



Case Report

1	Case Number	0194/13
2	Advertiser	South Australian Tourism Commission
3	Product	Travel
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV
5	Date of Determination	26/06/2013
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

2.3 - Violence Cruelty to animals

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The advertisement opens on a table laden with food sitting under a tree outside. We then see various people sourcing the food from the land: a woman collects lemons, another woman is shown plucking a chicken, a man is shown holding an animal he has shot. The advertisement closes with a scene of a man standing on a hill and the text, "Barossa. Be Consumed" appears on screen.

THE COMPLAINT

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

There are several images of dead animals and if I believe I saw correctly, a fowl being plucked. These images are disturbing to see and unbelievable when used to promote tourism. My daughter and I were extremely upset when the ad shows dead rabbits being held by a person and also someone plucking a chicken - we are vegetarians and find these explicit images (with no warning) offensive.

I was offended due the scene of the girl holding a dead rooster then following that it showed her pulling out the feathers of the dead animal.

I did not think that this was appropriate for television especially in the time slot it appeared.

I found the scenes detailing dead animals very offensive, distressing and totally unnecessary.

There was no warning or indication that some viewers may find viewing upsetting. There was no warning that dead animals could be clearly seen. Seeing a dead chicken being pulled apart and dead rabbits being held as a hunters prize was totally unexpected and vividly

obscene. Many households in Australia keep domestic chickens and rabbits and would find this advertisement upsetting. Rabbits are the third most popular pet kept by Australians after dogs and cats.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

Background

The objective of the advertisement is to capitalise on the growing trend of culinary tourism to relaunch the Barossa Valley in South Australia as a wine and culinary region. The advertisement promotes the provenance of produce from this region and the 'paddock to plate' production process. Its mood reflects the earthy authenticity of this region - the genuine and passionate people and the rich and fertile soil - and evokes the sensory experience of food and wine produced from this region. The advertisement demonstrates generally a shift in genre from destination marketing, which focuses on landmarks, to experience marketing, which uses evocative imagery and music to symbolise the destination.

Complaint

The complainants raise several issues regarding the advertisement, summarised as follows:

- 1. The advertisement depicts dead animals and promotes animal cruelty;*
- 2. The advertisement is "dark", "gory" and "barbaric"; and*
- 3. The advertisement does not promote tourism to the Barossa Valley, South Australia.*

Response

We do not consider that the advertisement is in breach of the AANA Code of Ethics, the Alcohol Beverages Advertising (and Packaging) Code or the AANA Food and Beverages Advertising and Marketing Communications Code. We also do not consider that the AANA Code for Advertising and Marketing Communications to Children applies as the advertisement is not directed, and does not have principal appeal, to children.

In respect of complainants' first and primary issue, we do not consider that the advertisement in any way presents or portrays violence against animals that is unjustifiable in the context of the product or service advertised and we therefore submit that the advertisement complies with section 2.3 of AANA Code of Ethics. The advertisement does not portray or otherwise condone violence or cruelty to animals as there is no depiction of injury or pain to any live animals. Furthermore, the advertisement does not treat animals with disregard or trivialise their welfare and exploitation; in fact it seeks to promote the opposite through its appreciation of free range animals in a natural environment and not in a factory.

We advise that the dead game and poultry depicted in this advertisement were humanely

slaughtered. The game was shot by a local farmer using ethical hunting techniques on an established working farm as part of his normal trade and the poultry came from a registered local poultry producer. The game and poultry used in this advertisement were sourced from the Barossa Valley region and delivered to a local chef in Angaston (Casa Carbone), who ensured that they were used in the restaurant's dishes. The advertisement supports, both in its creation and its representation, the genuine 'paddock to plate' production process.

'Paddock to plate' is a realistic process where produce is sourced in its primary form and prepared for consumption through a direct and discernible production process. It can be directly contrasted with the purchasing of meat products in plastic packaging on a supermarket shelf and reasonable community members would understand that the origin of meat products is not plastic containers in supermarkets.

We note that this advertisement can be contrasted to that in Case Report Number 91/08, in which the Board found that "the activity depicted was recreational killing that was graphic and gratuitous and could not be compared to fishing where the end objective is to provide food". We also note the Board's consideration in its dismissal of the complaint regarding violence as it relates to cruelty to animals in Case Report Number 0316/10 that "eating meat is a normal part of living for many members of the community".

The advertisement merely portrays the sourcing and preparation of produce on a farm, which we consider to be of low impact to the majority of viewers having regard to the content and brevity of the imagery and their understanding of animals as an accepted food source. We note that the advertisement received a CAD rating of 'G', signifying that its content is very mild in impact and does not contain any matter that is likely to be unsuitable for children to watch without supervision.

We therefore consider, in respect of the first issue raised by the complainants, that the advertisement does not depict violence and is unlikely to be considered offensive to reasonable members of the community. In respect of the remainder of the complainant's issues, we do not consider that these issues are regulated by any advertising code in Australia.

We do however consider that the advertisement falls within acceptable community standards and note that the overwhelming response to this advertisement generally and in the food, wine and tourism industry, particularly in the Barossa Valley region, has been positive and much support has been received for the campaign.

Based on the above, we respectfully submit that the advertisement complies with the AANA Code of Ethics. We also consider that the advertisement complies with the AANA Food and Beverages Advertising and Marketing Communications Code and the Alcohol Beverages Advertising (and Packaging) Code.

We appreciate the opportunity to respond to the complaint and acknowledge the advertiser's commitment to self-regulation of advertising in Australia. We sincerely hope that the Board reviews the advertisement positively having regard to the points raised above.

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 depicts scenes of slaughtered animals which are offensive, upsetting and inappropriate for a TV advertisement.

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

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.3 of the Code. Section 2.3 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 noted the advertisement is promoting tourism in The Barossa and focuses on the fresh produce available in that region. The Board further noted that the sound track contributes to the evocative theme of the advertisement.

The Board noted that although we see dead animals in the advertisement we do not see them being killed: one scene shows a woman carrying a dead chicken and then we see her plucking its feathers; another scene shows a man carrying a gun and holding a dead rabbit. The Board noted that the broad community is becoming more concerned about food sources and that increasing importance is being placed on the provenance of food and the concept of ‘paddock to plate’. The Board considered that the depictions in the advertisement are consistent with established farming practices in the use of animals as a food source.

The Board noted the advertiser’s response that the animals depicted in the advertisement were humanely slaughtered in line with ethical standards.

The Board noted that some members of the community would prefer that animals were not killed and used for food however the Board considered that meat consumption is a normal part of life for most people. The Board noted that the advertisement uses the images of the animals to make the connection with the final food products available from the Barossa region and considered that whilst the depiction of the dead animals could be upsetting or offensive to some members of the community, in the Board’s view most members of the community would consider that the advertisement is presenting an accurate portrayal of food sources which is not inappropriate for viewing on TV.

The Board considered that the advertisement did not present or portray violence and determined that it did not breach Section 2.3 of the Code.

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

