



Case Report

1	Case Number	0218/12
2	Advertiser	Great Wall Australia
3	Product	Vehicles
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV
5	Date of Determination	13/06/2012
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Gender

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

A man is shown in a dog kennel with the word "dog" written above the open door and a dog bowl at the front. The voice over explains that he is in the dog house because his wife discovered he had paid over \$35,000 for a four wheel drive when he could have bought one from Great Wall for \$23,990.

THE COMPLAINT

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

This advertisement shows a male as being at the same level as an animal. This scenario is totally inappropriate and demeans males or any human being. This would create outrage if a woman was depicted in the same situation. It is unacceptable for any person to be shown in this light with a pronounced wedding ring and blatantly tries to lower the mental and social standard of males as 3rd class humans and that this treatment and perception of males is acceptable and even normal behaviour. Outrageous.

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 dated 29 May 2012 in relation to the above complaint in connection with our television advertisement of the X240 Great Wall vehicle (“the Advertisement”).

Firstly, it should be known that Ateco Automotive Pty Limited (trading as Great Wall Australia) (“GWA”) takes its responsibility as an advertiser very seriously and makes extensive efforts to understand and respond appropriately to community concerns and issues, including by having in place our own stringent internal review and approval process, including legal advice.

GWA does not in any way encourage discrimination or vilification of any kind. We aim to ensure that our work and advertising practices afford respect to all cross sections of the community, on account of variables including race, sex, sexual preference, religion and disability. Accordingly, we disagree with the complainant’s view that the Advertisement discriminates, vilifies or demeans the male gender or in any way places the male gender “at the same level as an animal”.

We have considered the complaint and the Advertisement against the provisions of the AANA Code of Ethics (“the AANA Code”).

We submit that the Advertisement does not breach the AANA Code on any of the grounds set out in the same.

Section 2.1 of the ANNA Code provides that:

The Advertisement

At GWA we are most proud of our introduction into the Australian market in recent years of the Great Wall brand of vehicles. The Great Wall brand provides the market with quality vehicles at “great” value. This is the key message we promote in our advertising.

The Advertisement is one of a series of advertisements where we employ humor, hyperbole and exaggeration to convey our key theme that our vehicles are available at great value. We have run other television advertisements using similar humor, hyperbole and exaggeration in conveying this theme. These include television ads depicting:

(a) a man standing with egg on his face (exaggerating the feeling he must have at having paid more for a competitor’s vehicle);

(b) a man surrounded by fairies (exaggerating his state of mind in having purchased a competitor’s vehicle at a higher price, i.e. “he was off with the fairies”); and

(c) a man standing under a shower of water (exaggerating his state of mind in having purchased a competitor’s vehicle at a higher price, i.e. “he came down in the last shower”).

Clearly the above advertisements use commonly used Australian sayings to convey by way of humor, exaggeration and hyperbole the great value of our vehicles.

In the Advertisement, we consider that the use of the term “doghouse” and the exaggerated vision of a man in the “doghouse” seek to humorously illustrate the repercussions to a consumer who has not identified the great value in our Great Wall X240 vehicle and instead purchased a competitor’s product at a higher price.

We consider that the broader society would identify with this lighthearted humor and not reasonably consider that the Advertisement discriminates against or in any way vilifies or demeans the male gender.

We also note that the Board has in the past considered issues related to the potential discrimination and or vilification of the male gender in its decision in Case No. 0026/11. That complaint regarded a girl saying to another girl “where can I get one of those?” in reference to man in board shorts carrying a surfboard. Complaints were lodged in relation to this Ad, submitting among other things, that the ad “portrays men as being a pet”. The Board considered, in dismissing the complaint, that the “overall tone of the advertisement was lighthearted”.

*Therefore, we are of the view that similar considerations should apply here.
For the above reasons we submit that the Advertisement is not in breach of the AANA Code.
If you require any further assistance or information 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 complainant’s concerns that the advertisement discriminates against men as it likens them to a dog.

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

The Board considered whether the advertisement complied with Section 2.1 of the Code which requires that 'advertisements shall not portray 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.'

The Board noted the advertisement depicts a man in a kennel with a dog bowl in front of him and that the voiceover states he is in the doghouse with his wife for spending too much on a vehicle.

The Board noted that the phrase “in the doghouse” is a phrase commonly used by men to humorously convey that their wives are not happy with something they have said or done. The Board noted the complainant’s concern that the advertisement suggests men are the same level as an animal and considered that in this instance the man is not being portrayed as an animal but as a man who is in trouble with his wife.

The Board noted the overall humorous tone of the advertisement as well as the man’s reaction to being in the doghouse and considered that the advertisement does not suggest that the man is equal to a dog or that men in general should be treated as dogs.

Based on the above the Board determined that, in this instance, the advertisement did not depict material that discriminated against or vilified any person or section of society.

The Board determined that the advertisement 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 complaint.

