



**ADVERTISING
STANDARDS
BOARD**

Level 2, 97 Northbourne Avenue, Turner ACT 2612
Ph: (02) 6173 1500 | Fax: (02) 6262 9833
www.adstandards.com.au

ACN 084 452 666

Case Report

1	Case Number	0115/16
2	Advertiser	Roadshow Film Distributors Pty Ltd
3	Product	Entertainment
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Transport
5	Date of Determination	23/03/2016
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

2.3 - Violence Violence
2.3 - Violence Weapons

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The advertisement is for the movie GRIMSBY. The ad features Sacha Baron Cohen dressed in character with a rifle balanced on his shoulder, and appears on a plain orange background. The ad features simple title cards - FROM THE MAN WHO BROUGHT YOU BORAT, BRUNO and the DICTATOR and then underneath the title card it features some text that says SACHA BARON COHEN. The release date and IN CINEMAS information appears at the bottom and movie classification appears in the bottom left.

THE COMPLAINT

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

The tram was covered in images of automatic weapons, very large and very prominent. With young children it is hard to make them feel safe with the prevalence and size of these images. The children did not understand the film was promoting a comedy film and there is no information on the image that the content is ironic. My 6 year old son was scared and confused as to why he is not allowed to carry a gun when the larger than life weapons are displayed so prominently. I think these images displayed are unsettling and should not be available to be freely viewed by children while traveling to primary school for the day.

Children have a right to feel safe and not threatened by oversized and glamorised images of weapons on public transport.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

The advertisement in question uses the main one-sheet artwork for the movie GRIMSBY. The artwork features Sasha Baron Cohen mimicking a secret agent - he has a little smirk on his face, he is un-fit with a massive belly, his outfit is mismatched and the zipper is undone on his pants, he has a ridiculous hair-cut and look on his face. The movie is a comedy and the artwork does reflect this as it's not intended for him to look like a real spy in any way.

I understand the concern is mainly around the inclusion of a weapon in the artwork. This weapon is not being held in a menacing way and the person holding this (Sasha Baron Cohen) does not look like a real spy. He is merely using this weapon as a prop to help deliver his spy persona. Overall he does not look serious and does not look like he could do any harm.

With regards to the marketing campaign for the movie, this is currently live across TV, outdoor and online. The comments here are specifically in to outdoor and bus-sides in particular. This activity was booked through our media agency OMD via APN. The campaign is currently will be coming down on the 20th March. Artwork was submitted to APN for approval prior to printing and posting and there were no concerns at the time of printing/posting.

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 depicts automatic weapons and is not appropriate as it could cause alarm and distress to children.

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

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.3 of the Code. Section 2.3 states: "Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not present or portray violence unless it is justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised".

The Board noted that this transport advertisement for an upcoming movie, Grimsby, features an image of the main actor, Sacha Baron Cohen, facing the camera and holding a gun over his shoulder. The Board noted that the weapon is not pointed at a person or the viewer and

considered that Sacha's pose is not menacing or threatening as he has a silly expression on his face, his pants are undone and his posture highlights his pot belly.

The Board acknowledged that there is a level of community concern regarding terrorism and weapons and considered that whilst this level of concern is increasing, and possibly shifting in regards to what is or is not acceptable for outdoor display, the Board considered that in this instance, consistent with previous determinations, (0211/11, 0429/12, 0226/14), the depiction of a weapon in this advertisement is relevant to the advertised product and is not a violent depiction.

The Board noted the complainant's concern that children could find this image to be threatening but considered that the overall image is not menacing and the actor's pose, clothing and facial expression are unlikely to be found threatening or menacing by most members of the community including children.

Overall the Board considered that in the context of the movie being promoted the depiction of a weapon was justifiable and the depiction of the gun is not in this context violent.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.3 of the Code.

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