



Agency Assessments International
Response to 'A review of Government advertising In
Northern Ireland'
Draft Report for consultation

Section 3.15

- It is possible to secure **one rate for each major publication** so that in effect it becomes the **Government Rate** – the same cost to each department no matter who the user is. The only variable can be size but this can be standardised by quoting a column inch equivalent or using standard costs per thousand (better).
- It is equally possible for agencies to quote **one production cost** for Government Notices. The majority of advertisements have substantially the same content so that one production cost per advertisement can be estimated and utilised.
- Some agencies may offer **zero costs for production** preferring instead to recoup costs through a higher media commission. This is acceptable provided it is transparent as to how much of the media commission is offsetting production and how much is to cover costs of media planning and buying.

- The net result can be:
 - Standard Government media rates for each publication
 - Standard Government production rate for each notice
 - A unit cost for media and production
 - Standard costs for each user
 - One invoice per insertion
 - One invoice direct to users

- Note; Agency Assessments have negotiated the above scheme for Statutory Notices in ROI.

- Finally it is possible for individual users to **produce their own advertisements 'online'** using pre-designed templates that control and dictate type face, type size, branding etc. This is a quite common technology for major retailers and car dealerships. It can be easily adapted for Government. It is a very efficient process offering the benefits of speed, cost savings, efficiency and control.

Section 3.12

- There is no apparent reason why Government TV buying cannot be improved provided that it up skills to 'best practice' in the private sector – ensuring among other things commitment to budgets, agreement on quality parameters as well as costs, clearly defined buying audiences and on time approvals.

- In an ideal structure the appointment of a media specialist within the team is worth considering. He/She can then act coordinate often competing demands within and across departments for prime time spots

and ensure the elimination of the Government led demand and higher prices. He/She can also be a critical participant in major negotiations with media owners.

Section 6

- The recommendations contained in Section 6 are good. Training in the management of agencies should include;
 - How agencies are structured
 - How agencies are motivated
 - How agencies are remunerated
 - Managing the agency relationship
 - Best Practice briefing
 - Best practice Creative evaluation
 - Assessing agency performance
 - Agency contracts

- The appointment of consultant media buyer role should be replaced by an in-house resource. See above.