



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	297/05
2. Advertiser	AAPT Ltd ('missing my kids/dinner')
3. Product	Telecommunications
4. Type of advertisement	Print
5. Nature of complaint	Discrimination or vilification Gender - section 2.1
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 11 October 2005
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This print advertisement features a couple sitting on a couch in their living room. The woman is shown to be on the phone. She is wearing an orange t-shirt with the words: “*Missing my kids*” written in large, bold, white font. Next to her sits her frustrated husband who squeezes the couch cushions and stares at the ceiling. He is also wearing an orange t-shirt, however, the words on his t-shirt read: “*Missing my dinner*”. The lower half of the advertisement provides information on AAPT’s \$59 cap. The words: “*Our \$59 cap means you can talk long distance as much as you like*” appear at the bottom of the advertisement.

THE COMPLAINT

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

“... For the men, it makes them look like they:

(a) expect women to prepare their meals; and

(b) are completely incapable of feeding themselves.”

“... When I first saw the ad, I was livid about the man on the couch. I thought “You’ve got hands! Get off your fat butt and get your own meal!!”.”

THE ADVERTISER’S RESPONSE

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

“...(b) it is AAPT’s view that the advertisement respects the AANA Advertiser Code of Ethics. In particular, AAPT believes that the advertisement:

(i) does not portray people or depict material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, age, sexual preference, religion, disability or political belief; and

(ii) uses language which is appropriate in the circumstances.”

“... As the product we are advertising enables long calls at a capped amount, we wanted to play up the fact that people can talk on the phone for long periods of time. To do so in a humorous way, we created the advertisement, which shows a mum talking to her kids whilst a father waits for his wife to join him for dinner.”

“The advertisement does suggest that the mum has kept talking for so long that it is encroaching on dinner time. However, when viewed in its entirety, we do not believe that the advertisement

perpetuates a negative stereotype that “all women spend extended periods of time on the phone”, nor do we believe that it suggests that women who talk on the phone for extended periods do so at the expense of their household duties or that their household duties include cooking dinner.”

“The advertisement does imply that the dad is hungry and would like the mum to end the call so that they can have dinner together. However, in our view, it would be unreasonable to infer from the advertisement the message that men are incapable of preparing their own meals and feeding themselves...”

“... “Missing my dinner” does not infer that he is less concerned about his kids, but uses humour to point out how long the mum has been on the phone...”

THE DETERMINATION

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

The Board was of the view that the gentleman depicted in the advertisement was simply waiting for his wife to stop talking to their children so that they could eat dinner together. The Board did not interpret the advertisement as the man waiting for his wife to cook him dinner. The Board was of the view that the majority of people would interpret the advertisement in the same manner as the Board and would not find the advertisement offensive.

On that basis, the Board considered that the depiction did not contravene the provisions of the Code relating to the portrayal of people (sex).

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