



Case Report

1	Case Number	0204/16
2	Advertiser	BIOHAZARD TRAUMA AND CRIME SCENE CLEANING
3	Product	Professional Service
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Internet
5	Date of Determination	11/05/2016
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

2.5 - Language Inappropriate language

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This internet advertisement for Biohazard Trauma & Crime Scene Cleaning features the text, "We clean up Urine and Faeces in Yirrkala. Urine, Piss, Poo, Shit, Crap, Faeces Droppings, whatever you call it".

THE COMPLAINT

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

I just think its offensive and I was shocked to see this, at first I thought it was a demographic thing, but checked and they use this same description for all areas, its just very poor form.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

This is ridiculous! Hire somebody to review this rubbish complaint before wasting our time.

Yes, we provide services to clean up crap/shit, tell your client to get over it! We are within our rights, this complaint is a joke

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 is offensive in its description of the work the advertiser undertakes.

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

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.5 of the Code. Section 2.5 of the Code states: “Advertising or Marketing Communications shall only use language which is appropriate in the circumstances (including appropriate for the relevant audience and medium). Strong or obscene language shall be avoided”.

The Board noted the practice note to this section of the Code states that: Words and phrases which are innocuous and in widespread and common use in the Australian vernacular are permitted (provided they are used in a manner consistent with their colloquial usage, for example with gentle humour, and not used in a demeaning or aggressive manner). Examples are “bugger”, “shit”, “pissed-off”, “crap” etc.

The Board noted that the advertisement is for a business that specialises in trauma and crime scene cleaning. The Board considered that in the context of this advertisement, the advertiser uses the terms faeces and urine when they talk about their work but notes the terms that may be more familiar and these includes piss, poo, shit, crap. The Board acknowledged that some members of the community may find these words to be inappropriate language however the Board considered that most members of the community would find them to be mild and inoffensive. Overall the Board considered in the context of an advertisement for this product, the words are not inappropriate, strong or obscene.

The Board considered that in order to access the advertisement one needs to access the website and this limits the audience to those seeking out this ‘niche’ product/service.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.5 of the Code.

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

