



## Case Report

<b>1</b>	<b>Case Number</b>	<b>0219/11</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Advertiser</b>	<b>Pharmacare Laboratories</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>13/07/2011</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>DETERMINATION</b>	<b>Dismissed</b>

### ISSUES RAISED

- 2.3 - Sex/sexuality/nudity Treat with sensitivity to relevant audience
- 2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Sex

### DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

A can of Brut deodorant transforms in to a racing car. The driver of the car falls out and stands up with his arms raised and we see cartoon flames coming out of his armpits. These flames are extinguished by two young women carrying Brut V8 “extinguishers”. The women are wearing white coats which blow off them to reveal black bikini tops and black skorts.

### THE COMPLAINT

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

*This ad objectifies and sexualises the women while it makes the man look really powerful. The women are portrayed as very sexual the outfits they are wearing are sexy and the close up of them staring and pouting makes them look sexy. The man in the ad looks at the women lustfully. It sets a standard that women are merely sexual objects to be used and perverted at by powerful men. I am concerned about the effect this type of imagery has on my children. Many psychologists have found that this type of thing causes self-hatred self-harm body issues and eating disorders in girls trying to live up to an unrealistic standard. It makes them believe that they must be skinny hot and sexy in order to be accepted. It sends unhealthy messages about the role of women/girls in society. It encourages male chauvinism and teaches our sons to disrespect girls/women.*

## THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

*(Response provided by Loud)*

*As requested, we have reviewed the complaint letters forwarded by the ASB regarding the Brut V8 TVC, and the issues raised in the light of the AANA Code of Ethics, specifically Articles 2.1 and 2.3.*

*Issue Raised - 2.1 – 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 race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, age, sexual preference, religion, disability or political belief.*

*The man in the commercial is portrayed with flaming exhausts under his arms as a strong visual metaphor for hot, sweaty armpits. These are then extinguished by a female pit crew using Brut “extinguishers”. He turns and smiles slightly at each of the women as they hold up grid boards which highlight the features of Brut. There is no close up shot of the man at this stage and no reasonable person could interpret his glance as lustful. His behaviour is clearly neither chauvinistic nor disrespectful.*

*The women/pit crew in the commercial are wearing modest Brut promotional outfits, a full bikini top and “skorts” (mini skirt with shorts). This is entirely consistent with community standards and can be seen on any “grid girl” at car racing events or cheerleaders at major football matches. In fact, it is considerably more conservative than the majority of bikinis that can be seen on any public beach. The women look directly at the camera when holding the boards, but do not “pout” in the close up as stated by the complainant.*

*Issue Raised - 2.3 – Advertising or Marketing Communications shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and, where appropriate, the relevant programme time zone.*

*The commercial received W rating from CAD (G with a warning) which states that the spot “may be broadcast at any time except during P and C programs or adjacent to P or C periods. Exercise care when placing in cartoon and other programs promoted to children or likely to attract a substantial child audience”.*

*The complaints in question refer to an evening news air time on 30th May. Clearly this is not an infringement of our rating classification. Neither is the advertisement content, behaviour or promotional clothing, offensive in any way to the vast majority of the television audience at that time. In fact, the content of the Brut commercial is considerably lighter viewing than much of the confrontational imagery featured regularly in the news.*

*We would also argue that the clothing and light hearted action depicted in the Brut commercial is consistent with many Australian TV shows broadcast at a similar time slot. Consequently, the commercial does not infringe 2.3 of the AANA code.*

*Summary*

*The scenario, clothing and interaction between male and females depicted in the Brut V8 spot is entirely consistent with both the time slots in which it was shown, accepted societal norms and comparable free-to-air television shows broadcast at comparable times. Therefore, we do not believe that the Brut commercial infringes either 2.1 or 2.3 of the AANA code and request that the complaint raised should be dismissed accordingly.*

## **THE DETERMINATION**

The Advertising Standard Board ('the Board') considered whether the advertisement complied with the AANA Code of Ethics ('the Code').

The Board noted the complainant's concerns that this advertisement objectifies and sexualises women who are shown wearing sexual clothing.

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

The Board first 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, sex, age, sexual preference, religion, disability or political belief.'

The Board noted that the advertisement depicts a can of Brut deodorant transforming in to a racing car, and that the driver of the car has cartoon flames from his armpits extinguished by two young women wearing white coats which blow off to reveal black bikini tops and skorts.

The Board noted the complainant's concern that the advertisement objectifies women. The Board noted that the advertisement uses a racing context for the story and the depiction of the women is consistent with the role of women in these sports and is not in this context demeaning or vilifying. The Board considered that the advertisement did not objectify women.

The Board determined that, in this instance, the advertisement did not depict any 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.

The Board then considered whether the advertisement complied with Section 2.3 of the Code. Section 2.3 states: '...shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and, where appropriate, the relevant programme time zone'.

The Board noted that all actors in the advertisement are wearing clothing and considered that the overall tone of the advertisement is humorous rather than sexual. The Board noted the raceway context of the advertisement and considered there was not an inappropriate focus on the women in a sexualised manner.

The Board determined that the advertisement did treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and 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.

