

# Service Station Association Pty Ltd

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## FUEL PRICE BOARDS AT SERVICE STATIONS

### POSITION PAPER

The Service Station Association Pty Ltd (SSA) represents the interest of independent, franchisee and commission agent service station operators in NSW.

The SSA recognises that service station fuel price boards are an integral and important component part of fuel retailing in Australia. From a consumer's perspective, the SSA accepts that price transparency is necessary and contributes to the continuation of a robust competitive industry. From a service station's perspective, the SSA acknowledges that fuel sales are driven more by price than any other single factor and that service stations require effective price boards to attract customers.

The SSA notes the Australian Automobile Association's Fuel Price Boards Position Paper June 2011 and supports it in principle.

Specifically, the SSA agrees that fuel price boards should be compulsory at all automotive fuel retailers. The SSA also agrees that prices posted on a price board *should not* be inclusive of any 'shopper-docket' or similar over the counter discount offers. The SSA believes that all prices quoted on a fuel price board must be available to all customers and at all times that the price is displayed. There should be no conditions. To operate in any other way, we believe, is in contradiction of consumer law and the Trade Practices Act. Special offers can be displayed on a separate sign and in such a way as to not interfere with the capacity of the main price board to fully inform consumers and should not be misleading.

The SSA agrees with the AAA position paper in that consultation between stakeholders in the petrol retailing industry should aim to establish a minimum set of standards for the content, layout and size of fuel price boards. The guidelines should aim to provide clear pricing messages to consumers in an unambiguous manner and that addresses the major fuels sought by motorists.

The guidelines should also be conscious of the need to minimise compliance cost burdens on service stations and to recognise that local area planning authorisation requirements need to be recognised and allowed for.

The SSA believes that the first step in the process should be the establishment of an industry voluntary code of conduct to address these issues, followed by a reasonable review period. The SSA also believes that the ACCC has an important role to play in this process in the interests of providing assurance to consumers that the industry continues to operate in a competitive and transparent matter.

**For further information, contact:**

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