



**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>0087/18</b>
2	<b>Advertiser</b>	<b>Sabco Australia</b>
3	<b>Product</b>	<b>Hardware/Machinery</b>
4	<b>Type of Advertisement / media</b>	<b>TV - Pay</b>
5	<b>Date of Determination</b>	<b>21/02/2018</b>
6	<b>DETERMINATION</b>	<b>Dismissed</b>

## ISSUES RAISED

2.5 - Language Inappropriate language

## DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The Pay TV advertisement features someone dropping some wood and saying 'oh four by two', then sweeping up wood shavings and saying 'oh shavings'. The voice over describes the product as being tough enough for any clean up on any worksite and depicts the product being used on bitumen. The voice over states 'even this bitumen job'. The advertisement ends with the tagline 'keep it clean'.

## THE COMPLAINT

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

*By the word 'bitch' to describe a broom. The broom is for men to use on a work site and the word is offensive, unnecessary and demeans female gender, when there are very many other words that could be used to describe a difficult or unpleasant job.*

*I feel that this language is offensive and inappropriate.*

## THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE





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

*The concept for the TV commercial centers on self-censorship and aligns slice of life mess-moments that occur on any worksite. In this instance we visualize a number of scenarios that depict work site mess and use voice over to carry out the self-censorship in line with our “keep it clean” tag line. The ‘mess-moment’ references used in this commercial are to “4 by 2” and “shavings” and “bitumen”.*

*We note that a viewer misheard the voice over in our Sabco bulldozer commercial. In the scene, a workman is cleaning up bitumen. Bitumen is notoriously tough to clean up, so the intent of this scene is to demonstrate the toughness of the Sabco bulldozer cleaning range. The voice over at this point says “The Sabco Bulldozer range is tough enough for any cleanup on any worksite – even this bitumen job.”*

*We have endeavoured to ensure the audio - and particularly the voice over - on this commercial is clear, and we regret that the viewer in this instance misheard it. It is certainly not our intention to cause offence.*

## **THE DETERMINATION**

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

The Panel noted the complainants’ concerns that the advertisement features offensive language.

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

The Panel considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.5 of the Code (including Prevailing Community Standards). Section 2.5 of the Code states: “Advertising or Marketing Communications shall only use language which is appropriate in the circumstances (including appropriate for the relevant audience and medium). Strong or obscene language shall be avoided”.

The Panel noted the complainants’ concerns that the advertisement features the phrase ‘bitch of a job’ and that this language is inappropriate.

The Panel noted that the Pay-TV advertisement features someone dropping some wood and saying 'oh four by two', then sweeping up wood shavings and saying 'oh shavings!'. The voice over describes the product as being tough enough for any clean



up on any worksite and depicts the product being used on bitumen. The voice over states 'even this bitumen job'. The advertisement ends with the tagline 'keep it clean'.

The Panel noted that there is a genuine level of community concern about strong or inappropriate language (Community Perceptions Research, [https://adstandards.com.au/sites/default/files/2017\\_community\\_perceptions\\_web.pdf](https://adstandards.com.au/sites/default/files/2017_community_perceptions_web.pdf)) particularly where children are exposed or included.

The Panel noted the advertiser's response states that the word 'bitch' is not said in the advertisement and that the phrase used in the advertisement is 'bitumen'.

The Panel considered that the advertisement clearly refers to 'bitumen' while depicting bitumen on the screen and considered that while the advertisement may have been trying to suggest another phrase, the clear wording was 'bitumen' and was not a strong suggestion or sound of the word 'bitch'.

The Panel considered that the complainants' were incorrect about the advertisement containing the word 'bitch'.

The Panel considered that the advertisement did not contain strong or obscene language and did not breach Section 2.5 of the Code.

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

