



**Ad Standards** Community Panel  
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**AdStandards.com.au**

Ad Standards Limited  
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## Case Report

<b>1. Case Number :</b>	<b>0191-21</b>
<b>2. Advertiser :</b>	<b>Meat &amp; Livestock Australia Ltd</b>
<b>3. Product :</b>	<b>Food/Bev Groceries</b>
<b>4. Type of Advertisement/Media :</b>	<b>TV - Free to Air</b>
<b>5. Date of Determination</b>	<b>14-Jul-2021</b>
<b>6. DETERMINATION :</b>	<b>Dismissed</b>

### ISSUES RAISED

AANA Code of Ethics\2.1 Discrimination or Vilification

### DESCRIPTION OF ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement depicts two adult siblings at the dinner table. The sister is Olympic javelin gold medalist and reigning world champion, Kelsey-Lee Barber, who is shown in her official Australian Olympic tracksuit. Her brother is "Greg". At the end of the meal there is one last beef fillet and both siblings reach for it simultaneously with their forks. Kelsey comments that she "has a record to break" and the advert cuts to footage of her in an Olympic stadium impressively throwing a javelin before a cheering crowd. Greg responds meekly with "well, I've got a record to break too" and the advert cuts to footage of Greg at the local games arcade competing on a dance machine. He is shown dancing wildly before a small group of friends cheering his name. Back at the dinner table, the mum comments that Greg has been "trying to break that record for years" and suggests that Kelsey should let Greg have the last piece of beef. The advert closes with the line "Packed with protein. Feed your everyday greatness with beef."

### THE COMPLAINT

Comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:



*It is sexist! A female Olympian being told that that is still not enough to matter beyond her brother's time zone skills. Advertising and glorifying a man's inability to be told no is sexist, misogynistic and out of date. It is inappropriate and problematic.*

*I found the ad sexist and belittling of girls role. It promoted myth of boys role as more important than girls. I realize it was probably meant to be amusing, but it promoted sexist roles.*

*This is wrong on so many levels. In the current climate of not hearing women and their concerns, this is a classic example ... her needs are disregarded The young male aiming for a pretty trivial goal is held up to be more important by the mother. This is a pretty classic 50s scenario, but we are in 2021 Irrespective of gender inequality and the continuation of male supremacy; why not promote sharing? Cut the piece in half? This advertisement makes me so angry, I could scream*

*I object to the depiction of the nuclear family being a family of four with one male and one female child. I also object to the reinforcement of the patriarchal stereotype that men are more deserving of extra food and that mothers in general will side with a male child over a female child. I think that this is old-fashioned and unimaginative and reinforces unhelpful stereotypes That are used to suggest that men are better or more deserving than women.*

#### **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

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

*We refer to your correspondence dated 29 June 2021 concerning complaints received in response to a television advertisement for Australian beef from Meat & Livestock Australia Limited (MLA).*

*We are grateful for the opportunity to respond to the complaints and, after detailed consideration, respectfully submit that each of the complaints should be dismissed.*

#### *Description of the advertisement*

*The television advertisement which is the subject of the complaints is part of MLA's new winter beef campaign entitled "Australian Beef. Feed Your Greatness". The campaign is part of an official partnership with the Australian Olympic Team and has been approved by the Australian Olympic Committee (AOC).*

*The advert features two siblings enjoying a beef dinner with their parents at the dinner table. The sister is Olympic javelin gold medalist and reigning world champion, Kelsey Lee-Barber, who is shown in her official Australian Olympic tracksuit. Her brother is "Greg".*



*At the end of the meal there is one last beef fillet and both siblings reach for it simultaneously with their forks. Kelsey comments that she “has a record to break” and the advert cuts to footage of her in an Olympic stadium impressively throwing a javelin before a cheering crowd. Greg responds meekly with “well, I’ve got a record to break too” and the advert cuts to footage of Greg at the local games arcade competing on a dance machine. He is shown dancing wildly before a small group of friends cheering his name.*

*Back at the dinner table, the mum comments that Greg has been “trying to break that record for years” and suggests that Kelsey should let Greg have the last piece of beef.*

*The advert closes with the line “Packed with protein. Feed your everyday greatness with beef.”*

#### **COMMENTS**

*The context of the advert is that greatness means different things to different people – from the heights of Olympic athletic achievement to more day to day achievements which are nevertheless equally important to the person trying to achieve their personal best in their own way.*

*The message of the advert is that whatever your personal greatness, you can help feed it with the natural source of protein in beef. The advert conveys that beef has benefits for everyone, not just elite athletes – and it uses a humorous and obviously dramatized depiction of sibling rivalry to convey this message.*

*The advert is directed to a general audience and is not primarily directed to children. A detailed media schedule can be provided if required.*

#### **Detailed submissions**

*Please see below our detailed submissions in response to alleged breaches of the AANA Code of Ethics as identified by Ad Standards in its notice of complaint.*

##### **1. Code of Ethics Section 2.1 (Discrimination and vilification on basis of gender)**

*Some complainants have suggested that the advertisement is “sexist” and “misogynistic”, or that it is somehow prejudicial to women. One complainant has suggested that the advert “makes a mockery of the elite sports person depicted in the ad”.*

*Section 2.1 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 AANA Practice Note on section 2.1 defines discrimination and vilification as:*



a) *Discrimination: unfair or less favourable treatment*

b) *Vilification: humiliates, intimidates, incites hatred, contempt or ridicule. Gender is defined as “male, female or trans-gender characteristics”.*

*We make the following submissions in response to any allegation that the advert is discriminatory or vilifying in relation to gender.*

- *The sister in the advert is a real life, well known Australian Olympic world champion. She is shown in her Australian Olympic tracksuit with her multitude of trophies in the background to signal her world class sporting prowess. She is portrayed as strong, fit, and talented. Her achievements are lauded. There is no humiliation, ridicule, contempt or disparagement of the sister or of her achievements.*
- *The brother is portrayed by reference to his arcade dancing skills – a deliberately dramatic contrast to an Olympic athlete. The contrast of the Olympic challenges and the arcade dancing challenge is intended to be humorous.*
- *The mother’s suggestion that the sister should let the brother have the final piece of beef is done out of (unspoken) pity for the brother who has apparently always played “second fiddle” to his athletic sibling. The sister knows how beef can feed her greatness hence her desire to have the last piece, but is sympathetic to the needs of her brother. The reasonable viewer is likely to appreciate the light hearted nature and dramatized context and is not likely to take the advert as promoting any act of humiliation, ridicule, contempt, disparagement, prejudice, inequity, unfair treatment or bigotry towards females (or any other class of person).*
- *The communication between the mother and daughter is consistent with an ordinary parent/child communication – the mother does not humiliate or ridicule her daughter or treat her unfairly or unfavourably on account of her gender.*
- *Importantly, there is nothing in the advert that is directed at gender, nor is there any suggestion that the sister should give the last piece of beef to her brother because he is a “boy” and she is a “girl”. The rationale of giving the last piece of beef is simply to assist the brother to achieve his goal – which he has long strived for.*
- *The portrayal of the sister in the advert does not involve or imply any degrading, vilifying or discriminatory attributes or characteristics towards females. By contrast, the sister is portrayed as strong, fit and successful on the world stage- a role model to be looked up to.*
- *The advert is readily distinguishable from previous determinations by Ad Standards for discriminatory or vilifying behaviour based on gender. In those cases, the advertisements have involved depictions such as:*
  - o *ridiculing and humiliating depictions such as a woman in a beauty pageant speaking in an obviously non-sensical/stupid manner about a new iPhone App which is then marketed as “foolproof” (refer Case Number 0274-19)*
  - o *sexualized or degrading portrayals of women (refer Case Number 0064/20);*
  - o *obviously stereotypical portrayals of women (e.g. an ad depicting a man with his feet up while family members create mess and a woman is shown as solely responsible for that mess).*



- *Ad Standards has previously dismissed complaints under section 2.1 where the material is clearly “light-hearted, humorous and draws upon sentimental and friendly rivalry” (refer, most notably, to determination 0189-20).*

*Considering the above, MLA strongly rejects the assertions that the advert is discriminatory or vilifying on account of gender in any way. The reasonable viewer is likely to appreciate that the advert plays on friendly sibling rivalry to convey the message that beef has benefits for everyone – not just elite athletes.*

*For these reasons, MLA does not consider that the advertisement breaches Section 2.1.*

## *2. Other issues*

*MLA’s submissions above relate to those provisions of the AANA Code of Ethics that have been identified in the notice of complaint. MLA is not aware of any complaints regarding any other provision of the Code, but nevertheless makes the following high level comments:*

<b>Relevant Code</b>	<b>Provision/section</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<i>Code of Ethics</i>	<i>Section 2.2 (Exploitative or degrading)</i>	<i>There is nothing in the advert that involves the use of sexual appeal in an exploitative or degrading manner. The advert does not take advantage of the sexual appeal of any person or group of people by depicting them as objects or commodities, nor does it involve the inappropriate depiction of any body parts.</i>
<i>Code of Ethics</i>	<i>Section 2.3 (Violence)</i>	<i>There is no depiction or suggestion of violence in the advert.</i>
<i>Code of Ethics</i>	<i>Section 2.4 (Sex, sexuality and nudity)</i>	<i>The advert does not depict any nudity or sexually suggestive content.</i>
<i>Code of Ethics</i>	<i>Section 2.5 (Language)</i>	<i>The advert does not use any strong or obscene language.</i>
<i>Code of Ethics</i>	<i>Section 2.6 (Health and safety)</i>	<i>The advert does not depict any material that is contrary to prevailing community standards on health or safety.</i>
<i>Code of Ethics</i>	<i>Section 2.7 (Clearly distinguishable advertising)</i>	<i>The advert is quite clearly advertising for beef.</i>



<i>Food &amp; Beverage Code</i>	<i>Section 2.2 (undermining importance of healthy lifestyle/encouraging excessive consumption)</i>	<i>There is nothing in the advert that is likely to undermine the importance of a healthy lifestyle or to encourage excessive consumption.</i>
<i>Food &amp; Beverage Code</i>	<i>Section 2.3 (Health and nutrition claims)</i>	<i>The advert includes the claim “packed with protein”. A serving of lean beef (150g raw weight, equivalent to 105g cooked weight) contains 34.3g of protein which is well above the Food Code’s requirement of 10g protein per serve to make a high in/good source of protein claim. (Based on nutritional data sourced from FSANZ).</i>
<i>Food &amp; Beverage Code</i>	<i>Section 2.4 ((Health or nutritional comparisons)</i>	<i>The advert does not make any health or nutritional related comparisons.</i>
<i>Food &amp; Beverage Code</i>	<i>Section 2.5 (Consumer taste or preference tests)</i>	<i>The advert does not include references to consumer taste or preference tests.</i>
<i>Food &amp; Beverage Code</i>	<i>Section 2.6 (Claims relating to material characteristics of food)</i>	<i>Other than the nutritional claim set out above (ref 2.3) the advert does not make any claims relating to the material characteristics of beef or any other food.</i>
<i>Food &amp; Beverage Code</i>	<i>Section 2.7 (use of personalities and clearly distinguishable)</i>	<i>The advert is clearly an advert for beef and is unlikely to be confused with editorial or program content.</i>

### *3. Conclusion*

*On the bases set out in this response, we submit that the advertisement does not breach any provisions of the AANA Code of Ethics.*

*MLA takes compliance with the AANA advertising codes extremely seriously. While we appreciate that our adverts will not always appeal to everyone, we always exercise care to assess our adverts against the AANA codes throughout the production process.*

*We trust that these submissions adequately address the issues raised to date, however please do not hesitate to contact us if further information is required.*



## THE DETERMINATION

The Ad Standards Community Panel (Panel) considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the AANA Code of Ethics (the Code).

The Panel noted the complainants' concerns that the advertisement is sexist by suggesting that the man is more worthy than the woman and is offensive in its depiction of a nuclear family.

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

The Panel noted a complainant's concern around the depiction of a family being father, mother, female child and male child however considered that such a concern was not within the provisions of the Code and is outside the purview of the Panel.

**Section 2.1: Advertising or Marketing Communication shall not portray people 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 Panel noted the AANA Practice Note which provides guidance on the meaning of:

Discrimination - unfair or less favourable treatment

Vilification - humiliates, intimidates, incites hatred, contempt or ridicule

Gender – refer to the attributes, roles, behaviours, activities, opportunities or restrictions that society considers appropriate for girls or boys, women or men.

Gender is distinct from 'sex', which refers to biological difference.

### Women

The Panel considered that the advertisement is highly satirical and noted that the intention of the advertisement is to highlight how ridiculous it is that the man considers his goal of record breaking an arcade dance game to be comparable to his sister's goal of breaking a world record.

The Panel considered that the relationship depicted is not related to gender but rather is indicative of sibling rivalry. The Panel considered that the sister is not encouraged to give her brother the last piece of beef because of his gender but rather because of his striving to reach his goal, one which may seem less significant than hers but is of great importance to him.

The Panel considered that the content of the advertisement did not show the woman to receive unfair or less favourable treatment because of her gender, and did not humiliate, intimidate or incite hatred, contempt or ridicule of the woman because of her gender.

### Men



The Panel noted that the brother in the advertisement is depicted as ridiculous due to his belief that breaking a record on an arcade dance game is more important than his sister's goal of breaking a world record.

The Panel considered that while he is shown to be the butt of the joke in the advertisement, this depiction is based on his personal goals in comparison to his sister's and is not related to his gender.

The Panel considered that the content of the advertisement did not show the man to receive unfair or less favourable treatment because of his gender, and did not humiliate, intimidate or incite hatred, contempt or ridicule of the man because of his gender.

### **Section 2.1 conclusion**

The Panel considered that the advertisement did not portray or depict material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of gender and determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.1 of the Code.

### **Conclusion**

Finding that the advertisement did not breach any other section of the Code the Panel dismissed the complaints.