



# Case Report

1	Case Number	0090/17
2	Advertiser	Pacific Brands Holdings Pty Ltd
3	Product	Lingerie
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV - Pay
5	Date of Determination	22/02/2017
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

## ISSUES RAISED

- 2.4 - Sex/sexuality/nudity S/S/N - general
- 2.5 - Language Inappropriate language

## DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The 'Meet the Parents' ad opens in a flashback scene of a young couple meeting the young man's parents for the first time. The woman shifts uncomfortably on the couch, then runs awkwardly to the bathroom. She's then seen holding her uncomfortable polyester G-string in hand, looking for a place to dispose of it. Water is then seen running from the toilet and the G-string floats past. The ad finishes in the current day where the woman, now in her forties, approves of her much more comfortable underwear in the mirror.

## THE COMPLAINT

A sample of comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:

*The content is very suggestive of sex. It is inappropriately erotic to show a woman removing skimpy underwear and then walking about wearing no underwear.*

## THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the complainant/s regarding this advertisement include the following:

*We write on behalf of our client, Bonds (Hanes Brands) in response to multiple complaints against the Bonds Comfytails 'Bus' and 'Meet the Parents' TVCs, specifically relating to the following sections of the AANA Code of Ethics: 2.4 – Sex, Sexuality and Nudity (general).*

*Bonds is an underwear and apparel brand, best known for creating fun and fashionable undies for the whole family. On 5th February 2017, Bonds launched a new range of underwear for women in their forties who have outgrown uncomfortable called Comfytails.*

*The Comfytails campaign plays on the insight that years of unfortunate and uncomfortable underwear results in all sorts of uncomfortable experiences.*

*The 'Meet the Parents' ad opens in a flashback scene of a young couple meeting the young man's parents for the first time. The woman shifts uncomfortably on the couch, then runs awkwardly to the bathroom. She's then seen holding her uncomfy polyester G-string in hand, looking for a place to dispose of it. Water is then seen running from the toilet and the G-string floats past. The ad finishes in the current day where the woman, now in her forties, approves of her much more comfortable underwear in the mirror.*

*In regard to the complaints that have been made to the ASB regarding sections 2.4 and 2.5 of the AANA Advertiser Code of Ethics, we take the opportunity to refute these as follows:*

*In reference to section 2.4 we disagree that the TVCs treats sex, sexuality and nudity without sensitivity to the relevant audience. The TVCs are designed to promote and celebrate a product range for women in their forties. The woman is not seen actually removing her underwear in 'Meet the Parents'.*

*The Bonds product resolves show the main characters in the privacy of their bedrooms appreciating their comfy undies. The women's poses, movements, and expressions are not sexual in the least. The product is also quite modest in the way it covers their bodies. The close ups at the end of the TVCs are used to highlight product features, including the fit, on the back of the women's briefs. The close ups are intended to be of product, not a body part. The scenes are not intended, nor should they be interpreted, to be sexual in any way. We also refute any inference that women's bodies in underwear or references to underwear are inherently sexual. The tone of these commercials is intended to be fun, humorous and playful, in line with the Bonds brand values.*

*In addition, both Comfytails TVCs received a PG classification from CAD allowing it to be broadcast during programs that are P rated. By definition, parental guidance is recommended for programs with a P rating, but they are not classified as children's programming. The intended audience is women in their forties and the classification of the TVC as well as instructions to networks ensures it is not on air during classified children's programming nor during adjacent periods.*

*We trust upon viewing the TVCs, and our written response, you will agree that the Bonds Comfytails TVCs do not breach the AANA Advertiser Code of Ethics.*

## **THE DETERMINATION**

The Advertising Standards Board ("Board") considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the "Code").

The Board noted the complainants concerns that the advertisement is inappropriate and includes sexualised scenes.

The Board viewed the advertisements and noted the advertiser's response.

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.4 of the Code. Section 2.4 of the Code states: "Advertising or Marketing Communications shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience".

The Board noted that this television advertisement shows a flashback scene of a woman meeting her partner's parents and trying to make a good impression but she is uncomfortable because of her underwear choice. She enters the bathroom to remove her g-string and attempts to flush the item down the toilet which does not work. The voice over refers to the flashback and talks about the g-string being the "dental floss of satan."

The Board noted the advertiser's response that the advertisement was depicting a light hearted situation and aimed at women in their forties who followed certain fashion trends and providing a solution that is more appropriate and more comfortable.

The Board noted that Bonds are a well-known underwear brand and that it is not unreasonable for an underwear business to show the types of product available to purchase as long as they comply with the Code. The Board noted that at no time was the woman seen naked. The Board noted that in the bathroom scene, the woman does remove her underwear – a pink g-string, and is looking for somewhere to put it. In the Board's view she did not remove her underwear in a seductive or tantalising way and there was not sexual connotation associated with this, rather a clear need for comfort.

The Board noted that the woman holds the g-string up while she is searching for a way to hide or dispose of it. The Board noted that the suggestion was that the woman left the bathroom with no underpants on but that the woman remained covered by her skirt and there was no inappropriate nudity.

The Board noted that the advertisement goes forward in time to the woman in her forties and shows her in front of a mirror admiring her comfortable underpants. The Board noted that in this scene there is no exposed private areas and no inappropriate nudity.

The Board noted that it considered the same advertisement for Bonds being aired on television at the same time – case 0076/16 and dismissed the complaints.

The Board considered that the advertisement did treat the issue of sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant viewing audience and determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.4 of the Code.

Finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on other grounds, the Board dismissed the complaint.

