



ADVERTISING
STANDARDS
BUREAU

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Case Report

1	Case Number	0192/14
2	Advertiser	Valvoline (Aust) Pty Ltd
3	Product	Automotive
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Pay TV
5	Date of Determination	28/05/2014
6	DETERMINATION	Upheld - Modified or Discontinued

ISSUES RAISED

2.6 - Health and Safety Motor vehicle related

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The advertisement is for Valvoline SynPower Engine Oil and features men who look primal men/Neanderthal driving motor vehicles and doing burnouts but then transforming into humans when they step out of the car.

THE COMPLAINT

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

The young man was driving fast, performing wheelies and all the time growing wilder looking. He then stepped out of the car looking like a normal young man. I feel that this is encouraging young drivers to be reckless behind the wheel and does not promote responsible driving habits.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

Valvoline is disappointed with the Board's decision [to uphold the advertisement] and will be seeking an independent review. In the meantime, out of respect for the Board's determination, the advertisement will be modified.

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 depicts and encourages reckless driving.

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

The Board considered Section 2.6 of the Code. Section 2.6 of the Code states: “Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not depict material contrary to Prevailing Community Standards on health and safety”.

The Board noted that the advertisement depicts characters driving various vehicles repeatedly doing ‘burnouts’ including in front of a group. The Board noted that it had recently upheld the same advertisement on Free TV in case 0150/14 where:

“The Board noted that the advertisement is intended to make the main characters appear primal or Neanderthal in nature. The Board noted that the distinction between the characters not being ‘real’ or being non-human is not clear. The Board noted that the end shot of the advertisement does show the Neanderthal man getting out of the car and he is clean cut and well groomed, however it is not apparent that the character is no longer going to drive in a manner that is primal or reckless.

The Board noted that the advertisement was a television advertisement with a PG rating, designed to reach the target market of young males aged 18-24 who would relate to the scenarios presented in the advertisement. The Board considered that the message that was being delivered was not clearly about choosing the right oil for your car and was more strongly suggestive of the types of ways a car could be driven.

The Board considered that the advertisement depicts scenes that young adults would relate to and that the approach did undermine the importance of driving carefully and within the law. The Board considered that the advertisement does encourage the unsafe practice of burnouts or drifting and that this is material contrary to Prevailing Community Standards on safety, specifically regarding responsible driving.”

The Board noted that the advertiser had responded to say that they would be modifying the advertisement therefore this version of the advertisement would no longer be aired on Free TV or Pay TV. The Board considered that consistent with its determination against 0150/14 the advertisement in its current form does depict material contrary to prevailing community standards on safety, specifically responsible driving.

The Board determined that the advertisement did breach Section 2.6 of the Code.

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

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE TO DETERMINATION

Valvoline is disappointed with the Board's decision but the advertisement has been modified.

