



Community standards research – 10 year overview

The Advertising Standards Bureau (The Bureau) regularly commissions research to assess the extent to which decisions of the Advertising Standard Board (the Board) align with community views. In 2017, this research included a ten year overview of alignment of Board decisions under the AANA Code of Ethics (the Code).

This fact sheet provides an overview of the research results, and summarises additional research findings in the areas of community concerns and perceptions of acceptability of advertising, and awareness of and support for the work of the Bureau and Board.

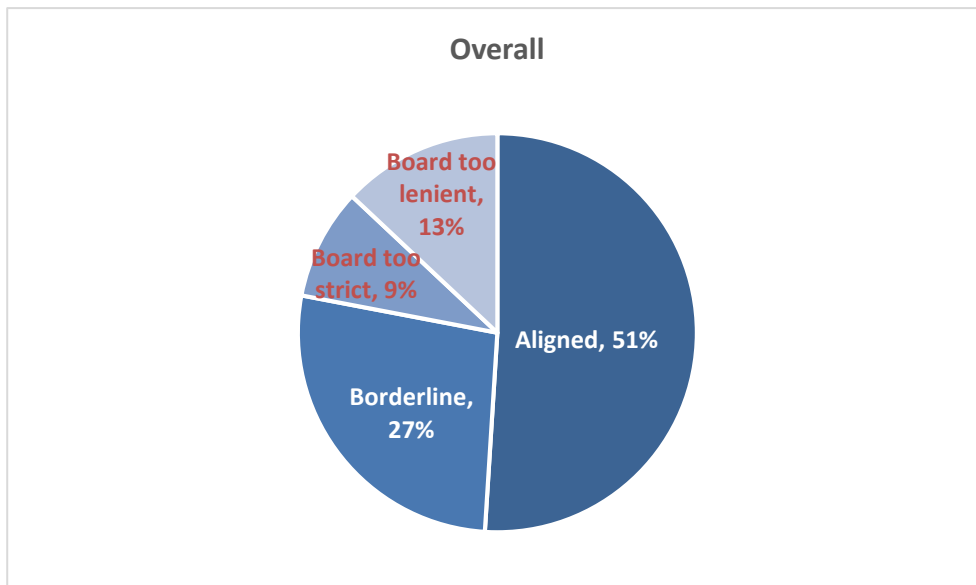
The full report will be available from the Ad Standards website next month.

Board alignment with community standards since 2007

Overall, the findings show that the Board's decisions have been largely aligned with the majority of community opinion.

The research shows that 78% of the time Board decisions have either aligned or not been inconsistent with a majority community opinion (with the community view directly aligning with the Board view 51% of the time, and the community view being mixed 27% of the time).

Approximately one in five decisions (22%) by the Board have been at odds with majority community opinion. In these instances, majority community opinion was more conservative 13% of the time, whereas the Board was more conservative 9% of the time.

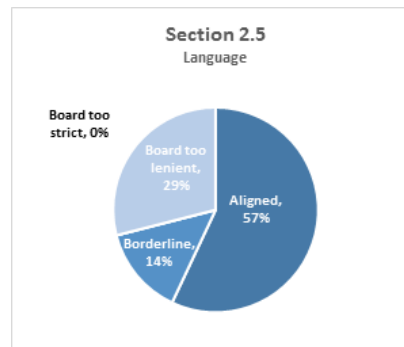
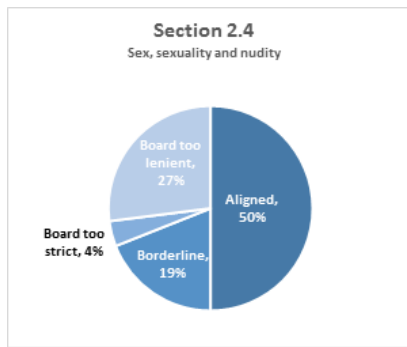
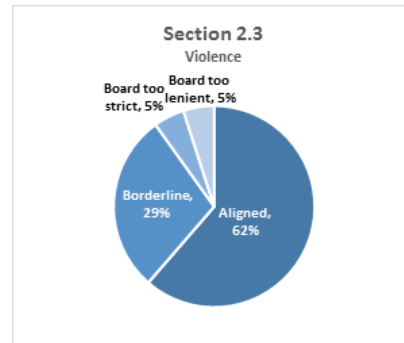
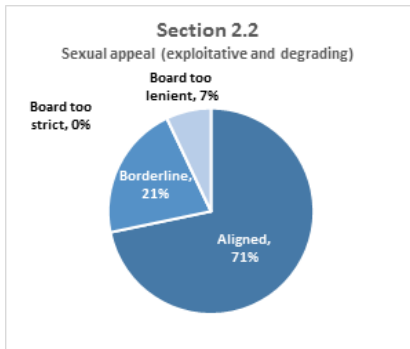


The Board is well aligned with community views in the areas of:

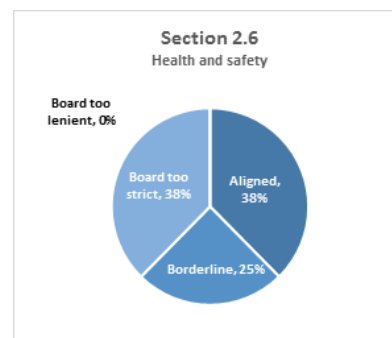
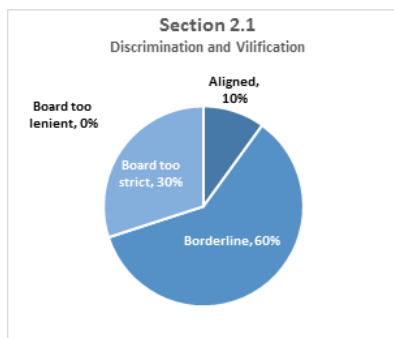
- Section 2.2 - Sexual Appeal – Exploitative and Degrading (71%),
- Section 2.3 - Violence (62%), and
- Section 2.5 - Language (57%).



Where majority community opinion was more conservative than Board decisions ie: the Board dismissed complaints where the community would not have, this was more commonly in relation to sections 2.4 (SSN) and 2.5 (Language). These sections require more conservative Board decision-making to better align with community opinion.



The Board is less well aligned for decisions relating to section 2.1 (discrimination, 10%) and section 2.6 (health and safety, 38%). However, although less aligned in these two areas, Board decisions were more conservative than majority community opinion ie: the Board upheld complaints about material more than the community would have. In these areas less conservative Board decision-making would better align with majority community opinion.



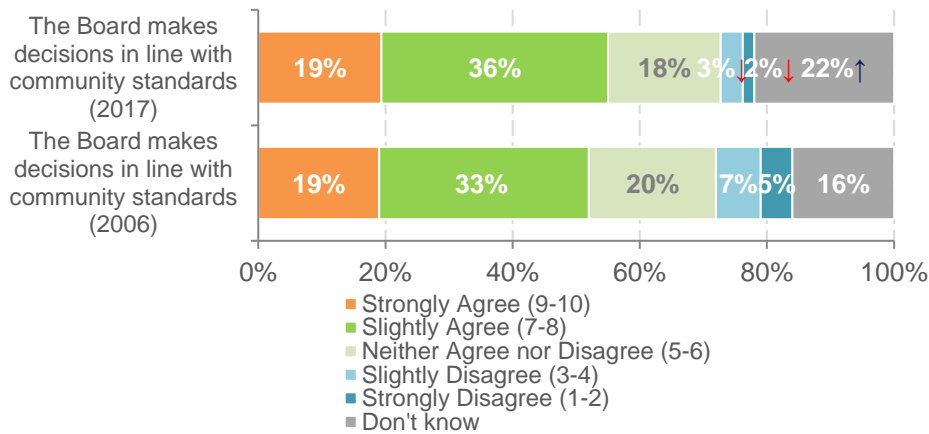
Community opinion was most polarised on advertising regarding section 2.1 Discrimination.



Board decisions in line with community standards

Among all respondents 55% agree that the Board makes decisions in line with community standards. This result was not significantly different to 2006. Almost one quarter (22%) indicated not being sure, a significant increase of 6% since 2006

Board statements – The Board makes decisions in line with community standards



Q30. Using a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is strongly disagree and 10 is strongly agree, how much do you disagree or agree that... The Board makes decisions in line with community standards.

Base=All respondents n=1,249; 2006 Community awareness research n=600.

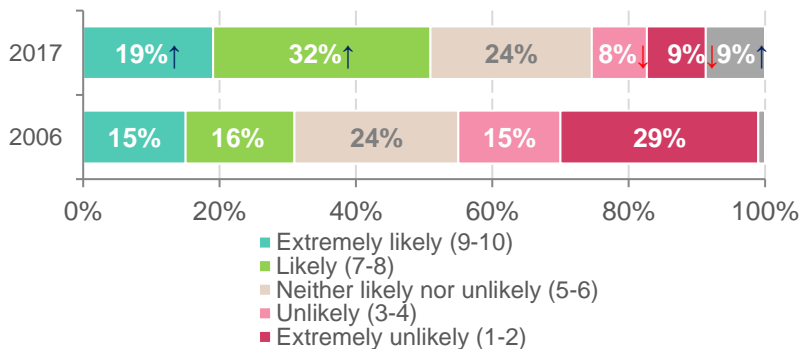
Reactions to the AANA Code of Ethics

Overall, there is ongoing and strong agreement with the various aspects of the AANA Code of Ethics (the Code). More than three quarters of the community agreed or strongly agreed with the need for and the content of all of the sections of the Code both in 2007 and 2017.

Likelihood of people complaining to ASB

The likelihood of people complaining to the ASB if they have a concern about advertising has increased significantly.

Likelihood of complaining to the Advertising Standards Bureau



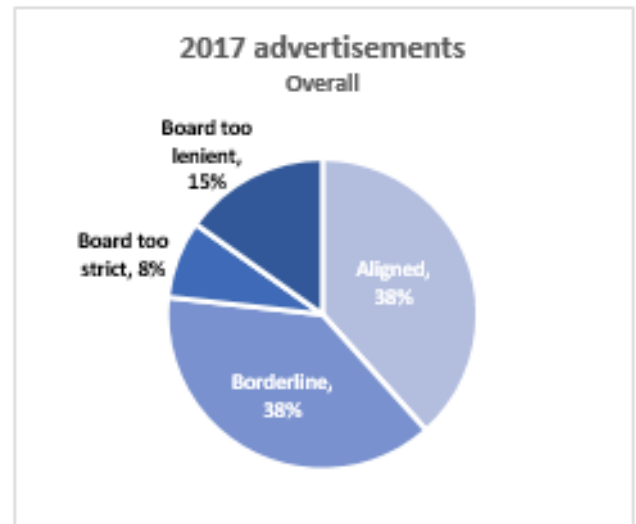
Q28 If you had a concern about advertising standards in relation to language, discriminatory portrayal of people, suitability for your children, portrayals of violence, sex, sexuality, nudity or health and safety, using a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is extremely unlikely and 10 is extremely likely, how unlikely or likely would you be to make a complaint to the Advertising Standards Bureau? (Single response)



The 2017 results: recent advertisements considered

In considering the part of the research which focussed on 13 recent advertisements, results showed that the Board:

- Correctly upheld complaints against two ads that were deemed unacceptable by the community;
- Correctly dismissed complaints against three ads that were deemed acceptable by the community;
- Conservatively upheld complaints against one ad that was deemed acceptable by the community, and a further two ads where community opinion was mixed, i.e. there was no statistically significant majority;
- Dismissed complaints against two ads that were deemed unacceptable by the community, and a further three ads where community opinion was mixed.



When examining acceptability of the advertisements only gender showed consistent variations in acceptability. Females were significantly more likely than males to consider all of the 13 advertisements to be unacceptable.

In almost all cases, the proportion of the general public believing each advertisement was unacceptable increased after reading the relevant section of the Code.

What we do with the research

Results from the research:

- Informs the Board about its alignment with community views. This material is discussed with the Board during training, and impacts decision making in an ongoing way.
- Informs AANA about alignment of the Code with community views and of emerging community concerns.
- Informs Ad Standards Bureau about awareness and assists in design of communication and awareness campaigns for the future.