

## CHILDREN'S CLEARANCE COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURE

ASC publishes and administers [The Broadcast Code for Advertising to Children \("Children's Code"\)](#). The Children's Code was developed to guide advertisers and advertising agencies to prepare commercial messages that recognize and respect the special characteristics of the children's audience. Canadian broadcasters have agreed to adhere to the Children's Code as a condition of licensure by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC).

ASC's Children's Clearance Committee ("Committee") is charged with the important responsibility of reviewing and approving children's broadcast advertising messages to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Children's Code. All children's commercials, except those which are purely local, must be approved by the Committee and carry a valid ASC Children's Clearance Number prior to broadcast.<sup>1</sup>

Information on how to submit a commercial for review and the associated fees can be found on [ASC's Clearance website](#).

### 1.0 PURPOSE

The Committee reviews and approves finished children's commercials based on the provisions of the Children's Code.

### 2.0 COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION

**2.1. Committee structure:** The Committee shall have nine voting members: the chairperson, three public representatives, four industry representatives, and one representative from the CRTC.

- **Chairperson:** The Chairperson, who presides at meetings of the Committee, will be a senior ASC staff member appointed by the Chief Executive Officer of ASC.
- **Public Representatives:** The Chairperson shall appoint three public representatives selected using the recruitment process posted on [ASC's website](#). The term of office for each public representative shall be two years, renewable for one successive term of two years. Public representatives receive a small honorarium.
- **Industry/CRTC Representatives:** The Chairperson shall appoint one member each nominated respectively by private broadcasters; the CBC; advertiser associations; advertising agency associations, and the CRTC. These representatives are not subject to term limits.

### 2.2 Quorum

A quorum shall consist of four members, at least one of whom shall be a public representative. In the absence of a public representative, the CBC representative may serve in this role. In order to ensure balanced representation, any member who is unable to participate may be represented by an alternate approved by the Chairperson.

### 2.3 Confidentiality

All Committee members shall sign and be bound by the ASC Children's Clearance Committee Confidentiality Agreement.

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<sup>1</sup> Procedure in effect across Canada, with the exception of Quebec, whose authority to prohibit broadcast advertising to children has been affirmed. Clearance numbers are not required for commercial messages broadcast in Quebec. Therefore, the following procedure applies to the rest of Canada only.

### **3.0 COMMITTEE PROCEDURE**

#### **3.1 Submissions and Meetings**

The Committee reviews produced broadcast commercials and their accompanying “as recorded” scripts. Committee meetings are scheduled every other week, except from September through November, when meetings are generally held weekly. The Committee meeting schedule is available on [ASC’s Clearance website](#). Submissions must be made to ASC by noon of the last working day preceding a Committee meeting. An expedited service is also available for submitters unable to meet this deadline.

#### **3.2 Review**

The Committee will review and carefully consider each submission. Committee decisions regarding a commercial’s acceptability will be reached by a simple majority of members who review the commercial. In the event of a tie vote, the Chairperson will identify a committee member (who for any reason was originally unable to review and vote on the submission) to review the submission and cast a deciding vote. If no such additional reviewer is available on short notice, the Chairperson shall cast a second and deciding vote.

ASC will, if possible, notify the submitter of the Committee’s decision by the end of the business day on which the meeting and voting took place, but in any event not later than within two business days of submission. Approved commercials will be assigned an ASC Children’s Clearance Number, which is valid for one year from date of issue. When the Committee does not approve a commercial, notice to the submitter will make specific reference to the Children’s Code clause or clauses the commercial was deemed to contravene.

#### **3.3 Conflict of Interest**

Any Committee member must declare if s/he has a conflict of interest before any screening or discussion of a commercial. S/he will be asked to leave the meeting for the duration of the discussion of that submission.

An example of a conflict would include an advertising agency representative working in an agency that has an account related to or in competition with the advertiser submitting a commercial for review.

### **4.0 APPEAL PROCEDURE**

An appeal process is available to any advertiser whose commercial is determined by the Committee to contravene the Children’s Code. An advertiser should direct their appeal in writing to ASC’s Vice-President, Standards, with a copy to the Committee Chairperson. The appeal procedure is available on [ASC’s Clearance website](#).