



Case Report

1	Case Number	0014/11
2	Advertiser	AAMI
3	Product	Insurance
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV
5	Date of Determination	09/02/2011
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

- 2.3 - Sex/sexuality/nudity Treat with sensitivity to relevant audience
- 2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Sex

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The ad is play on the musical "Hair" but renamed to "Fair". It follows a man in a street where as a safe driver he is avoiding accidents. He is joined in the street by various people, including a group of bikini clad girls working at a car wash.

THE COMPLAINT

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

The advertisement prominently features a section where bikini-clad women are washing the car of the man in the advertisement. Their bikinis are scant and there is absolutely no need for these women to be sexual objects in an advertisement for insurance. I find the advertisement uses unnecessary sexual innuendo and objectifies women to promote the product.

I am an AAMI customer of many years and a current policy-holder. I am extremely disappointed that a company of AAMI's standing would approve an advertisement like this. The use of and close up shots of scantily clad girls. AAMI has never used this before in their ads based on singing and funny car crashes. I believe the use of girls has been added because of the cricket and the hope that men watching the game will notice. This used to happen with beer ads but that seems to have stopped. There are plenty of women that watch sport too and this should be taken into account.

The women in this ad have their breasts protruding out of their bra/bikini tops. Close up footage of one lady's breasts in particular offended me and was inappropriate viewing for my 2 boys as this ad was played many times throughout the Cricket Ashes Test. Not sure I understand the comparison between women shaking their breast around and Car Insurance..??

This advertisement utilises females in 'skimpy' bikinis washing a car in what can easily be described as of a pornographic nature. If I wanted to see offensive images such as this I would turn on SBS late at night not during prime timing viewing during the day (especially during school holidays). Further the frequency of this ad is offensive as during a 60 minute period it was seen 9 times.

The advertisement portrayed women as a mere sexual object, simplifying women and was insulting and dehumanizing to women in my opinion and unfit for general broadcast.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

We would like to take this opportunity to strongly contest that the current AAMI campaign contravenes Section 2 of the AANA Advertisers Code of Ethics.

By way of background, the "Fair" campaign is a play on the famous musical "Hair". As such, the ad has been filmed in a world of hyper reality - almost an advertisement as a stage musical. It is very clear that the ad is not depicting a real world environment – but a world where our safe driver is surrounded by these accident prone individuals causing a level of mayhem. The cast has over 100 participants including a selection of dancing girls. There are also road workers, a hippy, 3 women in motorised wheelchairs, a gospel choir, a lady riding a pushbike and a lollypop lady along with various other cast members. The feel of the musical ad is upbeat, light hearted and above all fun.

The specific sections pertaining to the complaints are:

Section 2.1: Advertising or marketing communications shall 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.

According to the Oxford dictionary, discriminate means to treat someone either favourably or unfavourably due to their class or category rather than merit. Vilify means to speak ill of, to defame or slander. I think it's very clear our ad does not do this to any group outlined in section 2.1 of the code. Any individual who is a safe driver will be eligible for AAMI Safe Driver Rewards and receive the same treatment from AAMI.

Section 2.3: Advertising or Marketing Communications shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and, where appropriate, the relevant time zone.

Please note that this campaign received a PG rating from CAD. As a result of this rating, AAMI has complied with all rules around placement of the campaign. As a car and home insurer, please note that the relevant audience is people 18 and over. Obviously we cannot insure an individual under 18 years of age.

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standard Board ('the Board') considered whether the advertisement complied with the AANA Code of Ethics ('the Code').

The Board noted the complainant's concern that this advertisement objectifies women and features inappropriate and offensive sexual imagery and innuendo, and is shown frequently.

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

The Board noted that the frequency of broadcast of an advertisement is not a matter for the Board and is covered by the Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice January 2010.

The Board first considered whether the advertisement complied with section 2.1 of the Code which requires that 'advertisements shall not portray 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.'

The Board noted that the advertisement features a man driving and walking down a street whilst singing about being a safe driver. He is joined by various people, including a group of bikini clad girls working at a car wash.

The Board noted the advertiser's response that the advertisement is based on the musical, Hair, and that it has the feel of a stage performance and not a real life situation.

The Board noted that there are lots of people shown in the background of the advertisement, including a group of nuns and a group of workmen, and considered that the bikini-clad girls are not the focus of the advertisement but rather part of a large ensemble background cast. The Board considered that the advertisement does not objectify women.

Based on the above the Board determined that, in this instance, the advertisement did not depict any material that discriminated against or vilified any person or section of society. The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach section 2.1 of the Code.

The Board then considered whether the advertisement complied with section 2.3 of the Code. Section 2.3 states: '...shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and, where appropriate, the relevant programme time zone'.

The Board noted the complainants concerns regarding the sexual nature of the advertisement. The Board considered that the musical theme of the advertisement gave it a fun, un-real setting, and that the bikini-clad girls were not presented in a sexual manner. The Board noted that the advertisement had been rated PG by CAD.

The Board determined that the advertisement did treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and that it did not breach section 2.3 of the Code.

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