

## **GUIDELINES FOR THE PLACEMENT OF BREAKS IN SBS TELEVISION PROGRAMS SEPTEMBER 2006**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Section 45 of the *Special Broadcasting Services Act, 1991* (SBS Act) provides that SBS may broadcast advertisements and sponsorship announcements before or after programs and during natural breaks and that run in total for not more than five minutes in any hour of broadcasting.

All decisions regarding commercial revenue are subject to the overriding principle that the integrity of the SBS Charter and SBS's editorial independence are paramount and shall not be compromised in any way.

Decisions about the placement of advertisements in programs will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will have regard to program content and context. SBS will exercise sensitivity in the placement of advertisements. All advertisements will be clearly distinguished from SBS programming content.

SBS reserves the exclusive right to determine what is broadcast on SBS services and may reject any advertising or community service announcements. SBS will not broadcast advertisements that do not fulfil the requirements for the issuing of a Classification Number (CAD Number) by Free TV Australia's commercial advice service. All advertisements broadcast by SBS should comply with the Australian Association of National Advertisers (AANA) 'Advertiser Code of Ethics', the 'Code for Advertising to Children', and the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries 'Voluntary Code of Practice for Motor Vehicle Advertising'. If the Advertising Standards Board finds that an advertisement contravenes these codes the Advertising Standards Bureau will request the advertiser to withdraw or modify the advertisement in question.

As an associate member of Free TV Australia, SBS takes account of the 'Classification and Placement of Commercials and Community Service Announcements' contained in Section 6 of the 'Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice' (2004), where it relates to commercials.

### **1.1 Natural breaks in drama and comedy**

A break may be taken when:

- (i) there is an obvious and dramatically significant lapse of time in the action, or
- (ii) there is a change of scene, with a significant break in the continuity of action.

### **1.2 Natural breaks in documentaries and information programs**

A break may be taken when:

- (i) there is a change of topic, or
- (ii) there is a change of method or treatment, or
- (iii) recorded inserts occurring in live programs, or
- (iv) new participants in a discussion program are introduced.

### **1.3 Natural breaks in entertainment programs**

A break may be taken at the end of an act or at the end of a sequence.

#### **1.4 Natural breaks in programs with prizes**

A break may be taken when one competitor leaves the scene and before a new competitor is introduced. Where there is no change of competitor, a break may occur at the end of one complete round of questions.

#### **1.5 Natural breaks in music programs**

A break may normally be taken at the end of a musical composition, a set, or between the acts of an extended musical work. Breaks may not be taken between segments of a series of pieces usually heard as a continuous performance.

#### **1.6 Natural breaks in news and current affairs programs**

Breaks may be taken between separate reports in news bulletins and program segments in current affairs programs. A program segment may be:

- (i) discrete coverage of a particular topic or issue, or
- (ii) a report from a particular source or location on an issue, or
- (iii) defined by a particular method or treatment, or
- (iv) a particular topic in an extended interview.

#### **1.7 Natural breaks in sport**

Breaks may be taken during periods where viewers do not miss any significant action of the particular sport being televised either live or delayed.

In sport events where regular pauses in play occur, breaks may be taken during those periods, for example at half time or between races, innings or overs etc.

In coverage of long continuous events, breaks may be taken at points where the focus of coverage of the event shifts from one point to another, for example after a resumption of the current placings in a race and before refocusing on a particular section of the race. Breaks may also be taken before or after cut-away discussion or background film insert sequences.

#### **1.8 Natural breaks in outside broadcasts other than sport**

Breaks may be taken where the commentator finishes discussing one item in the program and moves to another.

#### **1.9 Natural breaks in acquired programs**

Pre-existing breaks that comply with these Guidelines in programs acquired from overseas suppliers and other sources will be considered to be natural breaks.

Acquired programs which do not include pre-existing breaks may be assessed for natural breaks following the definitions in sections 1.1 to 1.9 of these Guidelines.

#### **1.10 Natural breaks in relays of overseas broadcasts**

Where SBS relays a live program feed from an overseas broadcaster, the break pattern of the originating broadcaster may be taken.

## 2. PLACEMENT OF BREAKS IN PROGRAMS

### 2.1 Identification of breaks

SBS will assess programs to determine where, and if, there are natural breaks in content according to the definitions under section 1 of these Guidelines.

SBS will then decide which of these natural breaks will be used to carry advertising based on the five minute per hour limit and other considerations, including viewer experience.

### 2.2 Placement of breaks

Editorial considerations and the interests of viewer experience will be taken into account when considering the placement of breaks.

Within the definitions of natural breaks and the individual context of the program, the following schedule provides an indicative guide for the placement of internal breaks:

Scheduling Slot	Program Length	Parts/Breaks
Up to 10 minutes		No Break
30 minutes	25 minutes	3 Parts / 2 Breaks
45 minutes	40 minutes	3 Parts / 2 Breaks
60 minutes	52 minutes	4 Parts / 3 Breaks

Where the interests of viewers would be better served by a different format, for example to fit in with a particularly suitable interruption of continuity, there may be deviation from this guide. This will be assessed on a case-by-case basis applying these Guidelines in relation to natural breaks in accordance with the SBS Act.