



## **ASCI RELEASES ADVERTISING GUIDELINES FOR THE SKIN WHITENING PRODUCTS CATEGORY**

### **Issues the final set of guidelines post receiving industry, civil society and public feedback**

**Mumbai, 19<sup>th</sup> August 2014:** The Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI), a self-regulatory body for the advertising industry has released a set of final guidelines for the advertising of skin lightening & fairness products after seeking industry and public feedback to a draft it had issued earlier. ASCI's new guidelines will go a long way in ensuring that advertisements of products in this category do not depict people with dark skin as somehow inferior to those who are fairer.

#### **The following guidelines will be used when creating and assessing advertisements in this category:**

- Advertising should not communicate any discrimination as a result of skin colour. These ads should not reinforce negative social stereotyping on the basis of skin colour. Specifically, advertising should not directly or implicitly show people with darker skin, in a way which is widely seen as, unattractive, unhappy, depressed or concerned. These ads should not portray people with darker skin, in a way which is widely seen as, at a disadvantage of any kind, or inferior, or unsuccessful in any aspect of life particularly in relation to being attractive to the opposite sex, matrimony, job placement, promotions and other prospects.
- In the pre-usage depiction of product, special care should be taken to ensure that the expression of the model/s in the real and graphical representation should not be negative in a way which is widely seen as unattractive, unhappy, depressed or concerned.
- Advertising should not associate darker or lighter colour skin with any particular socio-economic strata, caste, community, religion, profession or ethnicity.
- Advertising should not perpetuate gender based discrimination because of skin colour.

Commenting on the new guidelines, **Mr. Partha Rakshit, Chairman, ASCI** stated:

“Setting up these new guidelines for the skin lightening & fairness products will help advertisers comply with ASCI code’s Chapter III 1 b which states that advertisements should not deride any race, caste, colour, creed or nationality . Given how widespread the advertising for fairness and skin lightening products is and the concerns of different stakeholders in society, ASCI saw the need to set up specific guidelines for this product category.

As a self-regulating body, it is important to have the advertisers’ buy-in to the guidelines, and we are happy to note that both the industry and the consumer activists’ groups have welcomed these guidelines.”

#### **About Advertising Standard Council of India (ASCI):**

Advertising Standards Council of India is a self-regulatory voluntary organization of the advertising industry. 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 Ad Monitoring Service (NAMS)



started in May 2012, ASCI now also proactively monitors over 80% the new print and TV ads released in the country every month, for contravention of its Code.

**For further information, please contact:**

**The Advertising Standards Council of India**

Shweta Purandare - Secretary General, ASCI 9821162785/ 23512371

**Ketchum Sampark Public Relations Pvt. Ltd.**

Vikas S/ Shivangi J: 9892629404/9167106693