



## Case Report

<b>1</b>	<b>Case Number</b>	<b>0135/11</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Advertiser</b>	<b>Rugby World Cup LTD</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Product</b>	<b>Leisure &amp; Sport</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Type of Advertisement / media</b>	<b>Pay TV</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Date of Determination</b>	<b>27/04/2011</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>DETERMINATION</b>	<b>Dismissed</b>

### ISSUES RAISED

2.2 - Violence Other

### DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The advertisement depicts one boy holding a counterfeit rugby ball, which is kicked by another boy. The ball lands and deflates, causing the boy who was holding the ball to look quizzically at the deflated ball and for the boy who kicked the ball to deflate in the same manner as the ball, accompanied by a hissing noise. The advertisement then shows counterfeit rugby jerseys hanging on a line, with the colour running from the fabric. The woman hanging up the jerseys deflates as per the initial ball and boy. Finally three men are shown attempting to pass through a stadium turnstile. The men deflate when their invalid tickets are rejected by the scanner. The message 'Don't be let down' appears on screen, followed by a stadium crowd shot overlaid with the Rugby World Cup 2011 logo and the words 'Find out where to buy official tickets, hospitality and merchandise at [rugbyworldcup.com](http://rugbyworldcup.com)'.

### THE COMPLAINT

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

*I find this advertisement in poor taste. We are shown images of children and adults losing their form. It is distressing to watch. At first viewing it seems that they are dying and both my wife and I thought it might be an advertisement about terminal illness. It's very upsetting and as a member of the target audience (male rugby fan) I find it in poor taste and in fact unwatchable. I cannot believe that the advertiser can think this is a good way of marketing*

*tickets to this event. I really wish that this advertisement would not be broadcast because it causes me distress when I see it.*

## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

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

*The complainant alleges that the advertisement depicts people 'dying' and that it is therefore in breach of section 2.2 of the AANA Code of Ethics for its portrayal of 'violence'. We believe that the advertisement does not depict people 'dying' or any other violent action, and are also of the belief that the advertisement does not have any other issues that fall within the scope of section 2 of the AANA Code of Ethics.*

*The advertisement is intended to warn consumers of the disappointment they could experience if they purchase unofficial and counterfeit Rugby World Cup 2011 merchandise or tickets. The deflation of the people featured in the advertisement both visually and aurally (by the repetition of the hissing noise) mirrors the deflation of the counterfeit rugby ball in the opening scene. The point of the advertisement is then clarified by the final frames of the advertisement that warn consumers not to be 'let down' by purchasing unofficial Rugby World Cup 2011 tickets, hospitality or merchandise. The advertisement's quirky and unusual depiction of the disappointment experienced by those featured in the advertisement is further reinforced by the light-hearted background music.*

*We consider that most members of the community would interpret the actions of the persons deflating as a symbolic depiction of their disappointment at being duped by unofficial and inferior product, rather than as a violent action. There is no physical contact or aggression depicted between the people featuring in the advertisement, and no physical force is otherwise applied to those depicted in the advertisement.*

## **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 over the images in the advertisement of people who appear to be dying.

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

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 shall not present or portray violence unless it is justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised."

The Board noted that the advertisement starts with an image of a football deflating. There are then images of people who also deflate following their realisation that products they bought were not of suitable quality (a shirt that ran, counterfeit tickets).

In the case of this advertisement the Board considered that the opening image of the football deflating provides a clear context for the people to also deflate and that the following images were all connected with similar substandard products. The Board agreed that some people in the community would find the images unpleasant but, in the Board's view, the deflating was unrealistic and not violence.

The Board considered that the images shown in the advertisement were not violent and did not breach section 2.2 of the Code.

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