



Case Report

1	Case Number	0191/15
2	Advertiser	Renault Australia
3	Product	Vehicle
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV - Free to air
5	Date of Determination	13/05/2015
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Gender

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement features a young woman driving a Renault and saying that you can tell a lot about a person by the car they drive. We see kids in the back of a larger vehicle, a vehicle with music blaring from it and then an older man driving a sports car who the woman refers to as 'that guy'.

THE COMPLAINT

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

She notices three people and their cars, one of whom is a middle-aged man whose comb-over hairstyle blows wispily in the wind while at the wheel of a sports car. "And we all know THAT guy" goes her voiceover, simultaneously.

This is gratuitously negative, and puts men, especially middle-aged men, in a negative light. Would a young attractive man be allowed to make such derogatory remarks about a middle-aged female?

I do not believe this ad is respectful.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

Thank you for forwarding the customer feedback regarding our recent Renault Clio commercial. I can assure you we take these comments seriously and would like to explain our advertisement to the Advertising Standards Bureau.

In response to the comments regarding our portrayal of men, in particular middle aged male men, it was not our intention to cause any offence but simply to add some light hearted humour to a standard category advertisement.

The target audience of the Renault Clio is typically female aged 20-35 who view their choice of vehicle as a reflection of their own personal brand. The commercial therefore is designed to be a light hearted, comical portrayal of modern society that we hoped the Australian audience would appreciate.

We believe that this commercial is a comical portrayal that parodies Australian stereotypes whilst representing our vehicle in a humorous and inventive way.

At Renault we take these comments seriously but I trust that this explanation has shed some light on the intention behind the commercial.

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 is discriminatory to middle aged men and portrays them in a negative way.

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

The Board considered whether the advertisement complied with Section 2.1 of the Code which requires that ‘advertisements shall not portray or depict material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, sexual preference, religion, disability, mental illness or political belief.’

The Board noted that advertisement features a young woman driving her car - a Renault Clio and she comes across various scenarios of different people and groups in their cars. The voiceover refers to your car saying a lot about you. In one scene there is a middle aged man driving alongside her in a convertible with the top down and the wind is blowing his hair about. The voice over says: “we all know that guy.”

The Board noted that the woman takes note of various different people in their cars and as she looks at the people and their cars, she responds with a slight smug smile on her face and continues to drive. The Board agreed that the overall impression is that she is aware of the people around her but is very happy with her choice of vehicle and with herself in general. The Board noted that the man who drives the convertible is middle aged and his hair is combed in a manner to try and cover his baldness, however the wind is blowing his hair about. The Board noted that the comment made by the voiceover at this point “we all know that guy” is understood to mean that there are middle aged men who buy convertibles and fancy cars because they are having a mid-life crisis and wanting to look cool. The Board felt that

although this is a stereotype, it is not a negative one and the man is not being ridiculed. The Board noted that this portrayal is not suggesting that all men do this but that it is an occurrence that does happen. The Board noted that the woman driver does show an expression of smugness on her face at all the instances she comes across and not only at the male driver.

The Board considered that the advertisement was intended to be light-hearted and reflect some real life driving situations seen in the community and did not portray or depict material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of their gender or age.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.1 of the Code. Finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on other grounds, the Board dismissed the complaint.