

OUR ENVIRONMENT OUR HERITAGE

REVIEW OF SIGNAGE POLICY 2006

Continuing on from our previous publication, this week's edition for the review of the Signage Policy will be discussing the last three land-use categories of the policy. Sections 8, 9 and 10 of the policy look at Rural Areas, Main Road Corridor Areas and Environmentally Sensitive Areas respectively.

Section 8: Rural Areas

Definition: all areas outside of greater Apia (VAIMAUGA, FALEATA) and Salelologa (FAASALELE'AGA) that are primarily agricultural or undeveloped areas (less than 10% residential/commercial/industrial uses).

As usual, most advertisements (and therefore signage) aim to address the most densely populated areas in order to capture the attention of a maximum number of people. This can easily be found in the urban areas where services and development are concentrated and therefore attracting people. For this reason, signage in the rural areas is not as frequent and dominant as compared to that in the urban areas.

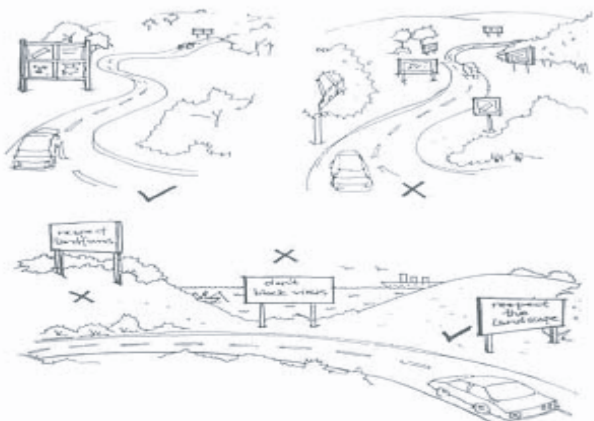
However, they still exist and for these signs, however few there may be, the following objectives have been set to ensure the orderly display of such signs:

- Encourage the location of signs on rural properties on fences, buildings or other existing infrastructure.
- Where possible, discourage the location of freestanding signs and illuminated signs in rural areas.

In trying to meet these objectives, several performance standards were developed under the policy to help with its implementation. In being consistent with these performance standards, the objectives set in this section of the policy are well within reach of achievement. Such performance standards as outlined in the policy are summarized below.

Despite the signs being located in the rural areas, development consent must be obtained from the Planning and Urban Management Agency of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment prior to the erection of any sign. And consent can only be granted when such a sign is limited to 2m above ground level and no bigger than 1.5m² in total area. It should also be no higher than the tallest point of a building, upon which the sign is erected. Signs in the rural areas are permitted to be erected on fences, buildings as well as other existing infrastructure.

With regards to temporary signs, similar standards apply as outlined in other land-use categories defined in this policy. These include the nature of the sign being religious, educational, cultural, political, social or recreational. A temporary sign should not be erected 28 days earlier than the event it advertises and must be removed within 14 days after the event has been completed. The development consent holder must also ensure the state of the environment is either returned to its original state or at an improved state, upon removal of a sign.



Example of signage permissible in a Main Road Corridor Area

The next section of the Policy to be discussed looks at Main Road Corridor Areas:

Section 9: Main Road Corridor Areas

Definition: refers to major road corridors in Samoa, including Cross Island Road, East Coast Road, West Coast Road, Beach Road, Vaitele Street, Ifiifi Street, South Coast Road, West Coast Road for Upolu, and Main South Coast Road, Main North Coast Road, Falealupo Road, Vaiaata Road in Savaii.

The objectives set under this section are as follows:

- Ensure that signs do not create a safety hazard or potentially distract motorists or pedestrians through the type or level of illumination, colours or form of advertising.
- Ensure signs do not obscure a motorist's view of pedestrians and vice versa, or obscure views to nearby pedestrian and traffic signal facilities.
- Ensure that signs do not create a distraction or obstruction to road-users or pedestrian traffic.
- Discourage signs that obscure major view lines.
- Encourage signs that do not dominate the landscape or host buildings.
- Encourage signs that are in scale with their surroundings.
- Signs for identification or public awareness and safety purposes may be erected on the coastal side of ocean roads at the discretion of the Board.

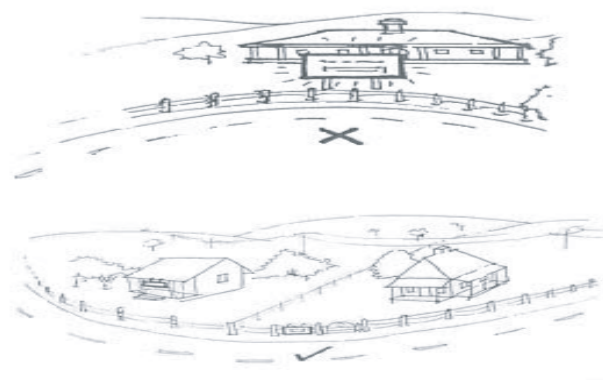
With the aim to achieve these objectives, the following performance standards were devised.

For billboards and other freestanding signs, location should be at a minimum of 15m from traffic control devices and at least 20m away from any road intersection. They must also be designed in a way where it allows for them to be taken down in the event of a severe storm or cyclone. The general standards applying to billboards as discussed in earlier sections of the Policy also apply here, including the height above ground level and its maximum area.

For billboards and freestanding signs located on land adjoining an arterial route, the following standards must be met.

- On a 25 mph/ 40 kmph road a minimum distance of 70metres should be maintained between signs on the same side of the road.
- On a 35 mph/ 60 kmph road signs may be clustered in groups of three (located 1 metre apart) and a minimum distance of 90 metres should be maintained between the groups of signs on the same side of the road.

For illuminated signs, the performance standards are similar to those of the same type of signs as discussed under section 7 of the policy (industrial/commercial areas), in our previous issue. Similarly to temporary signs, it must comply with the standards outlined in the rural areas land-use category.



Example of signage permissible in a rural area

The final section of the Policy looks at Environmentally Sensitive Areas and the different performance standards that have been set under this category of land-use.

Section 10: Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Definition: refers to the ocean and non-ocean side of coastal roads, beaches and foreshore areas, wetlands/mangroves, coastal hazard zones, parks and reserves and areas with exceptional view lines.

The objectives of this section relate to all applications for the development of advertising signs in environmentally sensitive areas of the environment to ensure that these areas are maintained in a healthy state. These objectives are:

- Signs and billboards should be limited in sensitive environmental areas.
- It is preferable that billboards and freestanding signs in sensitive environmental areas are used for interpretive, public safety or educational purposes.
- Careful consideration of the location of signs and billboards to minimize negative impacts on view lines and amenity must be achieved in environmentally sensitive areas.
- Signs and billboards should not dominate the landscape in environmentally sensitive areas or silhouette above the existing dominant tree canopy.
- Signs and billboards should, where possible, incorporate colours and materials that are compatible with the existing character of an environmentally sensitive area.

The performance standards set for the erection of signs in environmentally sensitive areas are very similar to those under Section 7 of the Policy.

For billboards, the same standards mentioned earlier for the same type of signage in previous sections of the policy also apply including the total area of the billboard as well as the illumination conditions and clearance conditions from the ground, as well as wiring and electrical warnings for the public.

This also holds true for any temporary signs that may be erected under this category of land use. The same conditions and standards under this type of signage outlined in previous sections all apply here such as the time period permissible for a temporary sign to remain erected after the event being advertised.

And again, for any of these types of signs, it is encouraged that the environment around the site where the sign was erected should return to its original state or an improved state after the removal of the sign.

All these set objectives and standards under the policy ensure that the erection of signs within Samoa are in an orderly manner and does not affect or degrade the amenity of the surrounding environment.

Comments are welcomed to assist the Agency (PUMA) with the on-going review of this policy and further information may be uplifted from our office on level 5 of the DBS building.

For more information contact:
Planning & Urban Management Agency
Ministry of Natural Resources & Environment
Development Bank Building - Level 5
Telephone number: 23800
Contact person: Pauline Pogi

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Children's Corner



Children aged 9-14 are invited to answer the following corner. The name of 3 students with top scores at the end of every month will be posted under the "Children's Corner" for special prizes. "Children's Environmentalist Star Award 2010" will be given to 10 students with top total scores at the end of the year.

UNSCRAMBLE

Unscramble the following words

- | | | |
|------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| ■ sigгнаe | ■ locaiton | ■ copmlain |
| ■ amneity | ■ resiednt | ■ deveoplmmnet |
| ■ agecny | ■ envirnomet | ■ rurla |
| ■ isesu | ■ poro | ■ uranb |
| ■ maseure | ■ imapcts | ■ aresa |
| ■ rissk | ■ busneiss | ■ corirdro |

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to acknowledge and thank the following companies for sponsoring prizes for our children's corner

- **SAMOA STATIONERIES LTD**
- **MCDONALD'S RESTAURANT**
- **AH LIKI'S WHOLESALE**

WHAT IS AMENITY?

Amenity is the pleasant or normally satisfactory aspects of a location which contributes to its overall environment and enjoyment of residents.

What are the impacts of poor amenity on you?

Poor Amenity can result to health and environment risks relating to you, your family and business.

How can PUMA help you?

PUMA has a statutory duty to ensure relevant mitigation measures are implemented by the alleged offender to resolve an issue and that the amenity of the area is protected.

LEGAL ACTION

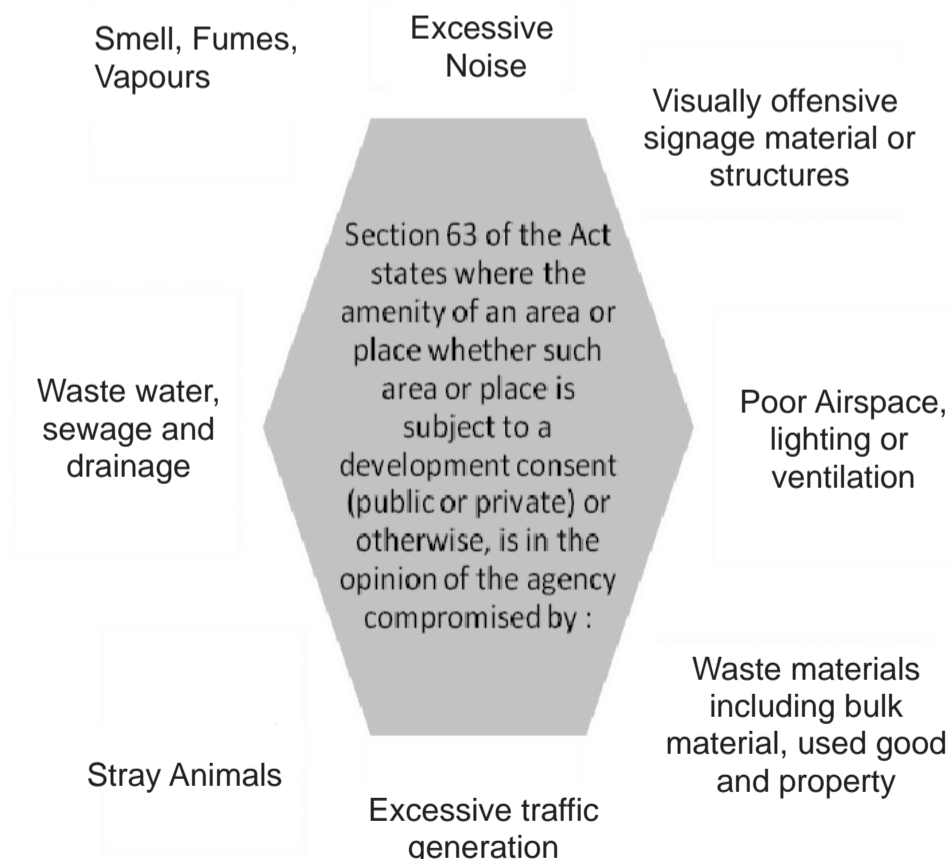
PUMA has the authority under the Law to take to court any person(s) who has Breached the PUMA Act 2004 and who is not willing to comply with PUMA advice.

The Agency requires the complainant's full name and contact details when lodging a complaint. A site plan of the location and the site is useful information.

For further information, contact the Planning and Urban Management Agency (PUMA) on phone number 23800, or pay us a visit on level 5 of the DBS Building.

SANITATION POLICY

The Government of Samoa through the collective efforts of all ministries in the water and sanitation sector has committed to take on the full responsibility of ensuring that land and water resources are managed in a manner that supports the environmental, health, social, cultural and economic well-being of current and future generations. The sanitation policy, which has been approved by Cabinet in its Cabinet Development Committee meeting in March 2010, was developed under the support of the Joint Water Sector Steering Committee to provide an integrated regulatory framework to improve wastewater management and treatment in Samoa. The policy aims to guide the Government's decision-making relating to wastewater management and address the main challenges we face. Further to the approval of the Sanitation Policy, the Planning and Urban Management Agency is required to lead the implementation of short term strategies identified in the policy, including the national education and awareness campaign and the sanitation community surveys. A sanitation technical committee has been established to facilitate the implementation of policy activities and work in close partnership with the Agency and other ministries to ensure a successful outcome. The EDF 10 Water Sector Budget Support Project 2010-2013 permits implementation through provision of financial resources for both water and sanitation sectors.



What is the role of the Agency?

The Agency has a statutory responsibility under Section 63 of the Act to... "remove or minimise the impacts affecting the amenity of an area or place" to prevent adverse or irreversible environmental and health impacts in the future

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