



The Advertising Standards Council Of India

Ms. Abanti Sankaranarayanan, elected as the New Chairman of ASCI

Mumbai, September 14, 2017: At the Board Meeting of The Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) held immediately after the AGM today, **Ms. Abanti Sankaranarayanan, Former Vice Chairman, Confederation of Indian Alcoholic Beverage Companies (CIABC)** was unanimously elected as the Chairman of the Board of ASCI. As the member of the Board of Governors for four years, Ms. Sankaranarayanan, also Chief Strategy & Corporate Affairs Officer at Diageo India, and member of its Executive Committee, is an accomplished business leader, having steered pivotal roles across functions in the consumer products and luxury industry for over two decades now.

Mr. D. Shivakumar, Chairman & CEO PepsiCo India Holdings P. Ltd. was elected as the Vice-Chairman and **Mr. Shashidhar Sinha, CEO, Media Brands Pvt. Ltd.** was re-appointed as the Honorary Treasurer.

Other members of the Board of Governors are **Mr. Al Rajwani** (Managing Director & Chief Executive, Procter & Gamble Hygiene and Health Care Ltd.), **Mr. Benoy Roychowdhury** (Executive Director, HT Media Ltd.), **Mr. Gurmit Singh** (Vice President – India Business, Oath), **Mr. N.S. Rajan** (Global Partner & Managing Director, Ketchum Sampark Pvt. Ltd.), **Mr. Narendra Ambwani** (Director, Agro Tech Foods Ltd.), **Mr. Prashant Singh** (Managing Director, Nielsen India Region), **Mr. Raj Jain** (Chief Executive Officer, Bennett, Coleman & Co. Ltd.), **Mr. Rohit Gupta** (President - Network Sales & International Business, Sony Pictures Networks India Pvt. Ltd.), **Mr. Sandeep Kohli** (Executive Director & Vice President, Personal Care, Hindustan Unilever Ltd.), **Mr. S.K. Palekar** (Adjunct Professor & Advisor - Executive Education, Institute of Management Technology), **Mr. Srinivasan K. Swamy** (Chairman & Managing Director, R K SWAMY BBDO P. Ltd.), **Mr. Subhash Kamath** (Managing Partner, BBH Comms India Pvt. Ltd.) and **Mr. Sunil Lulla** (Chairman & Managing Director, GREY Group – India).

Mr. S. K. Swamy, the outgoing Chairman, ASCI, said, *“2016-17 has been an interesting year for ASCI as it marked some impressive advancements. In a noteworthy achievement, ASCI received positive re-enforcement for the role it plays as a self-regulatory body in a landmark Supreme Court Judgement. Renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with The Department of Consumer Affairs (DoCA) which is currently on its third year, and the signing of two new MOUs with the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and the Ministry of AYUSH, has collectively proven credibility ASCI enjoys with the Government. Other noteworthy aspects include ASCI being included as an Expert Committee member to look into matters pertaining to advertising of High Fat Sugar and Salt (HFSS) foods and Sugar Sweetened beverages (SSBs), and as a key stakeholder in the committee constituted by*



HONESTY



DECENCY



RESPONSIBILITY



FAIRNESS

So you can trust advertising



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the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI). ASCI is now a part of the Executive Committee of International Council on Ad Self-Regulation (ICAS). Interestingly ASCI was a Gold winner at Global EASA's Best Practice Awards for its mobile app, a service that was introduced in 2016. Another significant step was introduction of an Independent Review Process by a retired Supreme Court/High Court Judge, when CCC decisions are sought to be reviewed by affected advertisers. Guidelines were issued relating to Celebrity endorsements of products/services given the importance consumers attach to such association. I'm delighted to have been an enabler for this year's journey for ASCI and I'm sure the Council will take proactive steps in the cause of self-regulation in advertising".

The incoming Chairman, Ms. Abanti Sankaranarayanan, said, *"ASCI has seen a remarkable year on year progress through formalised collaborations with various regulators, notable recognitions from eminent external organisations, further facilitation of robust codes and guidelines and swifter processes to promote the cause of self-regulation in advertising. I feel privileged to be elected as Chairman of ASCI and I'm elated to take over as the torch bearer for several more successful initiatives and significantly contribute to effective self-regulation in advertising. It's heartening to see ASCI's relentless efforts being recognised by the judicial body, prominent regulators and government bodies and we shall take all efforts to continue to keep it so. Core to ASCI's mission to ensure protection of the interests of consumers, through supporting Honesty, Decency, Responsibility and Fairness in Advertising, ASCI shall carry on to keep true with its consumer focused tagline, "So you can trust advertising".*

During the year 2016-17, the Consumer Complaints Council (CCC) constituted by ASCI as an independent body (which has majority of its members drawn from civil society members like consumer activists, lawyers, doctors, educationists) met 49 times and deliberated on complaints against a total of 2300 advertisements. Of these, complaints on 1242 advertisements were upheld, while 454 were not upheld. The significant increase in the number of complaints as compared to 2015-16 numbers (1389) is largely due to ASCI's Suo Moto Monitoring project viz. National Advertisement Monitoring Services (NAMS) that was restarted in April 2016 after a gap of one year. ASCI has also started referring advertisements that the CCC considers to be, prima facie, in violation to The Drugs & Magic Remedies Act or The Drugs & Cosmetics Rules to the Ministry of AYUSH or the Ministry of Health, as the case may be. This ensures that the concerned regulator is alerted about the existence of such advertisements and they can initiate prompt action. There were 373 such advertisements falling in this category.

Analysis of advertisements complained against for the year 2016-17 is annexed to this release.





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About The Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI)

ASCI is a self-regulatory organization for the advertising industry to promote, maintain, monitor and uphold fair, sound, ethical and healthy principles and practices of advertising for the protection of interest of consumers and the general public. Established in 1985, ASCI's role has been acclaimed by various Government agencies. The Govt. bodies including The Department of Consumer Affairs (DoCA), Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and Ministry of AYUSH have partnered with ASCI to address all misleading advertisements in their respective sectors. The Supreme Court of India in its recent judgement has also affirmed and recognized the self-regulatory mechanism put in place for advertising content by ASCI. On the global platform, ASCI is a part of the Executive Committee of International Council on Ad Self-Regulation (ICAS). ASCI has also bagged six awards at the European Advertising Standards Alliance (EASA) Global Best Practice Awards.

ASCI & its Consumer Complaints Council (CCC) deal with Complaints received from Consumers and Industry against Advertisements which are considered as False, Misleading, Indecent, Illegal, leading to Unsafe practices, or Unfair to competition, and in contravention of the ASCI Code for Self-Regulation in Advertising. Under its National Advertisement Monitoring Service (NAMS), ASCI proactively monitors over 80% of new print and all new TV advertisements released in the country every month, for contravention of Chapter I of the ASCI code. (Source: www.ascionline.org)

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For further information, please contact:

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Shweta Purandare, Secretary General, ASCI

Phone: 91 22 2495 5070 / 91 9821162785 | Email: shweta@ascionline.org

Ketchum Sampark Public Relations Pvt. Ltd

Kiwishka Sanjay Prasad

Phone: 91 7506861969 | Email: kiwishka.prasad@ketchumsampark.com

Anuradha Roy

Phone: 91 7506916497 | Email: anuradha.roy@ketchumsampark.com

