



**Ad Standards** Community Panel  
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Ad Standards Limited  
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## Case Report

<b>1. Case Number :</b>	<b>0083-20</b>
<b>2. Advertiser :</b>	<b>Lifestyles Hi-Way Carwash</b>
<b>3. Product :</b>	<b>Automotive</b>
<b>4. Type of Advertisement/Media :</b>	<b>Billboard</b>
<b>5. Date of Determination</b>	<b>11-Mar-2020</b>
<b>6. DETERMINATION :</b>	<b>Dismissed</b>

### ISSUES RAISED

AANA Code of Ethics\2.2 Exploitative or Degrading

### DESCRIPTION OF ADVERTISEMENT

This billboard advertisement features the name of the business, along with a cartoon image of a woman cleaning a car. The woman is wearing a white crop top and denim shorts and is bending over to get cleaning supplies from a bucket.

### THE COMPLAINT

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

*The image employs sexual appeal in a manner which is degrading to a group of people, in this instance women and young girls. In the current environment, with the MeToo movement and rape culture research asserting that rape culture begins with women and young girls being objectified. This advertised image objectifies women and young girls.*

### THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

*The advertisement was to promote the use of a hand car wash specifically to the demographic of young women.*



*The design of the billboard was a standard image purchased for the use of advertising and wasn't specifically designed for the business.*

*The AANA Practice Notes provide that the Community Panel may have regard to the context or medium in which the material appears and as such should consider in their decision the following contextual points.*

*The use of a person in the advertisement is used to indicate that you clean the car yourself rather than using an automatic carwash, although this service is also offered by the advertiser as an alternate. However, most of the premises facilities and associated income derives from the hand wash function.*

*Statistics indicate that 2/3 of men are more likely to clean their cars at home rather than 43% of women who prefer to use a carwash (Ray Massey for the Daily Mail, 'Men care more about cleaning a car's bodywork, women worry about the interior'). Additionally, the advertiser notes that the use of the dog wash on the premises is predominately used by women.*

*These points formed the basis for the decision to use an image of a woman in the advertisement.*

*Lifestyles Hi-Way Carwash believe in selecting the image for the advertisement they were not, (a) taking advantage of the sexual appeal of a person, or group of people, by depicting them as objects or commodities; or (b) focusing on their body parts where this bears no direct relevance to the product or service being advertised. Neither was Lifestyles Hi-Way Carwash depicting a lowering in character or quality of a person or group of persons. As defined by the AANA practice notes for Section 2.2.*

*As per the AANA Practice Notes, for material to breach section 2.2 of the Code, it must contain sexual appeal, however not all images or other material depicting people who are scantily clad or naked will be unacceptable under this section. This section restricts the use of material only if it employs sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative of or degrading to any individual or group of people.*

*The image of the woman in the advertisement does not employ sexual appeal and is a minor element of the signage and is in no way depicting a child or young girl. Rather visual emphasis is placed on the tyre of the car indicating its sparkling cleanliness and on the bucket of cleaning products one would commonly use for the cleaning of a car.*

*The image depicted shows a woman in summer clothing which is a period that sees an increase in trade for Lifestyles Hi-Way Carwash and which formed the basis of why this attire was chosen. Such attire is commonly seen being worn in the area as the business is based in a coastal region. As was found in the determination of case 0570/16 the attire of a woman, specifically a bikini, for the promotion of a car wash was not considered in breach and similarly this determination would apply to the facts in this case.*



*The management of Lifestyles Hi-Way Carwash take the issues of rape culture and objectification of women seriously being a family business and with the owner having two sons and two daughters who are young adults and are highly aware of these issues.*

*Lifestyles Hi-Way Carwash believe the advertisement is in line with current advertising standards.*

*The advertisement has been displayed for a period of eight months to date and only one complaint has been received regarding the advertisement in this time.*

## **THE DETERMINATION**

The Ad Standards Community Panel (the 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 objectifies women and is inappropriate in the current environment, with community opinion being expressed through social movements such as #MeToo.

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

The Panel considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.2 of the Code. Section 2.2 of the Code states: "Advertising or marketing communications should not employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative or degrading of any individual or group of people."

The Panel noted the AANA Practice Note which provides guidance on the meaning of the terms exploitative and degrading:

Exploitative - (a) taking advantage of the sexual appeal of a person, or group of people, by depicting them as objects or commodities; or (b) focussing on their body parts where this bears no direct relevance to the product or service being advertised. Degrading – lowering in character or quality a person or group of people.

The Panel first considered whether the advertisement used sexual appeal.

The Panel considered that the image of the woman is the focus of the advertisement. The Panel considered that whilst the image is a cartoon, it is clearly identifiable as an attractive woman. The Panel considered that the woman is depicted wearing short shorts, a crop top and heels and that large parts of her skin were exposed. The Panel considered that there is a stereotype associated with attractive women washing cars, and considered that this image plays into that stereotype. The Panel considered the advertisement did contain sexual appeal.



The Panel then considered whether the advertisement used sexual appeal in a manner that was exploitative of an individual or group of people.

The Panel considered that the woman in the advertisement was depicted as washing her vehicle, and that this was an action that could be undertaken at the location. The Panel considered the woman appeared confident and capable, and that the advertisement did not suggest that the woman was an object or commodity. The Panel considered that whilst the image of the woman was the focus of the advertisement, her depiction was to highlight that people could wash their own cars and the use of the image was relevant to the service being advertised. The Panel considered that the advertisement did not use sexual appeal in a manner that was exploitative of the woman in the advertisement.

The Panel then considered whether the advertisement used sexual appeal in a manner that was degrading of an individual or group of people.

The Panel considered that the cartoon woman in the advertisement was depicted washing her car, and that the woman was not lowered in character or quality in this depiction. The Panel considered that the advertisement did not use sexual appeal in a manner that was degrading of the woman in the advertisement.

On that basis, the Panel determined that the advertisement did not employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative or degrading of an individual and did not breach Section 2.2 of the Code.

Finding that the advertisement did not breach any other section of the Code the Panel dismissed the complaint.