



16 May 2008

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts
Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

Dear Sir/Madam

Supplementary materials to ACP Magazines Limited's submission (made jointly with Pacific Magazines Limited) to the Senate Environment, Communications and the Arts Committee's inquiry into the sexualisation of children in the contemporary media environment

Representatives of ACP Magazines Limited appeared before a public hearing of the Senate Environment, Communications and the Arts Committee's inquiry into the sexualisation of children in the contemporary media environment on 30 April 2008.

At the hearing, the Committee requested that ACP Magazines provide it with data in relation to the actual age of readers of *Dolly*, *Cleo* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines. The requested data are set out in the attached schedule.

The data are based on two surveys conducted by Roy Morgan Research. The first survey is Roy Morgan's Single Source readership figures. This survey is conducted in person with people aged 14 years and older. It is a continuous weekly survey (48 weekends of the year), conducted Australia-wide in both city and country areas. Last year a clustered random sample of over 54,000 people were surveyed and asked questions relating to magazine readership, other media consumption, demographics, product consumption and attitudinal and activity-related behaviour. Their responses are weighted to be representative of the Australian Bureau of Statistics' census data.

The second survey is Roy Morgan's Young Australians Survey, which addresses children aged between 6 and 13. The Young Australians Survey is conducted separately because Roy Morgan chooses to obtain parental permission prior to interviewing children aged under 14 years and many of the questions in the Single Source survey are irrelevant to young children.

Participants in the Young Australians Survey are recruited by asking respondents to the Single Source survey whether there are children aged 6 -13 years living in their household. All participants are asked to fill in a self-completed questionnaire (with the help of their parents, if required). The Young Australians Survey is a much shorter survey but it also measures readership in certain publications. It does not measure readership for *Cleo* and *Cosmopolitan*, which are considered irrelevant to the participants. The sample size for the Young Australians Survey is approximately 2,500 participants per year.

Although readership data for males is available, there are negligible male readers of the relevant titles and those data have not been included.

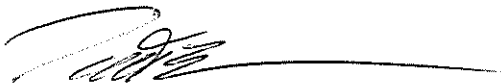
At the hearing, the Senate Committee sought ACP Magazines' view in relation to the printing of age recommendations on the front cover of magazines. Having had an opportunity to give the matter further consideration, it is ACP Magazines' view that such a proposal is not warranted for the following reasons.

1. As noted in ACP Magazines' joint submission to the Senate Committee, ACP Magazines and Pacific Magazines receive a negligible number of complaints in relation to content in their magazines. Similarly, to the best of ACP Magazines' knowledge, the Australian Press Council has never received a complaint in relation to the sexualisation of children in any magazine published by ACP Magazines or Pacific Magazines. The limited number of complaints indicates that the vast majority of consumers have no concerns around their current ability to choose age-appropriate publications.
2. The significant variance in the developmental levels of people in their early teenage years suggests that age recommendations would be of limited value. Material that may be appropriate for one fourteen year old girl, for example, might reasonably be considered inappropriate for another fourteen year old girl. A rigid categorization of specific publications as recommended for one age but not another would, therefore, be of limited value to a parent or child attempting to choose an appropriate publication.
3. Magazines, unlike television programs or movies, clearly describe their contents and the nature of their subject matter on their front covers. Printed age recommendations would not provide consumers with any information that is not already easily available to them from a cursory glance at the cover.
4. Age recommendations may have the unintended consequence of encouraging younger readers to consume content recommended for older readers. They may also stigmatise the reading of a publication by children who are beyond or at the upper limit of the printed age recommendation for that publication.
5. Although details of the proposal are not available to ACP Magazines, ACP Magazines notes that it would be inappropriate to discriminate against magazine publishers in relation to the application of age recommendations on covers. Magazines compete with equivalent media such as books and any proposal that the Senate Committee did consider should treat all such equivalent media similarly.

Accordingly, a requirement that age recommendations be printed on the front cover of magazines is neither necessary nor appropriate. It would simply impose a further regulatory burden on publishers without conferring any associated benefit on the Australian public.

ACP Magazines thanks the Senate Committee for the opportunity to present the attached data and for its consideration of the matters referred to above.

Yours sincerely



Scott Lorson
Chief Executive Officer

SCHEDULE – ACTUAL READERSHIP FIGURES BY AGE (FEMALE ONLY)

Source: Roy Morgan Single Source, Dec07; Roy Morgan Young Australian Survey, Dec07

Age	Dolly % of Readership	Cleo % of Readership	Cosmopolitan % of Readership
6	0.6%		
7	1.2%		
8	2.1%		
9	2.1%		
10	2.9%		
11	6.4%		
12	8.9%		
13	12.0%		
14-15	19.5%	7.7%	7.9%
16-17	15.1%	15.2%	17.0%
18-19	6.8%	14.8%	17.2%
20-24	6.6%	24.6%	23.8%
25-29	2.1%	12.5%	11.0%
30-34	2.7%	6.7%	5.3%
35-39	3.3%	5.6%	4.9%
40-44	3.5%	3.9%	3.6%
45-49	2.5%	3.8%	3.6%
50-54	0.8%	2.2%	2.5%
55-59	0.2%	1.2%	1.3%
60-64	0.2%	0.9%	0.8%
65-69	0.4%	0.3%	0.2%
70+	0.2%	0.7%	0.8%