# [GB] Ofcom’s New Advertising Code Comes into Effect

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As a consequence of the AVMS Directive, Ofcom, the UK communications regulator, opened a review in March 2008 of its Rules on the Amount and Distribution of Advertising (RADA). The aim was that the Rules be (a) shorter and (b) simpler.

The proposals, which are reflected in the revised Code, included: (i) lifting the “20 minute” rule (currently, there must be not less than twenty minutes between advertising breaks within programmes) and (ii) lifting or liberalising the rules regarding advertising during specific programme genres (documentaries, current affairs, religious programmes) and during films (reducing the interval between breaks).

Ofcom argued that facilitating such changes would do away with rules that had little beneficial impact and were “unhelpful”.

For example, the twenty minute rule meant that the “...first and last breaks [had] to be scheduled very close to the beginning and end of some programmes to the annoyance of viewers”. And, the proposals for allowing advertising in hitherto prohibited categories would “...remove or reduce the disincentives to showing such programmes.”

The Revised Code came into effect on 1 September 2008. It was known as the Stage One revision. In the autumn (2008), Ofcom is to publish a Stage Two Paper, concerning the amount of advertising and teleshopping permitted on television. This Review will also consider the question of how often advertising breaks should be permitted.

***“Code on the Scheduling of Television Advertising – Revised rules on the scheduling of advertisements”***

http://www.ofcom.org.uk/consult/condocs/rada/statement/statementcode.pdf

***“Ofcom publishes a new Advertising Code” (June 2008)***

http://www.ofcom.org.uk/media/news/2008/07/nr_20080724b

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***"Review of television advertising and teleshopping regulation: Proposals on advertising distribution, and options for the amount of advertising and teleshopping" (March 2008)***

http://www.ofcom.org.uk/consult/condocs/rada/rada.pdf

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