ADVERTISING STANDARDS BUREAU

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Case Report

1	**Case Number**	**0201/12**
2	**Advertiser**	**Pacific Brands Holdings Pty Ltd**
3	**Product**	**Clothing**
4	**Type of Advertisement / media**	**Billboard**
5	**Date of Determination**	**13/06/2012**
6	**DETERMINATION**	**Dismissed**

ISSUES RAISED

2.4 - Sex/sexuality/nudity S/S/N - general
2.2 - Objectification Exploitative and degrading - women

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

Image of a woman wearing a black bra with the text, "Your 8am pick me up. Berlei Your Body".

THE COMPLAINT

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

I object to the billboard advertising campaign based on issues of sex, objectification and degrading. The images of a woman with a push-up bra and the slogan 'your 8am pickup' and 'Berlei your body' suggest that a woman cannot feel happy or ready for a successful day unless her body has been inappropriately sexualised with something that is 'barely your body'. I contacted Berlei via their website and their Customer Service (reply received 2 May) said that I could submit a complaint. After reviewing the FAQs and previous determinations for Berlei and other underwear advertising complaints I still wanted to raise my concerns. My complaint is not about advertising bras in a public space but rather the objectification of women that is degrading a person's identity if they do not have the product.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

We checked all the lines used in the 'Berlei Your Body' campaign 'with OOH Media, who in turn ran it by the OMA. We were told that the ads "did not appear to breach the Advertising Standards Board (ASB) guidelines."
Response: To the contrary, the campaign celebrates women and shows them how Berlei products (in this instance Fabulous Fit Boost Bra) can help to naturally enhance their bodies. The '8am' referring to when she is getting dressed for the day and the 'pick me up' the benefit (boost) that the product gives her body. The tone of the headline is deliberately a little cheeky and designed to bring a smile to her face. We think this sends out a positive and light-hearted message and in no way implies that you cannot be happy or successful in life without our bra.
We are in the business of marketing and selling bras and in order to show the product benefit it must be shown on the body, the focus of the ad is on the bra and the benefit it delivers and does not sexualise or degrade women. Berlei is a brand that supports and cares for women and is all about encouraging them to look their best and feel confident in themselves.

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 complainant's concerns that the advertisement features an inappropriate image of a woman which is sexualized and objectifies women.

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

The Board considered whether the advertisement complied with Section 2.2 of the Code which states, "Advertising or Marketing Communications should not employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative and degrading of any individual or group of people."

The Board noted the advertisement is a large format outdoor billboard and features an image of a woman wearing a bra. The image is cropped and does not include the woman's full face/head. The text that appears on the right of the image is 'Your 8am pickmeup.'

The Board noted that the woman is posed in a manner which is clearly intended to show the bra and is not overtly sexualised. The Board considered that the image does focus largely on the model's breasts but that the relevance to the product is apparent. The Board considered that although the image could have included the full face of the woman, the relationship between the product being advertised and the image shown is not about promoting the woman as an object but about the benefits of a well fitting bra that may improve a woman's cleavage.

The Board considered that the woman is not represented in a manner which could be considered exploitative and degrading.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative and degrading and did not breach Section 2.2 of the Code.

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 the advertisement is featured on a billboard. The Board considered that it is reasonable to expect an underwear advertisement to feature imagery of underwear i.e. a bra and noted that the advertisement is aimed at women seeking to buy bras.

The Board noted that the advertisement is visible to a broad audience that includes children and considered that most members of the community would not find the image used in this advertisement to be inappropriate for a broad audience.

Based on the above the Board considered that the advertisement did treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and did not breach Section 2.4 of the Code.

The Board noted that they had also considered the identical image with different text on a billboard in case 0189/12 and the complaint was dismissed in this case.

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