



## Case Report

1	Case Number	0103/17
2	Advertiser	AAMI
3	Product	Insurance
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Internet
5	Date of Determination	08/03/2017
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

### ISSUES RAISED

2.5 - Language Inappropriate language

### DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This internet advertisement opens on a family who have broken down on a rural road near a sign which says, 'Ship Creek'. The dad is on the phone to AAMI and says that they are "up by Ship Creek". The daughter mishears him and says, "OMG Dad – up Ship Creek" and the son starts laughing and says, "Did Day say sh..." before being cut off by his dad. The voiceover says, "Up Ship Creek? AAMI's Roadside Assist option is Australia-wide with unlimited call outs, 24/7. That's not very insurance".

### THE COMPLAINT

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

*Also on YouTube ads, on channels aimed at children. We have twin 6yo's and they have giggled at it a few times. I have no problem with it airing after 8pm, or on YouTube content for adults, but I feel it shouldn't be on channels specifically aimed at children, like toy reviews and children vlog channels. It's not something we would want our children repeating at school.*

*They keep saying "ship creek" and it deliberately sounds like "shit creek". They have kids in the ad saying "shit" like that's normal behaviour. We are trying to teach our son not to walk around saying shit and shit creek. It's offensive. This ad appears on you tube as an unskippable ad on kids channels. Cant they sell insurance without the shock value of children*

*swearing? Thanks.*

*My seven year old son heard this, and the repeated use of "Up Ship Creek" sounded far more like "Up Shit Creek". It's not ok, and could naively be repeated. I just don't want this language in my house, and think the advertisement needed to be better targeted to avoid children's search terms and locked down settings. We've never had this problem before.*

## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

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

*The complaint received is in relation to AAMI's latest TVC for our Roadside Assist product, titled 'Woop Woop.' The complaint is in the same nature as previous complaints (0064/17 & 0080/17), however was seen in digital channels, particularly Youtube.*

*We would like to address some concerns and provide commentary relating to our advertising approach in our recent 'Woop Woop' execution, in particular section 2.5 of the AANA Code of Ethics.*

*At your request and to alleviate any other concerns, we will address all of section 2 of the AANA Code of Ethics, as well as sections 3.1 and 3.3.*

### *2.1 - Discrimination or vilification*

*At no point during any AAMI advertising do we portray people or depict material in a way which could be seen as discriminatory, nor we do set out to vilify people or sections of the community.*

### *2.2 - Exploitative and degrading*

*Similarly, at no point during this advertisement (or any AAMI content) do we employ sexual appeal in a matter which exploits or degrades individuals or groups of people.*

*2.3 – Violence The advertisement in question has no justifiable violence depicted or any behaviour that could be considered dangerous.*

### *2.4 - Sex, sexuality and nudity*

*AAMI's advertising will never include sex, sexuality or nudity.*

### *2.5 – Language*

*As captured in the above script, AAMI's 'Woop Woop' execution leverages colloquial Australian humour to dramatise an everyday scenario in a light-hearted manner.*

*During his conversation with AAMI, the father describes that they've broken down in the district of Woop Woop which, according to a sign on the side of the road, is very close to Ship Creek – all of which is found both intriguing and amusing by his wife, daughter and son.*

*Although the use of 'Ship Creek' may be described as a play on words, no inappropriate*

*language is used within the ad and the pronunciation of the word in question is clearly 'ship' reinforced visually by the 'Ship Creek' sign (at 00:13).*

*This, along with the enjoyment of the family, softens the potential for this to be taken out of context and our CAD approval and PG rating (detailed above) are also reflective of this.*

*In her moment of enjoyment, the daughter (tween in the script) exclaims, "OMG, Dad." – a particularly common expression used by youth in a moment of joy or surprise as an acronym for 'oh my goodness', which was the intention.*

## *2.6 - Health and Safety*

*As per our stance on section 2.3, the advertisement in question does not contain any material contrary to Prevailing Community Standards on health and safety.*

## *3.1 - Advertising and Marketing Communications to Children*

*AAMI's core product suite is general insurance relevant for consumers aged 16 and over. And while children appear in this content for the purposes of dramatising a family whose car has broken down in a remote location, our targeting in digital channels is strictly 18+ to ensure relevancy and minimise wastage.*

## *3.3 - Food and Beverages Marketing and Communications Code*

*This advertisement is for AAMI's Roadside Assistance product which is an optional extra for our Comprehensive Car Insurance product.*

*AAMI is not an advertiser of food or beverage, nor a licenced wagering operator.*

*We take all complaints we receive very seriously so we appreciate you raising the issue with us.*

## **THE DETERMINATION**

The Advertising Standards Board (the "Board") considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the AANA Code of Ethics (the "Code").

The Board noted the complainants' concerns that the advertisement uses inappropriate language and is not appropriate for children.

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

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.5 of the Code. 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 Board noted that this television advertisement features a family whose vehicle has broken down. While the father tries to explain where they are to AAMI over the phone, the children laugh when he says “up by Ship Creek”.

The Board noted it had previously dismissed complaints about the same advertisement when aired on free to air television in case 0064/17, where:

“The Board noted that Ship Creek sounds very similar to the colloquial phrase ‘up shit creek’. The Board noted that the Macquarie Dictionary definition of ‘up shit creek’ is: “in trouble; in difficulties” and considered that as the family is in difficulties near a sign for Ship Creek the advertisement is using a play on words. The Board noted that after the father says they are right up by Ship Creek, the daughter corrects him and says, “Up ship creek’ and considered that while the inference is that the man has said ‘shit’ he clearly says ‘ship’. The Board noted that when the son goes to repeat his father’s words the suggestion is that he is going to say ‘shit creek’ rather than ‘Ship Creek’ and considered that his father stops him which in the Board’s view is highlighting that using the phrase ‘shit creek’ is not appropriate for children.

The Board noted it had previously dismissed similar complaints about the use of the phrase, “Oh sheet!” in an advertisement in case 0291/15 where:

“The Board noted that whilst there a suggestion of “shit” the actual word used is “sheet” and is clearly heard as such throughout the advertisement. The Board noted that after the exclamation is used, the word is contextualised immediately by onscreen imagery of the product being used to wipe up the particular mess.”

The Board noted that in the current advertisement the word ‘shit’ is not actually used and considered that the phrase ‘Ship Creek’ is contextualised by the sign post for Ship Creek.

The Board acknowledged that some members of the community may find a reference to the word ‘shit’ to be inappropriate but considered that this word is not actually spoken in the advertisement. The Board noted the repeated use of the phrase ‘Ship Creek’ and considered that while this does emphasise the reference to ‘shit creek’ in the Board’s view the overall tone is light-hearted and humorous and the language used is not inappropriate in the circumstances and does not amount to strong or obscene language.”

The Board noted the current advertisement has been aired on Pay television and considered that while a CAD number is not required, the advertisement had previously been rated ‘PG’ by CAD for airing on free to air television. Consistent with its previous determination the Board considered that the language used was not inappropriate for the relevant audience of Pay Television.

The Board considered that the advertisement did not use strong, obscene or inappropriate language and determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.5 of the Code.

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

