



## Case Report

<b>1</b>	<b>Case Number</b>	<b>0193/13</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Advertiser</b>	<b>SCA Hygiene Australasia</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Product</b>	<b>Toiletries</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Type of Advertisement / media</b>	<b>TV</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Date of Determination</b>	<b>26/06/2013</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>DETERMINATION</b>	<b>Dismissed</b>

### ISSUES RAISED

2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Gender

### DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The advertisement in question starts on two young women who have just been for a run and are arriving back at their car. The main character receives a phone call, to be told she has an audition in 15 minutes. Her friend takes charge and jumps into the front seat, while the main character jumps into the back. En route to the audition, the main character pulls a Libra 'Get Fresh Wipe' from her bag. She changes clothes, and manages to make the audition on time, looking and feeling fresh. An endframe then shows a pack shot of Libra Get Fresh Wipes with some individual Wipe sachets next to the box. A voice over says, "New Libra Get Fresh Wipes. Freshen up when you haven't got time to freshen up."

The core message of the ad is that Libra's Get Fresh Wipes allow women to freshen up while they're on the run and don't have time for a shower.

### THE COMPLAINT

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

*This advertisement causes acute embarrassment to girls who are in mixed company, particularly young teenage girls who have the right to not have very private matters broadcast to anyone in the room.*

*There may not be anything about the ad that comes under your criteria for requiring it to be banned, but advertisers should have a code of sensitivity about subject matter that causes acute embarrassment or distress.*

*There is no male equivalent that would even up the embarrassment quota. Why should girls/women have their private hygiene practices so publicly displayed???*  
*The implication is that the girl is wiping herself with the Libra Get Fresh Wipes en route to the interview because she has some undisclosed intimate hygiene problem. Discussing this ad with my wife (a nurse) and my two adult daughters they were struck with the fact that females are being constantly targeted with ads of this type but this ad goes one step beyond in that there is an implication the girl's intimate hygiene problem is of a magnitude that an interviewer would be able to discern it during an interview if she didn't take steps to address it prior to the interview. While some may find the very notion of an intimate hygiene problem in either gender distasteful that is not the issue of concern to the women in my family; it's more of a concern that otherwise healthy-looking young women are being discriminately targeted as having this problem, and that the problem is of such magnitude that it would require rectification prior to a job interview. Assuming the interview did not involve a gynaecological examination the relevance is as questionable as the advertiser's taste.*

## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

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

*We have received the attached complaints regarding the Libra 'Audition' television commercial, and are hence providing our response.*

*As mentioned in your letter, the complaints raise an issue covered by Section 2.1 of the AANA Advertiser Code of Ethics- that ads should 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.*

*Please see our response to the issues raised below.*

*1. Please provide a description of the ad.*

*The advertisement in question starts on two young women who have just been for a run and are arriving back at their car. The main character receives a phone call, to be told she has an audition in 15 minutes. Her friend takes charge and jumps into the front seat, while the main character jumps into the back. En route to the audition, the main character pulls a Libra 'Get Fresh Wipe' from her bag. She changes clothes, and manages to make the audition on time, looking and feeling fresh. An endframe then shows a pack shot of Libra Get Fresh Wipes with some individual Wipe sachets next to the box. A voice over says, "New Libra Get Fresh Wipes. Freshen up when you haven't got time to freshen up."*

*The core message of the ad is that Libra's Get Fresh Wipes allow women to freshen up while they're on the run and don't have time for a shower.*

*2. The ad implicates that the main character is wiping herself with the product because she has an undisclosed intimate hygiene problem.*

*We feel that the commercial in no way indicates that the main character has an intimate hygiene problem. The character has been exercising and is visibly sweaty at the beginning of the ad. She does not want to remain looking or feeling sweaty for her audition, and the product provides the solution- it's her shower on the run.*

*3. The ad implies that the girl's intimate hygiene problem is of a magnitude that it would be discernable by another person.*

*As mentioned in response to concern 2, we do not believe that the commercial implies that the main character has an intimate hygiene problem. She is simply sweaty from exercise, and the product allows her to remove sweat from her body when she doesn't have time for a*

shower. The scenario of the audition was simply used to demonstrate an occasion where you are in a hurry and don't have time to freshen up.

4. The ad could cause acute embarrassment or distress to girls who might view the ad in the company of others.

The ad is aimed at appealing to the no-nonsense sensibilities of our target market, which is women aged 18-25. Before the TV advertisement was produced, the concept was qualitatively researched with members of our target market and researched very positively.

We believe that we have communicated the rational benefit of 'freshening up on the go' with sensitivity, and that the language and imagery used is appropriate for our target audience, wider community and the broadcast medium in which it appeared.

5. The commercial should adhere to a code of sensitivity about subject matter

SCA Hygiene Australia took several measures to ensure this commercial adheres to national standards. The script was submitted to Free TV Australia on 8th January 2013 for pre-approval, and it was noted that the commercial would likely receive a W rating. The offline edit of the commercial was also sent to Free TV Australia for pre-approval, and it was again noted that the commercial would likely receive a W rating. The final TVC was then given a W rating under CAD on 4th April 2013. Care was taken to adhere to the W rating, with no media being purchased during children's programming or for programs promoted to children or likely to attract a substantial child audience. We believe we have dealt with the subject matter in a sensitive way.

6. Women shouldn't have their private hygiene practices publicly displayed as there's no male equivalent that could cause embarrassment.

It is unfortunate that this complainant assumes the product to be solely for intimate bodily use, although this is not the intention. We believe the error may be due to Libra's historic product range consisting solely of intimate items (pads, tampons and panty liners.) Libra's 'Get Fresh Wipes' are part of a new ancillary range which looks to move the brand beyond intimate products, and includes a pH balanced body wash and a heat patch designed to be worn on the stomach to reduce cramping pain. Understanding the nature of the TV environment, we took a more subtle approach and demonstrated a usage occasion for all over body use to freshen up.

7. It is a concern that otherwise healthy-looking young women are being discriminatingly targeted as having a problem.

We don't believe the commercial insinuates either character has a problem that is specifically female-oriented. Both genders become sweaty when they exercise. Libra chose to market the product to women as it is traditionally a women's brand, and the product was found to be motivating when tested in qualitative research prior to it being released on the market.

Libra is not the first brand to release a feminine ancillary product to the market. Double-digit growth in the category between 2011-2012 indicates that using feminine ancillary products, including body wipes, is a growing trend with Australian women. Libra is simply looking to meet an existing consumer need, not develop a new behaviour. Through qualitative research we found that women perceived the usage occasion for a wipe to be wide and varied, stating the following usage occasions; travelling, going out straight from work, waxing appointments, when changing pads/tampons and many more.

If you have any other queries regarding the matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

## **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 complainants’ concerns that the advertisement is discriminatory towards women in its suggestion they suffer from feminine hygiene problems which need to be corrected and that the advertisement causes embarrassment to viewers.

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

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.1 of the Code. Section 2.1 of the Code states: “Advertising or Marketing Communications 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...gender..”

The Board noted that the advertisement depicts a woman holding up a Libra Get Fresh Wipe whilst preparing for a job interview on the back seat of her friend’s car straight after going for a run.

The Board noted the complainant’s concerns that the product itself can cause embarrassment amongst viewers and considered that as the product is legally allowed to be advertised the Board can only consider the content of the advertisement and not the issue of whether the product itself should or should not be advertised.

The Board noted the complainant’s concerns that the advertisement suggests that young women have feminine hygiene problems. The Board noted that the complainants had made an assumption that the product is specifically for use on a woman’s private areas and considered that although the Libra brand is primarily associated with feminine hygiene products, the advertised product is aimed at the entire body and the advertisement does not suggest its use on a specific area of the body. The Board noted that the girl in the advertisement is preparing for an interview in less than perfect circumstances (immediately after doing some exercise and with no access to washing facilities) and considered that the advertisement is suggesting the use of the product in lieu of access to proper washing facilities. The Board considered that the advertisement does not suggest that all women, young or old, need to use this product but rather that if you should ever be in a situation similar to the predicament the girl in the advertisement finds herself, the advertised product would be useful.

The Board determined that the material depicted did not discriminate against a section of the community and 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 complaints.

