



**Ad Standards** Community Panel  
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**AdStandards.com.au**

Advertising Standards Bureau Limited  
ACN 084 452 666

# Case Report

1	<b>Case Number</b>	<b>0045/19</b>
2	<b>Advertiser</b>	<b>Hunter Valley Steel</b>
3	<b>Product</b>	<b>Professional Service</b>
4	<b>Type of Advertisement / media</b>	<b>Radio</b>
5	<b>Date of Determination</b>	<b>20/02/2019</b>
6	<b>DETERMINATION</b>	<b>Dismissed</b>

## ISSUES RAISED

2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Gender

## DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This radio advertisement features the voiceover: "Woman: Hello, XYZ Steel. Man: G'day I need some 1mm plate to fix the floor of my box trailer. Woman: Sure, it's \$100 a sheet. Voiceover: Did you spot the mistake? Man: I need some 1mm plate to fix the floor of the box trailer. Man 2: That's a bit thin. 1.6 plate or 2.6 checker plate would be more suitable. Voiceover: When you need an expert, not an order taker, call Hunter Valley Steel. From the smallest handyman job to the biggest construction project. HV Steel.com.au

## THE COMPLAINT

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

*It is blatantly sexist, derogative towards women and offensive. I am complaining because my 19 year old daughter heard it and flew into a rage. It is blatantly sexist and infers women are inferior to men. No wonder men still hit us when traditionally male dominated businesses are advertising trash like this.*



## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

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

*Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the complaint made regarding our Radio commercial.*

*I am very disappointed that the commercial has offended the complainant.*

*Hunter Valley Steel has a proud history of having strong women employed in our company, one of our founding Directors (40 years ago) is female, one of our current Directors is female, we have had a female manager at our Singleton branch for many years & if you call our Maitland branch two out of the three sales staff are Female.*

*I believe it's the best person regardless of gender.*

*I have played the commercial to all our staff & none of them found it offensive, One of the Female staff asked me "if we changed the commercial & reversed the rolls should men be offended"*

*I am deeply offended that the complainant has said that we are encouraging violence against women in this commercial, I believe this is an absolutely disgraceful comment.*

*The commercial has been on air for around 5-6 years & this is the first complaint we have had, I have had discussions with Southern Cross Austereo to make a new commercial & the Current commercial will not be played once the new commercial is produced.*

## **THE DETERMINATION**

The Ad Standards Community Panel (Panel) considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the AANA Code of Ethics (the Code).

The Panel noted the complainant's concern that the advertisement was sexist and derogatory towards women.

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

The Panel 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, gender, age, sexual preference, religion, disability, mental illness or political belief.'

The Panel noted this radio advertisement featured a man calling to enquire about the price of a steel plate for his trailer and the woman who answers the phone gives a price. The advertisement asks if the listener noticed the mistake. The man is then shown to call another place and a man answers and questions his choice in product as it may not be suitable for his needs.

The Panel noted the complainant's concern that the advertisement is sexist and offensive to women by implying that women are only ever order takers and are inferior to men.

The Panel noted that the advertisement does not depict the woman providing advice, she is only shown to be taking an order, and considered that the advertisement implies that the advertised business are experts in the product, not that they are experts in the product because men work there.

The Panel noted the advertiser's response that a man could be used in the advertisement and the effect would be identical.

The Panel considered that there is no language in the advertisement that suggests women are always order-takers. The Panel noted that the voiceover of the woman is exaggerated in that she sounds particularly nasal, however considered that radio does not have the benefit of visuals and therefore the use of an exaggerated voice is to gain attention. The Panel considered that the use of an exaggerated voice was not a depiction which demeaned the woman on account of her gender.

The Panel determined that the advertisement did not discriminate against or vilify any person or section of the community on account of their gender and did not breach Section 2.1 of the Code.

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

