motoring	132	2	134
Office	29	5	34
Pets	5	0	5
Property	54	0	54
Publishing	35	4	39
Retail	49	1	50
Services	19	0	19
Slimming	1	2	3
Tobacco	3	0	3
Transport	5	0	5
Travel	5	0	5
Grand Total	1022	38	1060

Compliance by media:

Media	Acceptable	Unacceptable	Grand Total
Magazines	449	16	465
National press	223	12	235
Regional press	350	10	360
Grand Total	1022	38	1060

Weighted sample

Product by media:

Product Category	Magazine	National press	Regional press	Grand Total
Alcohol	0.4	0.9	0.0	1.3
Charities	1.7	4.5	10.2	16.4
Children	0.2	0.2	4.4	4.8
Clothing	2.0	2.3	36.5	40.9
Education	0.0	0.7	19.1	19.9
Electrical	3.9	4.7	23.2	31.8
Employment	0.7	0.2	52.4	53.3
Financial	3.0	22.6	29.6	55.2
Food & drink	5.4	3.1	13.2	21.6
Fuel	0.0	0.0	4.4	4.4
Health & beauty	12.4	9.1	45.7	67.2
Household	8.9	13.1	136.4	158.4
Industrial	0.1	0.0	14.3	14.4
Leisure	5.3	13.1	142.2	160.6
Motoring	4.4	16.0	149.0	169.4
Office	0.9	8.1	31.8	40.8
Pets	0.5	0.2	0.8	1.5
Property	0.8	0.2	87.8	88.8
Publishing	3.0	3.8	11.1	17.9
Retail	3.0	4.3	38.4	45.7
Services	0.0	4.9	26.8	31.6
Slimming	0.2	0.2	1.4	1.7
Tobacco	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.2
Transport	0.0	0.2	10.3	10.5
Travel	0.4	1.4	0.0	1.8
Grand Total	57.4	113.6	889.0	1060.0

Compliance by product:

Product Category	Acceptable	Unacceptable	Grand Total
Alcohol	1.3	0.0	1.3
Charities	16.4	0.0	16.4
Children	4.5	0.3	4.8
Clothing	40.9	0.0	40.9
Education	19.9	0.0	19.9
Electrical	22.9	8.9	31.8
Employment	53.3	0.0	53.3
Financial	55.2	0.0	55.2
Food & drink	21.6	0.0	21.6
Fuel	4.4	0.0	4.4
Health & beauty	60.8	6.4	67.2
Household	155.4	3.0	158.4
Industrial	9.2	5.2	14.4
Leisure	159.7	0.9	160.6
Motoring	169.0	0.3	169.4
Office	39.4	1.4	40.8
Pets	1.5	0.0	1.5
Property	88.8	0.0	88.8
Publishing	16.7	1.2	17.9
Retail	45.5	0.2	45.7
Services	31.6	0.0	31.6
Slimming	0.2	1.5	1.7
Tobacco	0.2	0.0	0.2
Transport	10.5	0.0	10.5
Travel	1.8	0.0	1.8
Grand Total	1030.7	29.3	1060.0

Compliance by media:

Media	Acceptable	Unacceptable	Grand Total
Magazine	55.5	1.9	57.4
National press	110.4	3.2	113.6
Regional press	864.8	24.2	889.0
Grand Total	1030.7	29.3	1060.0