



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

Advertising Standards Bureau Limited  
ACN 084 452 666

# Case Report

1	<b>Case Number</b>	<b>0204/18</b>
2	<b>Advertiser</b>	<b>Singtel Optus</b>
3	<b>Product</b>	<b>Telecommunications</b>
4	<b>Type of Advertisement / media</b>	<b>TV - Free to air</b>
5	<b>Date of Determination</b>	<b>09/05/2018</b>
6	<b>DETERMINATION</b>	<b>Dismissed</b>

## ISSUES RAISED

- 2.6 - Health and Safety Motor vehicle related
- 2.6 - Health and Safety Unsafe behaviour

## DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement promotes Optus' 4G Plus mobile network by comparing it to the speeds achieved by athlete Usain Bolt. It features a scene showing Usain Bolt running across the ground with concrete cracking behind him, a vehicle doing a 'burn-out' and producing yellow smoke while Usain Bolt stand near to the vehicle, a person cracking an egg over a piece of toast and it instantly frying, a snail with a rocket on its back and Usain exploding and turning into gold confetti.

## THE COMPLAINT

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

*The unsafe driving shows a burnout that is that close to the person that In reality if this happened on the street it would result in a unsafe driving charge and confiscation of the car.*



## 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 letter in relation to a complaint received by the Ad Standards Community Panel (Panel) about our Optus 4G 'Live at the Speed of Bolt' advertisement. Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the complaint. Singtel Optus Pty Ltd (Optus) is committed to ethical practice in its advertising and appreciates all consumer feedback. While Optus regrets that the complainant has interpreted the advertisement as depicting unsafe or dangerous behaviour related to motor vehicles, we believe that the 'Live at the Speed of Bolt' advertisement is fully compliant with the Australian Association of National Advertisers Code of Ethics (Code).*

*While Optus considers and investigates all complaints in relation to the Code, from the perspective of prevailing community standards, the advertisement does not depict activities which would promote unsafe or dangerous behaviour in relation to motor vehicles. Rather, it is a light-hearted advertisement which uses exaggeration, hyperbole and absurdism to demonstrate that the 'speed of Bolt' is something very fast and analogous to the speeds of Optus' 4G Plus mobile network.*

### *Approvals*

*The advertisement's CAD number is G4KN6CBA. We confirm that the campaign advertisements received CAD approval on 4 April 2017.*

*The campaign was reviewed and approved by the Optus legal team, both during the scripting stage and final edit stage. The 'Speed of Bolt' campaign has appeared on social media, TV and online from April 2017 to present.*

### *Description of advertisement*

*The purpose of this advertisement was to promote the Optus 4G Plus mobile network by comparing it to the speeds achieved by athlete Usain Bolt who is widely recognised as the record holder for the world's fastest man. It was designed to communicate the speed of our network using analogy, hyperbole, exaggeration and absurdist imagery in a fun tone.*

*A number of features of the advertisement are exaggerated or 'over-the-top':*

- as Usain Bolt sprints across the screen in various frames, the ground is seen to be cracking and breaking up from the force of his speed. In addition, puffs of smoke and dust are left in his wake as he speeds across the screen;*
- footage of Usain Bolt is superimposed onto footage of a yellow 'hot rod' car with the word 'Bolt' and a lightning bolt symbol is shown doing a burn out on a closed course driving track with excessive amounts of fluorescent yellow smoke;*
- three jet planes fly swiftly across the screen leaving coloured trails of smoke in their*



*paths;*

- a golden cheetah with aqua spots is depicted running on a desk in a study;*
- an egg cracked by Usain Bolt is fried almost instantaneously;*
- a snail with a jetpack strapped to its back creates flames and sparks from its friction as it speeds across a table;*
- due to Usain Bolt's speed and ability to be 'fast' he is depicted as watching over 30 screens of entertainment simultaneously whilst running on a treadmill;*
- whilst Usain Bolt dances he causes puffs of smoke and jets of fire to come from his feet, utilising references from pop art such as Andy Warhol;*
- an animated Usain Bolt is seen in a fictitious video game where he collects coins by jumping on an octopus' head, again a reference to pop culture and popular arcade video games; and*
- Usain Bolt's body dissolves into brightly coloured blue smoke and golden confetti from his excitement about a goal in a football match.*

*In this way, Optus intended to use fun, over-the-top portrayal of speed and powerful imagery, with reference to Usain Bolt, to highlight the benefits of the Optus 4G Plus mobile network.*

#### *2.6 – Health and safety*

*The complainant was concerned that the footage featured a burn out next to Usain Bolt thereby showing unsafe driving practices next to a person. In the context of an exaggerated and over-the-top advertisement which relies heavily on hyperbole and fanciful imagery, the footage of a burnout does not promote unsafe driving or behaviour related to motor vehicles.*

*It would be evident to most of the community that the image of Usain Bolt is superimposed on top of the burnout footage and that Usain Bolt was clearly not in the same shot as the car. This is consistent with the over-the-top imagery listed above as special effects and animation have clearly been added to the advertisement post-production.*

*There is no suggestion to the viewer that vehicles should be driven in this manner for normal on-road driving. In the context of the other absurdist, hyperbolic imagery, any reasonable driver would be aware that the advertisement does not simulate a real driving experience. It is clear that the stunt was performed by an experienced professional in a controlled environment and should not be replicated by viewers.*

*Considering relevant aspects of section 2 of the Code in light of prevailing community standards, we argue that the advertisement is compliant with the Code:*

- 2.1 – no issues appear to arise in relation to 2.1.*
- 2.2 – no issues appear to arise in relation to 2.2.*
- 2.3 – no issues appear to arise in relation to 2.3.*
- 2.4 – no issues appear to arise in relation to 2.4.*
- 2.5 – no issues appear to arise in relation to 2.5.*



*- 2.6 – as noted, Optus does not believe that the advertisement promotes unsafe driving or dangerous behaviour involving motor vehicles. The stunt complies with safety guidelines and was performed by a professional in a controlled environment. There is no suggestion that a burnout should be replicated by viewers in normal traffic conditions.*

*Finally, considering the advertisement overall in light of other advertising material, media and entertainment widely seen by the public, the advertisement can be seen as entirely acceptable. It is intended to be a light-hearted reflection of the speed of Optus' 4G mobile network. While acknowledging differences of opinion, Optus believe that most of the community would view the advertisement as acceptable.*

*We trust that these comments assist the Panel in considering this complaint. If we can be of any further assistance, please let us know.*

## **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 complainant’s concern that the advertisement features unsafe driving practices.

The Panel viewed the advertisement and the advertiser’s response.

The Panel noted that this television advertisement features Usain Bolt and compares 4G network speeds to the speed of Bolt. In particular the Panel noted the scene where a vehicle does a burn-out and produces yellow smoke.

The Panel 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 Panel noted the complainant’s concerns that showing a person standing next to a car doing a burnout is unsafe, and would be illegal if the behaviour was replicated on Australian roads.

The Panel noted the advertiser’s response that this scene was shown in the context of other absurd, hyperbolic imagery and reasonable drivers would be aware that the advertisement does not simulate a real driving experience. Further the stunt was performed by a professional in a controlled environment.

The Panel considered that many of the scenes in the advertisement use CGI and it is evident that in this scene Usain Bolt is not standing near the car doing a burnout and



his image has been superimposed. The Panel considered that the advertisement was not depicting or encouraging people to stand near vehicles performing burnouts.

The Panel then considered the depiction of the vehicle doing a burnout on its own. The Panel considered that the vehicle does not look like an every-day car performing an illegal activity, rather the combination of the yellow smoke and the hot-rod style car creates the impression that this is being performed in a controlled environment.

The Panel acknowledged that this behaviour on a public road would be illegal, however on private property or at an organised event this behaviour is not illegal and would not be considered by the majority of the community to be unsafe. The Panel considered that the overall scene and advertisement are clearly presenting unrealistic and exaggerated scenes.

The Panel considered that the advertisement did not depict material contrary to Prevailing Community Standards on health and safety. The Panel determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.6 of the Code.

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

