



## **CASE REPORT**

1. Complaint reference number	290/05
2. Advertiser	Ateco Automotive Pty Ltd (Alfa Romeo 156JTS)
3. Product	Vehicles
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Discrimination or vilification Nationality – section 2.1
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 11 October 2005
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT**

The opening scenes in this television advertisement depict a woman preparing for an intimate meal. She prepares the food and sets the dining table. These black and white scenes are interrupted by short scenes depicting an Alfa Romeo 156 travelling along a coastal road. The woman pours herself a glass of wine and waits for her boyfriend/husband to arrive. Time is shown to pass and the woman is still waiting for the man to arrive. When he arrives at 11.45 pm, she stands at the top of the stairwell, holding a plate of pasta and screams at him in Italian. The English translation of her tirade is as follows: “*Where were you? What were you thinking? I’m not cooking for you anymore. That’s it. I have been waiting forever...*”. She then throws the bowl of pasta at the man. A voiceover states (in an Italian accent): “*The Alfa Romeo 156 now from \$44,990. The performance will seduce you*”.

## **THE COMPLAINT**

Comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:

*“... I have yet to see vehicles manufactured in France, Germany or England advertised with their national foods or exaggerated with native accents. I think the mindset directed towards Italian products needs to shift from the stereotypical and cultural difference images expressed with sarcastic humour to more acceptable, mature, and respectful images such as advertising for German, French even Japanese products.”*

## **THE ADVERTISER’S RESPONSE**

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the complaint/s regarding this advertisement included the following:

*“The lady’s response to this indiscretion is of both anger and frustration. It is not implausible that a lady of English, German, French or even Japanese culture could react in a somewhat similar matter. More so, we feel it is rather myopic to assume such frustration is a stereotypical expression from people of only Italian origin.”*

## **THE DETERMINATION**

The Advertising Standards Board (“Board”) considered whether this advertisement breaches section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the “Code”).

The Board recognised that the advertiser had specifically adopted Italian stereotypes within the advertisement.

The Board also recognised that the advertiser had used this Italian theme to promote an Italian product. The Board was of the opinion that the Italian accent, the Italian food and the emotional characters in the advertisement were used to further enhance the Italian theme of the advertisement

and did not discriminate against or vilify people on the grounds of their Italian nationality.

The Board found that the depiction did not contravene the provisions of the Code relating to the portrayal of people (nationality).

Further finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on any other grounds, the Board dismissed the complaint.