



## Case Report

<b>1</b>	<b>Case Number</b>	<b>0186/10</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Advertiser</b>	<b>World Society for Protection of Animals</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Product</b>	<b>Community Awareness</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Type of Advertisement / media</b>	<b>TV</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Date of Determination</b>	<b>12/05/2010</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>DETERMINATION</b>	<b>Dismissed</b>

### ISSUES RAISED

2.2 - Violence Cruelty to animals

### DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The TVC features Nick Maxwell the Captain of the Collingwood AFL raising awareness that "bear baiting is not a sport" and seeking support for the 'Bricks for Bears' campaign to provide safe sanctuary for bear baiting victims. Graphic images of a bear being attacked by dogs in a stadium are depicted with end image of bear rolling around safely in field of flowers and details on how to make donation online.

### THE COMPLAINT

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

*I have doubts about the ethics of WSPA which uses representations of animal cruelty in order to encourage people to collect money for them in shopping centres etc and to sign up for regular donations via credit card or bank account. To my knowledge this world-wide organisation is not as effective as it represents itself to be.*

*Even if this organisation is squeaky clean It is a breach of ethics and quite disgusting to use representations of suffering animals to raise money in this way. A previous campaign which was to save honey bears with a picture of one which was used for years with descriptions about milking bears for bile. As well as being dishonest these ads show gratuitous cruelty.*

### THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

*As with all charities, finding new supporters is very important so we can continue to fund our various campaigns and projects around the world. We have a responsibility to find these supporters as cost effectively as possible. We also have another very important role, and that is to raise awareness about animal welfare issues. Advertising gives us access to a very large audience that we need reach to generate the vital funds that are needed to help animals. We do try and balance portraying an honest picture about what is happening around the world, without being too graphic. We have tried using various images and stories and from the great support and feedback we have received, we feel we have that balance about right. From the information provided, we believe this complaint refers to our TVC raising awareness and asking for support for our Bear Baiting Campaign, Bricks for Bears which has appeared on Channel 7 and & SevenTwo in Victoria. You can see a copy of the TVC at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_Ze6xjbJUTQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Ze6xjbJUTQ). The TVC has received CAD approvals with a PG rating – see below.*

*The ad features our Ambassador, Nick Maxwell who is captain of Collingwood AFL and links the “sport” of bear baiting in Pakistan with his profession – to help raise awareness that “Bear baiting is not a sport” and raise funds to help us build a sanctuary and provide ongoing care for these bears.*

## **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 concern that the advertisement condones cruelty to animals to raise funds for a cause.

The Board also noted the complainant's concern about the organisations's effectiveness and agreed that this is not an issue for the Board to comment on.

The Board viewed the advertisement and noted that advertiser 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 considered that the images of the bear tied to a pole being attacked by dogs was likely to be distressing to some viewers but that the intention of the advertisement is to raise awareness of cruelty to animals.

The Board considered that the suggestion of violence was not inappropriate for the service or company being advertised and that, although distressing, the advertisement 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.