

## **TRANSFORMATION POLICY STATEMENT**

### **1 November 2017**

On 4 May 2007 the Southern African Marketing Research Association, the representative body for the market research industry, voted for the adoption of the Department of Trade and Industry's Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) Codes of Good Practice and the accompanying Generic Scorecard and its Compliance Targets as the industry guideline on transformation. This followed a transparent, rigorous and all-inclusive consultation process to ensure that all industry players were included in extensive information sharing and debate, culminating in the adoption vote.

To attract members that represent the diversity of South Africa, and especially younger members, SAMRA embarked on an intensive membership diversity drive in 2010. While the market research industry boasted a significant number of younger people across all ethnic groups in South Africa, SAMRA, as the representative industry association, wanted to play an increasingly empowering role to equip younger members for more senior positions and to position market research as a rewarding career option. A SAMRA Membership Diversity portfolio was created by the SAMRA governing body, to ensure that SAMRA is not only fully inclusive, but that the association, by embracing all market research areas, provided a home for all members to enjoy the benefits of membership. Among others, membership benefits include the opportunity to network with industry colleagues countrywide as well as internationally and learn from papers and presentations at the SAMRA Annual Conference and the various local meetings and events. Likewise, SAMRA accreditation, as it was known, included many benefits and confirmed members' professional status, ensuring ongoing professional development, informative and relevant SAMRA newsletters and international alignment through SAMRA's affiliation with global counterparts like ESOMAR. SAMRA members, from both the supplier and user side, remained committed to achieve the Generic Scorecard and its Compliance Targets.

The South African market research industry produces an annual turnover of at least R3.1 billion. Most of the SAMRA Organisation Members (75%) have an annual turnover of less than R 10 million and thus are Exempt Micro Enterprises in terms of the Act. Add to that another 16% of members that have an annual turnover of less than R 50 million, putting them in the Qualifying Small Enterprise category, and more than 100 SAMRA Independent Members who supply research mostly as part of small niche agencies or as freelancers, then most of the members operate in a Small, Medium and Micro Enterprise context. On the other side of the spectrum, eight organisations make up the remainder of the research supply industry, and jointly account for about 55% to 60% of the industry turnover. Half of these top-end organisations are South African owned, and half are multi-nationals. With the publication of the proposed amendments to the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment Codes of Good Practice in 2012, SAMRA submitted comments to the Department of Trade and Industry, emphasising the importance of not excluding businesses who are not VAT registered; not increasing the cost of doing business as a small operator by requiring verification certification; burdening multi-national operators with prohibitively expensive Equity Equivalents.

The industry's commitment to the Industry's Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment Codes of Good Practice and Generic Scorecard and its Compliance Targets was re-affirmed by the SAMRA Board in 2016. In 2017, the SAMRA Board also resolved to publish equity figures for the membership in 2018, to inform members regarding our progress.

Other initiatives to boost diversity and transformation in the industry has focused on skills development in the form of SETA-supported learnerships at SAMRA member organisations and Continuing Professional Development events offered by SAMRA; a student participation programme at SAMRA events; special interest groups for small businesses and freelancers, and for employment equity; career information sessions, a bursary service and a job search service.