

# Outdoor industry says enough is enough

By Claire Moffat

**SURFERS PARADISE:** The "wait and see" approach that the Outdoor Advertising Association has taken towards the organised vandalism currently being incurred on advertising billboards has come to an end.

It was announced at the associations' annual convention held last week, that they will be actively lobbying for changes in legislation which will physically deter graffitists.

A campaign to gather

photographic examples of the destruction is already underway although it will be another two or three months before the case will be ready to present to State parliaments.

The association admits that the current fines are completely ineffectual in halting the situation and it is believed they see significant jail terms as the only way to counter the attacks.

The association admits that it knows who is behind the vandalism — Bill Snow — who began 'doing' billboards about five years ago and now is an acknowledged

member of the group calling themselves BUGA UP.

OAAA president, Barry Levingston believes that they must work to get Snow "out of the road".

"At the moment, there is nothing we can do except co-opt people into helping us, the system isn't working for us so we'll have to change it."

Levingston claims that, until recently, the association believed that the activities of BUGA UP would wear themselves out, but that hasn't happened and the effect on the outdoor advertising industry is beginning to tell both

financially and emotionally.

"It's costing the industry about \$100,000 annually to replace the posters which are damaged. We didn't really anticipate it going this far, but now it looks as if it could get much worse," claims Levingston.

Although BUGA UP originally attacked only cigarette and alcohol posters, its graffiti has spread much further. Levingston sees the attacks now as directed at the industry rather than individual products.

"There's been the hurling of paint bombs on electric signs and

the spraying of wording on posters that have nothing whatsoever to do with the tobacco industry."

Levingston also expresses a feeling which is widespread throughout both the association and the industry, — that both the press and the electronic media are giving their tacit support to the graffitists.

"I wonder how silent radio and television stations would be if those people who disagreed with the views expressed on the advertising broadcast, were encouraged to set up jamming stations to interfere with the broadcasts."