**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**Board takes on drugs**

An advertisement showing white powder as part of a gambling scene has been given the thumbs down by the Advertising Standards Board.

Advertising Standards Bureau Chief Executive Officer, Ms Fiona Jolly, said a complaint about the advertisement focused on the depiction of illegal drugs in a print advertisement.

“The Board agreed that inclusion of what appeared to be illegal drugs in a magazine read by children and young adults was totally out of line,” Ms Jolly said.

“The Board also determined that it was grossly inappropriate to use a depiction of illicit drugs in the context of an advertisement for a clothing brand,” she said.

Ms Jolly said the demographic profile of the readers of the magazine in which the advertisement appeared was 15 to 24 year olds, with the next largest group of readers being those under 15 years of age.

“Advertisers need to consider the impact of their advertisements on the possible audience, and magazine audiences are usually very well known,” Ms Jolly said.

The advertiser, Unit Clothing, agreed to remove all signage and advertising which used the image, stressing that while the powder depicted was not cocaine, the concept was not in line with the company’s overall image.

“While we are pleased that the company has agreed to cease using the current image, the case highlights the power of the complaints process,” Ms Jolly said.

She said as the administrator of the complaints process and secretariat for the Board, the Advertising Standards Bureau is an important cog in the self-regulation of advertising in Australia.

“In our liaison with advertisers themselves, advertising industry bodies, government agencies and with the community, we ensure that we share information so that we can help to maintain the high standard of advertising and marketing communications demanded by Australians,” Ms Jolly said.

All advertisers have responded to the determinations made by the Board during its recent meetings and, if complaints were upheld, have removed or discontinued their ads.

More information about the complaints process and a full list of the advertisements considered can be viewed on the ASB website: [www.adstandards.com.au](http://www.adstandards.com.au) under ‘Case Reports’.

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