Fifth meeting of the Online Advertising Taskforce
6 May 2025, 16:30-17:30
Minutes

1. Welcome and opening remarks

The Deputy Chair of the Taskforce, Mark Lund, opened the meeting by welcoming Taskforce members, highlighting the strengths of the advertising sector as part of the creative industries and wider economy. Mark Lund said the Taskforce working groups have been working hard to firm up targets, and are now working to deliver industry-leading workstreams.

2. AI Working Group

Stephen Woodford, CEO of the Advertising Association (AA) and chair of the newly established AI Working Group, provided a summary of its work to date including agreeing the group's Terms of Reference and membership list, and summarised discussions at its first meeting in April.

Stephen explained that the overarching purpose of the group is to understand AI's effects on trust, transparency and accountability in advertising content and placement, with three broad areas of enquiry:
- Review and evolve existing industry principles/codes of conduct for AI use in advertising;
- Measure and analyse how AI affects trust in advertising;
- Examine key issues including labelling of AI usage, and AI as a tool to persuade, to understand the impact of AI on advertising transparency.

3. Influencer Code of Conduct Update

Rob Newman from the Incorporated Society of British Advertisers (ISBA) updated on the 4th iteration of the Influencer Code of Conduct, launched in November 2024. Rob explained the broader influencer landscape, with changing trends and challenges, and the emerging ways that influencers seek to engage with new and existing audiences. The latest version of the Code of Conduct[1] was launched with new areas of commitment, and ISBA and the Influencer Marketing Working Group are now working on expanding coverage and reach.

4. Working Group Updates and Vision Statement

Mark Lund provided an overview of the working group targets developed since the last meeting, and the ongoing work that is taking place. In turn, the remaining working group leads provided a summary of their new targets:
- **Age Assurance**: Phil Smith, from ISBA, updated on progress of work to provide a baseline measurement on age verification practice. The proposal is awaiting agreement.

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[1] https://www.isba.org.uk/knowledge/isba-imtb-influencer-marketing-code-conduct-version-4

- **Information Sharing**: Konrad Shek, from the AA, summarised the ongoing work of the partnership between industry and government to ensure data concerning scams and fraud using the advertising supply chain can be shared quickly and safely.
- **Gold Standard:** Sinead Coogan Jobes, from the Internet Advertising Bureau (IAB UK), summarised the new Gold Standard specification, released in January 2025, and plans for targeting new companies to register or recertify.
- **Intermediary and Platform Principles (IPP):** Guy Parker, from the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA), updated on the implementation of a permanent full-scale IPP framework.

Mark Lund asked if the Taskforce was satisfied with the working group targets and set out the benefits of cross-collaboration between working groups to deliver success. Minister Bryant was supportive, and keen to find ways to disseminate information on the positive work of the Taskforce.

5. AOB and Close

Minister Bryant thanked members for attending and their continued hard work, and proposed that the Taskforce reconvenes in the Autumn.