



Case Report

1	Case Number	0113/13
2	Advertiser	Extension leads Australia
3	Product	Hardware/Machinery
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Transport
5	Date of Determination	10/04/2013
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

- 2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Gender
- 2.2 - Objectification Exploitative and degrading - women

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

Image on the side of a yellow van of bikini clad woman lying on the beach with her arm raised so her hand is in her hair. The text reads, "240V Extension Leads & Fitted Air Hoses...Buy Direct 1300 413 260 www.extensionleadsaustralia.com.au" and there is an image of an extension lead and a cable.

THE COMPLAINT

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

The company is selling extension leads but has placed a scantily clad woman on the van to draw attention. It is offensive that this company is clearly objectifying woman for the purpose of getting attention. Upon further examination of their website they continue the theme with catch phrases and silhouettes of woman in provocative poses. I think they should remove the image from the van as it is unnecessary and offensive and was parked in a shopping centre car park in view of children. Seen while on a business trip to QLD last week and took photo plus shared with friends who agree it is offensive.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

Please note in my professional opinion the following for:-

1. *There is no breach of any code relating to public promotion of nudity or sexually offensive material that i am aware of.*
2. *The relevance for our client selling extension leads is they have a market position appealing to the entertainment industry, a primary user of hire and purchase of extension leads. This logo speaks to their customers needs for understanding of the entertainment industry's specific needs.*
3. *If this logo is ruled offensive and has to change in anyway due to the complaint, other images, silhouette art directed advertising for brands like Telstra Bigpond, bonds, etc must also be considered offensive.*
4. *We completely reject the complaint and respectfully ask the Advertising Standards Bureau why it cannot filter out such an obvious personal preference complaint V a real code violation?*

If found that this is the case and we have violated any code relating to public promotion every newsagent, magazine, print and billboard company in the country would also need to change their logos and advertising material, but where exactly is the code violation V someone upset? EG, she is fully clothed, legs closed etc.

Where exactly does the review board see a code infringement here V any pool, travel, online shopping company ad ?

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board (“Board”) considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the “Code”).

The Board noted the complainant’s concerns that the advertisement objectifies women, is offensive and is not appropriate for children to see.

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.1 of the Code. Section 2.1 of the Code states: “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...gender...”

The Board noted that the advertisement features an image on the side of a van of a bikini clad woman lying on a beach and that the complainant finds this offensive as there is no relevance

between this image and to the product advertised.

The Board noted that the image of the woman in her bikini does not have any relevance to a company which sells electrical leads. The Board noted that it is common practice for Advertisers to use eye catching images to attract the attention of the community and that many members of the community would prefer that images featuring women or men wearing little clothing were not used in such a manner. The Board considered however that the image of the woman does not of itself amount to an image which discriminates against or vilifies women.

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

The Board 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 and degrading of any individual or group of people."

The Board noted that the woman in the advertisement is wearing a bikini and is on a beach and considered that whilst she is clearly posing in a manner to best accentuate her body the Board considered that her pose is only mildly sexualised and she is not presented in a sexualised manner.

The Board noted that the writing next to the image says, "Get turned on" and considered that whilst the combination of this phrase and the image of the woman could be considered to be degrading to women, in the Board's view the relatively small size of the text and the context of an advertisement for power leads amounts to an overall depiction which is not degrading to the point it would breach the Code.

The Board noted that whilst many members of the community could consider that the use of a bikini clad woman to promote a company is exploitative in the Board's view the image of the woman does not amount to an image which is degrading.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative and degrading to men and that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.2 of the Code.

The Board then considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.4 of the Code. Section 2.4 of the Code states: "Advertising or Marketing Communications shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience".

The Board noted the complainant's concerns that the advertisement could be seen by children and noted that as the image appears on a van it would be available to a broad audience which would include children. The Board noted that the woman is wearing a standard bikini and is lying on a beach and considered that this image is one which is common in Australia both in advertising material and at the beach.

The Board noted that the advertisement does not depict any nudity or sexualised material and considered that the advertisement does treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the

relevant audience which could include children.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.4 of the Code.

Further finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on any grounds, the Board dismissed the complaint.