



Case Report

1	Case Number	0120/15
2	Advertiser	Adelaide Entertainment Centre
3	Product	Sport and Leisure
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV - Free to air
5	Date of Determination	15/04/2015
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

2.3 - Violence Violence

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The advertisement is a 15 second TV commercial promoting the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) event in Adelaide on May 10. It features past highlights from both competitors where they are fighting in a ring. The various fighters are described by the voiceover as being a 'monster' and being able to 'hit hard'.

THE COMPLAINT

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

It is truly violent to see this while watching a family show, to see one person beat the SHIT out of another human being, we educate our family that any violence against another person is not acceptable. To see this happening, where one person is punched to the ground and then continually punched is abhorrent.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

We thank you for calling this complaint to our attention. We take a very considered approach to the advertising and promotion of our events to ensure compliance with the AANA Code and appropriate placement.

Please find below a detailed response to each part of Section 2 of The Code, in relation to the advertisement and complaint received.

Section 2.1

The advertisement makes no attempt to portray, depict, discriminate or vilify any person or persons on the account of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, sexual preference, religion, disability, illness (mental or otherwise), nor political belief. The advertisement is for an international sporting event touring to Adelaide, and as such featured a broad representation of nationalities including an Australian competitor.

Section 2.2

The advertisement makes no attempt to employ sexual appeal in any manner that is neither exploitative nor degrading. The advertisement depicts various competitors in appropriate sporting apparel competing and celebrating their victories.

Section 2.3

UFC is a competitive fighting event. As such, very careful consideration was given towards the content portrayed to focus on fighters competing and celebrating their victory.

The advertisement avoids fighters being punched to the ground and then continually punched (to which the complaint refers).

The advertisement also avoids depiction of any significant trauma that can sometimes be sustained in competitive fighting arenas (to which the complaint also refers "to see one person beat the SHIT out of another human being").

The advertising material was cautiously selected to comply with The Code as being justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised.

Section 2.4

The advertisement has avoided any context of sex, sexuality or nudity. The advertisement focuses on the promotion of an international sporting event touring to Adelaide.

Section 2.5

The advertisement uses actual commentary and announcer voice over promoting the relevant event details. Caution has been applied so it is appropriate in the circumstance of the footage, sport and for the audience it is targeted at - ppl 25-54. We do appreciate (due to the nature of a broadcast channel) this is not always completely exclusive, so further care was given with regard to program placement in programming where adults/parental supervision would be likely.

Section 2.6

Careful consideration towards prevailing community standards on health and safety were

taken with this commercial. As mentioned in response to section 2.3 of The Code, the advertisement avoids fighters being punched to the ground then continually punched and avoids depiction of any significant trauma that can sometimes be sustained in competitive fighting arenas. Furthermore, the focus of the advertisement is on the competition of the sport, celebration of the victory, and referees are present in a controlled environment. These are all important with regard to consideration of community standards on health and safety.

We trust this aids your review of the advertisement in relation to the complaint received and should you have any questions or require further assistance on this matter please do not hesitate to contact me.

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 features men fighting and is too graphic for a broad audience which could include 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 Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) is legally allowed to be advertised on television and considered that its role is to determine whether the content of the advertisement, not the actual product, portrays violence in a manner justifiable in the context of the product.

The Board noted that the advertisement features a montage of clips from UFC events which show different men fighting one another in a boxing ring.

The Board noted the advertiser’s response that care had been taken to not show the same person being continually punched or any real damage being caused to a person as a result of being punched.

The Board noted that the advertisement had been rated ‘PG’ by CAD. A minority of the

Board considered that although the sport itself is a violent contact sport it is not appropriate to show images of men fighting one another in a medium which can be easily viewed by children.

The majority of the Board however considered that the violence depicted in the advertisement is clearly presented in the context of controlled conditions and that in the context of an aggressive combat sport the level of violence shown in the advertisement is not inappropriate. The Board noted children are able to attend UFC events and considered that the advertisement is presenting a realistic depiction of what you would expect to see at such an event.

Overall the majority of the Board considered that the advertisement did present or portray violence in a manner which is justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised.

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.