



## Case Report

1	Case Number	0231/12
2	Advertiser	Unilever Australasia
3	Product	Toiletries
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV
5	Date of Determination	27/06/2012
6	DETERMINATION	Upheld - Modified or Discontinued

### ISSUES RAISED

- 2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Gender
- 2.2 - Objectification Exploitative and degrading - women
- 2.4 - Sex/sexuality/nudity S/S/N - general
- 2.5 - Language Inappropriate language

### DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The Commercial is set in a TV studio with a mixed female and male audience and features a female presenter. A second woman, named “Amber Jones”, is introduced as former champion of a fictitious tennis tournament, “The Tasmanian International”. The tennis star starts talking about dirty sports balls and the difficulties of cleaning them properly. A young man is called on stage as a volunteer to clean dirty sport balls using Lynx Shower Gel and the Lynx Body Buffer. He demonstrates how to clean golf balls using Lynx Shower Gel together with the Lynx Body Buffer. Men in the audience then proceed to throw dirty tennis balls, cricket balls, and a sack with soccer balls on stage to have them cleaned. The presenter and ‘Amber James’ comment on the cleaning process while the male volunteer cleans the dirty sports balls with Lynx Shower Gel using the Lynx Body Buffer. Finally an older man, ‘Mr Gilbert’ is called on stage. He carries two deflated medicine balls. After the volunteer has cleaned the medicine balls they look inflated and shiny, and are handed back to a happy ‘Mr Gilbert’. Throughout the Commercial the presenter and the tennis star use innuendo associated with dirty sports balls to encourage good hygiene practices among men as a way to improve their self-confidence. The Commercial is aired in two versions which differ only in the last frame. The last frame of one version promotes a “Free Body Buffer” as long as stock lasts. The last frame of the second version does not contain this message.

### THE COMPLAINT

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

*References every couple of seconds to men's balls meaning testicles including old men with saggy balls. No hint at anything. Completely in your face references to men's testicles every second. It is smutty and filled with crude innuendo of a sexual nature. It is not clever advertising but rather immature banter akin to schoolyard talk. It has nothing to do with the advertising of the product and is totally unnecessary and demeaning to men. If the topic was woman's breasts there would be outrage. Not funny not clever just feral. I consider myself to be an open minded person with a strong sense of humour but I find your Lynx "clean your balls" advertising campaign offensive and in poor taste to the extreme and should be immediately removed from further publicity and screening on television. The people who created the advertisements might think they are smart clever and witty but their talents are totally misguided. The clean your balls campaign would no doubt receive a huge public backlash if the product and advertising was aimed at women instead of men. I have been a lynx product user for many many years. If the advertising campaign is designed to deter existing long term customers then it's succeeded in doing just that. Where to start...hmmmm. Female objectification. Again. Good job people. :/ This advertisement is a double entendre to the phrase "clean your balls". While I do not object to a double entendre in most circumstances in this one there is almost no way to draw a line between the cleaning of balls used for sporting events and those of the male genitals. If there was a line this advertisement does indeed cross it. The references to "balls" in various states e.g. saggy and old hairy and other very descriptive terms but it is highly obvious as to what the ad is actually referring to while almost making a mockery of what the ad is 'pretending' to advertise. While I am aware that this advert was shown at a late hour of the evening when it is unlikely that children will be viewing it I was personally offended by this brash attempt at an ad. It was not humorous or clever but rather stupidly obvious and I feel that the way the product was advertised is unnecessary. It is not the product that I have a problem with rather the way in which it is marketed and advertised. Really really crass. Lacks taste. Have enjoyed other lynx ads but this one is really lacking. The ad was very offensive as it clearly referred to balls in a sexual nature which was quite inappropriate and completely irrelevant to the product it was advertising. This advertisement spends its whole time using crude humour to sell its product. The advert isn't about cleanliness it's about how many times they can get the women to say balls of how much they would "like to play with those smooth balls" and that men need this product so "their balls are more enjoyable to play with" Lynx dominates the industry with discriminatory over sexualised advertising that quite frankly just shouldn't be allowed. If the sole purpose of this product is to clean "balls" we don't need to have each member of the audience asking about their "hairy" or "big ball sack" and that use of this product will turn "saggy old balls that haven't been played with in a long time" into their original condition. The female host holds them high in front of her chest. They even used the excuse to pretend she was a tennis star so she could wear something short and skimpy... THIS IS ALL RUBBISH!!!! I think it is unnecessary to use sexual acts to promote personal hygiene. The reference to 'hairy balls' 'saggy balls' 'old balls' was just shocking and offensive. I initially had no idea what this ad was for with its sexual innuendo and degrading antics. I don't even care what the product is I just found the entire premise to be offensive and obscene and I can't believe content like that has a place in our free to air TV advertising. I don't wish to be subjected to such immoral disgusting and ridiculous content again. I have never in my life made a complaint about anything until I was unfortunate enough to have seen this advertisement. Extremely offended that advertisement alludes to women wanting to 'play'*

*with clean balls. Disgraceful. Degrading. Unsafe messages being displayed. This advert is downright revolting and the blatant sexualisation is shameful. I find it VERY offensive and do not wish my teenagers to be subjected to it whether on television radio bill boards or any form of advertising! Considering that Lynx target group is teenaged boys and young men I am continuously disappointed with Lynx choice of advertising material!! Please listen to people's complaints and consider their objections....ban the ad from being used!!! I find this advertisement to be offensive for a host of reasons briefly outlined below: The ad is demeaning and sexist to men and full of sexual overtones. Women suggestively rolling sports balls around in their hands and scrubbing them in what is a poorly conceived joke. The ad is sexist to women as well. It suggests to the target audience teenage males that women will play with their balls if they clean them. It objectifies women in this manner. The ad represents a huge gender double standard. If the product on sale was aimed at women for cleaning their intimate areas and the ad had men making suggestive comments and was packed full of the same overtones it simply would not be allowed in the first place. It would be impossible to imagine an ad featuring men washing objects that are portrayed as representing the vagina. So that said why should it be allowed in reverse? Lynx has a history of inappropriate ads and this particular advertisement is being shown at times when children comprise the audience. I doubt few parents would be comfortable with this. Given the adult nature of the ad the ad should be at least restricted to airing at later times at night. But in my view should be scrapped altogether. It is not about being a prude - but there needs to be some basic standard applied here. I have a sense of humour and understand the ad in that regard but the glaring double standard irks me. I cannot imagine a feminine hygiene product being sold in this manner. I am writing to voice my disgust at an ad I saw on GO last night for Lynx body wash. It was nothing short of vile and offensive and regardless of the fact it was on after nine o'clock it is extremely poor taste. At first we thought it was a joke but sadly no. My partner and I are broad minded people and like a good laugh as well as the next person but this ad was very very wrong. Sophie Monk must be very hard up for work if she has to resort to making advertisements for a product to wash dirty "balls". Even if it was all innuendo it should be removed from the screen immediately. Terrible. Gross and inappropriate sexual references that I don't want my children exposed to. References every couple of seconds to men's balls meaning testicles including old men with saggy balls. No hint at anything. Completely in your face references to men's testicles every second. It is smutty and filled with crude innuendo of a sexual nature. It is not clever advertising but rather immature banter akin to schoolyard talk. It has nothing to do with the advertising of the product and is totally unnecessary and demeaning to men. If the topic was woman's breasts there would be outrage. Not funny not clever just feral. I consider myself to be an open minded person with a strong sense of humour but I find your Lynx "clean your balls" advertising campaign offensive and in poor taste to the extreme and should be immediately removed from further publicity and screening on television. The people who created the advertisements might think they are smart clever and witty but their talents are totally misguided. The clean your balls campaign would no doubt receive a huge public backlash if the product and advertising was aimed at women instead of men. I have been a lynx product user for many many years. If the advertising campaign is designed to deter existing long term customers then it's succeeded in doing just that. Where to start...hmmmm. Female objectification. Again. Good job people. :/ This advertisement is a double entendre to the phrase "clean your balls". While I do not object to a double entendre in most circumstances in this one there is almost no way to draw a line between the cleaning of balls used for sporting events and those of the male genitals. If there was a line this advertisement does indeed cross it. The references to "balls" in various states e.g. saggy and old hairy and other very descriptive terms but it is highly obvious as to what the add is actually referring to while almost making a mockery of what the*

ad is 'pretending' to advertise. While I am aware that this advert was shown at a late hour of the evening when it is unlikely that children will be viewing it I was personally offended by this brash attempt at an ad. It was not humorous or clever but rather stupidly obvious and I feel that the way the product was advertised is unnecessary. It is not the product that I have a problem with rather the way in which it is marketed and advertised. Really really crass. Lacks taste. Have enjoyed other lynx ads but this one is really lacking. The ad was very offensive as it clearly referred to balls in a sexual nature which was quite inappropriate and completely irrelevant to the product it was advertising. This advertisement spends its whole time using crude humour to sell its product. The advert isn't about cleanliness it's about how many times they can get the women to say balls of how much they would "like to play with those smooth balls" and that men need this product so "their balls are more enjoyable to play with" Lynx dominates the industry with discriminatory over sexualised advertising that quite frankly just shouldn't be allowed. If the sole purpose of this product is to clean "balls" we don't need to have each member of the audience asking about their "hairy" or "big ball sack" and that use of this product will turn "saggy old balls that haven't been played with in a long time" into their original condition. The female host holds them high in front of her chest. They even used the excuse to pretend she was a tennis star so she could wear something short and skimpy... THIS IS ALL RUBBISH!!!! I think it is unnecessary to use sexual acts to promote personal hygiene. The reference to 'hairy balls' 'saggy balls' 'old balls' was just shocking and offensive. I initially had no idea what this ad was for with its sexual innuendo and degrading antics. I don't even care what the product is I just found the entire premise to be offensive and obscene and I can't believe content like that has a place in our free to air TV advertising. I don't wish to be subjected to such immoral disgusting and ridiculous content again. I have never in my life made a complaint about anything until I was unfortunate enough to have seen this advertisement. Extremely offended that advertisement alludes to women wanting to 'play' with clean balls. Disgraceful. Degrading. Unsafe messages being displayed. This advert is downright revolting and the blatant sexualisation is shameful. I find it VERY offensive and do not wish my teenagers to be subjected to it whether on television radio bill boards or any form of advertising! Considering that Lynx target group is teenaged boys and young men I am continuously disappointed with Lynx choice of advertising material!! Please listen to people's complaints and consider their objections....ban the ad from being used!!! I find this advertisement to be offensive for a host of reasons briefly outlined below: The ad is demeaning and sexist to men and full of sexual overtones. Women suggestively rolling sports balls around in their hands and scrubbing them in what is a poorly conceived joke. The ad is sexist to women as well. It suggests to the target audience teenage males that women will play with their balls if they clean them. It objectifies women in this manner. The ad represents a huge gender double standard. If the product on sale was aimed at women for cleaning their intimate areas and the ad had men making suggestive comments and was packed full of the same overtones it simply would not be allowed in the first place. It would be impossible to imagine an ad featuring men washing objects that are portrayed as representing the vagina. So that said why should it be allowed in reverse? Lynx has a history of inappropriate ads and this particular advertisement is being shown at times when children comprise the audience. I doubt few parents would be comfortable with this. Given the adult nature of the ad the ad should be at least restricted to airing at later times at night. But in my view should be scrapped altogether. It is not about being a prude - but there needs to be some basic standard applied here. I have a sense of humour and understand the ad in that regard but the glaring double standard irks me. I cannot imagine a feminine hygiene product being sold in this manner. I am writing to voice my disgust at an ad I saw on GO last night for Lynx body wash. It was nothing short of vile and offensive and regardless of the fact it was on after nine o'clock it is extremely poor taste. At first we

thought it was a joke but sadly no. My partner and I are broad minded people and like a good laugh as well as the next person but this ad was very very wrong. Sophie Monk must be very hard up for work if she has to resort to making advertisements for a product to wash dirty "balls". Even if it was all innuendo it should be removed from the screen immediately. Terrible. Gross and inappropriate sexual references that I don't want my children exposed to. My husband and I both thought the ad was tasteless talking about ball sacks hairy balls old saggy balls that no-one has played with for years. It wouldn't be even considered if it was female body wash so why do it for men?? There is clear insinuation of the product in reference is used to cleaning scrotums and penises only and not for the body. The use of a scrubbing brush that demonstrated the action on many variety of balls (always displayed in pairs) is an insult to male masculinity and extremely sexist. 'Balls balls and balls' as the ad repeated is also inappropriate for the time at which the ad shown. It is understandable that many children were watching the program at the time of the ad was aired. The clear anatomical reference is inappropriate and draws on many stereotypes in the society. The advertiser may want to consider a more tactful ad for the product to clean the body rather in references that the product is only used to clean 'balls!' The innuendo was that the product was not to clean sports ball but to clean men's private genitalia. The verbal images portrayed were completely inappropriate and unrelated to the product being advertised. Some of the so called humorous comments were made at the expense of the elderly. The advertisement was not short it continued for 3 + mins and the content deteriorated as the advertisement went on. The connotations are extremely sexual. While they talk about 'shiny balls' while holding the sports balls the different descriptions of small balls hairy balls (handed over by a Mediterranean male) and so forth make it very clear they are talking about male genitalia. The crude nature of the advertisement is offensive sexist and demeaning. The advert is rude/ crass and disgusting. I was offended by this ad because I thought it degraded women and I was just plain disgusted. The double entendre of dirty balls was offensive in that it was blatantly making remarks about personal hygiene in a vulgar and descriptive fashion. It included comments about hairy balls ball sweat and old saggy balls. It honestly would have been less offensive had the advertiser actually spoken about it in a clinical fashion rather than a cheesy and lewd joke about various testicular complaints. It was overtly sexual and sexist. References to 'Hairy Balls' 'Old wrinkly balls that haven't been taken care of in years' a large ball sack handed over by a black man and the washing of multiple balls. It is disgusting to hear the Lynx advertisement talking about "balls" and there in depth description of "balls". In the ad they are only showing sports balls but it is the language and how they are inferring to male testicles that is disturbing to hear every time the ad comes on. Especially hearing "old balls" and "dirty balls". I'm sick of it and I usually couldn't care less about what is advertised on TV goes to show how disgusting I think it is. Derogatory blatant sexual innuendo blonde "bimbo" in tight tennis dress medicine balls held up as boobs and extremely long in duration. Please note that I am representing the views of four people (2 males 2 females all between 35 and 40). This is clearly referring to testicles and that girls will play with them if you use this product. Not only testicles but small ones hairy ones and a big ball sack referring to a scrotum (and a black mans inferring that it is 'big'). This ad is disgusting!!!! Especially when it refers to an old man's saggy testicles that 'no one has played with for years'. They then show these saggy balls young a firm again and insinuates that people will play with them again. This ad is offensive as the suggestion is to wash men's balls???. Different men were invited on stage to see a demo of how their balls could be washed and cleaned using Lynx soap and a ball cleaner. Different men from different cultures and age groups were represented with stereotype ball issues. Although they had sport balls the references and the overuse of the word "balls" and "wash your balls" by the women was offensive to say the least. The ad ended with an older man bringing his balls on

*stage to be washed and I quote "they have not been touched in a long time". This ad is offensive degrading and is pornographic. I am not a prude by any means but I could not believe this ad was allowed to air??? This advertisement is overly sexualised and is offensive to women. The way that women are portrayed in this advertisement is demeaning and sexist - Sophie Monk is completely objectified and regardless of how she feels about this this advertisement is promoting negative sexist views. This is not funny. It is discrimination. The innuendos are in bad taste and should not be shown on television. The content and double meaning of the ad is offensive. It cheapens and makes fun of men. I understand it is meant to be funny but I actually find it vulgar and offensive. It contributes to an overly sexualised culture. This is one of the worst ads I have ever seen. The constant references to cleaning balls is clearly not related to sports balls. The 'sports balls' are referenced as 'old saggy balls' 'hairy dirty balls' and more which is obviously not a reference to the sports balls at all. The women presenters in the ad say that the balls are so clean they would love to play with them. This is totally inappropriate for a TV advertisement. It's undermining the move to create a culture of respecting women if you have got men openly joking about washing their balls so women can play with them (which they are saying they want to do). It's overly sexualised and not appropriate to be on at a time when children are watching TV. At the end of the ad the product is referred to as a 'body buffer' which clearly indicates that the product is not to be used on 'sports balls' but of course the human body. In summary I am offended that this overly sexualised ad is allowed to be played on prime time TV and will definitely not buy a product by Lynx again as a result. Unsubtle use of sexualisation crude repulsive distasteful offensive the lowest form of humour. Young women cleaning an old man's balls?? (& other males in the audience) come on!!? Seriously? Moronic! It objectifies women is degrading & lewd. Pathetic attempt at humour. Sexually inappropriate & suggestive. I think this advert is absolutely disgusting. The sexual innuendo is horrible. It isn't clever or funny. I am offended that this is even considered funny. The message was cleaning your balls and the script and the repetitive pictures of 2 balls over and over again was clearly intended to be analogous with the male scrotum. My partner (male) and I have viewed the lynx advertisement on 7mate on 7th & 8th June which depicts balls in need of cleaning and find the content to be extremely offensive to the point that we both are contemplating not watching the channel in case it is broadcast again. I have heard many people speak in the same manner. Please take the time to review this advertisement as we believe it reflects badly on 7mate and the Lynx brand. The ad clearly insinuates that men should clean their testicles using their products via illustrating via various sporting balls. You would know the ad by now I suspect! The ad is offensive and what I would consider to be absolute rubbish advertising. This does nothing for the brand and I will certainly not buy anything with such offensive advertising. The standards of advertising need to be maintained to protect viewers from vitriol of this nature. Get this ad off immediately please! I was disgusted with this ad as was my family. It is offensive to anyone who doesn't want to hear about the male private parts which I am sure is a large group of people. I have also seen this ad playing before 8:30 a time when many children under the age of fifteen would be watching a group of persons I don't think should be shown ads like this. Their parents would be appalled. It is a rude shocking ad that isn't amusing in the least. There is clear insinuation of the product in reference is used to cleaning scrotums and penises only and not for the body. The use of a scrubbing brush that demonstrated the action on many variety of balls (always displayed in pairs) is an insult to male masculinity and extremely sexist. 'Balls balls and balls' as the ad repeated is also inappropriate for the time at which the ad shown. It is understandable that many children were watching the program at the time of the ad was aired. The clear anatomical reference is inappropriate and draws on many stereotypes in the society. The advertiser may want to consider a more tactful ad for the product to clean the body rather in*

references that the product is only used to clean 'balls'! The innuendo was that the product was not to clean sports ball but to clean men's private genitalia. The verbal images portrayed were completely inappropriate and unrelated to the product being advertised. Some of the so called humorous comments were made at the expense of the elderly. The advertisement was not short it continued for 3 + mins and the content deteriorated as the advertisement went on. The connotations are extremely sexual. While they talk about 'shiny balls' while holding the sports balls the different descriptions of small balls hairy balls (handed over by a Mediterranean male) and so forth make it very clear they are talking about male genitalia. The crude nature of the advertisement is offensive sexist and demeaning. The advert is rude/ crass and disgusting. I was offended by this ad because I thought it degraded women and I was just plain disgusted. The double entendre of dirty balls was offensive in that it was blatantly making remarks about personal hygiene in a vulgar and descriptive fashion. It included comments about hairy balls ball sweat and old saggy balls. It honestly would have been less offensive had the advertiser actually spoken about it in a clinical fashion rather than a cheesy and lewd joke about various testicular complaints. It was overtly sexual and sexist. References to 'Hairy Balls' 'Old wrinkly balls that haven't been taken care of in years' a large ball sack handed over by a black man and the washing of multiple balls. It is disgusting to hear the Lynx advertisement talking about "balls" and there in depth description of "balls". In the ad they are only showing sports balls but it is the language and how they are inferring to male testicles that is disturbing to hear every time the ad comes on. Especially hearing "old balls" and "dirty balls". I'm sick of it and I usually couldn't care less about what is advertised on TV goes to show how disgusting I think it is. Derogatory blatant sexual innuendo blonde "bimbo" in tight tennis dress medicine balls held up as boobs and extremely long in duration. Please note that I am representing the views of four people (2 males 2 females all between 35 and 40). This is clearly referring to testicles and that girls will play with them if you use this product. Not only testicles but small ones hairy ones and a big ball sack referring to a scrotum (and a black mans inferring that it is 'big'). This ad is disgusting!!!! Especially when it refers to an old man's saggy testicles that 'no one has played with for years'. They then show these saggy balls young a firm again and insinuates that people will play with them again. This ad is offensive as the suggestion is to wash men's balls???. Different men were invited on stage to see a demo of how their balls could be washed and cleaned using Lynx soap and a ball cleaner. Different men from different cultures and age groups were represented with stereotype ball issues. Although they had sport balls the references and the overuse of the word "balls" and "wash your balls" by the women was offensive to say the least. The ad ended with an older man bringing his balls on stage to be washed and I quote "they have not been touched in a long time". This ad is offensive degrading and is pornographic. I am not a prude by any means but I could not believe this ad was allowed to air??? This advertisement is overly sexualised and is offensive to women. The way that women are portrayed in this advertisement is demeaning and sexist - Sophie Monk is completely objectified and regardless of how she feels about this this advertisement is promoting negative sexist views. This is not funny. It is discrimination. The innuendos are in bad taste and should not be shown on television. The content and double meaning of the ad is offensive. It cheapens and makes fun of men. I understand it is meant to be funny but I actually find it vulgar and offensive. It contributes to an overly sexualised culture. This is one of the worst ads I have ever seen. The constant references to cleaning balls is clearly not related to sports balls. The 'sports balls' are referenced as 'old saggy balls' 'hairy dirty balls' and more which is obviously not a reference to the sports balls at all. The women presenters in the ad say that the balls are so clean they would love to play with them. This is totally inappropriate for a TV advertisement. It's undermining the move to create a culture of respecting women if you have got men openly joking about washing their

*balls so women can play with them (which they are saying they want to do). It's overly sexualised and not appropriate to be on at a time when children are watching TV. At the end of the ad the product is referred to as a 'body buffer' which clearly indicates that the product is not to be used on 'sports balls' but of course the human body. In summary I am offended that this overly sexualised ad is allowed to be played on prime time TV and will definitely not buy a product by Lynx again as a result. Unsubtle use of sexualisation crude repulsive distasteful offensive the lowest form of humour. Young women cleaning an old man's balls?? (& other males in the audience) come on!!? Seriously? Moronic! It objectifies women is degrading & lewd. Pathetic attempt at humour. Sexually inappropriate & suggestive. I think this advert is absolutely disgusting. The sexual innuendo is horrible. It isn't clever or funny. I am offended that this is even considered funny. The message was cleaning your balls and the script and the repetitive pictures of 2 balls over and over again was clearly intended to be analogous with the male scrotum. My partner (male) and I have viewed the lynx advertisement on 7mate on 7th & 8th June which depicts balls in need of cleaning and find the content to be extremely offensive to the point that we both are contemplating not watching the channel in case it is broadcast again. I have heard many people speak in the same manner. Please take the time to review this advertisement as we believe it reflects badly on 7mate and the Lynx brand. The ad clearly insinuates that men should clean their testicles using their products via illustrating via various sporting balls. You would know the ad by now i suspect! The ad is offensive and what I would consider to be absolute rubbish advertising. This does nothing for the brand and I will certainly not buy anything with such offensive advertising. The standards of advertising need to be maintained to protect viewers from vitriol of this nature. Get this ad off immediately please! I was disgusted with this ad as was my family. It is offensive to anyone who doesn't want to hear about the male private parts which I am sure is a large group of people. I have also seen this ad playing before 8:30 a time when many children under the age of fifteen would be watching a group of persons I don't think should be shown ads like this. Their parents would be appalled. It is a rude shocking ad that isn't amusing in the least.*

## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

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

*The Commercial is being aired on TV (0231/12), Pay TV (0246/12), Cinema (0247/12) and on Youtube (0240/12). We note that the ASB is considering the Commercial in relation to issues that fall under Sections 2.1, 2.2, 2.4 and 2.5 of the AANA Code of Ethics. Lynx is a brand that communicates to its target audience in a fun, tongue-in-cheek way that we know to be relevant to them. Lynx also has a proud history of award winning commercials which both entertain and surprise consumers. The Commercial continues this tradition of tongue-in-cheek entertainment by using innuendo and double entendre comedic techniques to advertise Lynx Shower Gel and the Lynx Body Buffer. Lynx strives to create amusing marketing campaigns and promotions, and the men and women featured in our advertising are always in on the joke. In essence, Lynx advertisements are about the importance of good hygiene to support health and wellbeing. Good hygiene, feeling and appearing clean and the use of fragrance helps boost the confidence of young men who often find themselves daunted by the dating game. Men generally don't feel comfortable discussing their personal hygiene openly and thus campaigns around men's hygiene and health resonate better with all men, and young adults in particular, when they use humour as a way to talk about important issues. We believe that the audience understands the playful nature of the Commercial and the use of*



*innuendo in relation to sports balls. Unilever is a responsible advertiser and has numerous internal review processes, including review by Unilever's Legal and Corporate Relations Departments to critique all advertisements to ensure compliance with legal and ethical considerations. We carefully choose programming that is consistent with the themes and content of our advertising. Unilever takes the AANA Code of Ethics seriously and we have taken great care to ensure that the Commercial complies with the Code of Ethics. When developing our media schedule for Lynx campaigns, we carefully choose programming that is consistent with the tone of our advertising and that is directed to an appropriate audience. 1.*

*The Commercial The Commercial promotes Lynx Shower Gel and the Lynx Body Buffer. It is set in a TV studio with a mixed female and male audience and features a female presenter. The set is designed to resemble that of popular advertorial television shows. A second woman, named "Amber Jones", is introduced as former champion of a fictitious tennis tournament, "The Tasmanian International". The tennis star starts talking about dirty sports balls and the difficulties of cleaning them properly. A young man is called on stage as a volunteer to clean dirty sport balls using Lynx Shower Gel and the Lynx Body Buffer. He demonstrates how to clean golf balls using Lynx Shower Gel together with the Lynx Body Buffer. Men in the audience then proceed to throw dirty tennis balls, cricket balls, and a sack with soccer balls on stage to have them cleaned. The presenter and 'Amber James' comment on the cleaning process while the male volunteer cleans the dirty sports balls with Lynx Shower Gel using the Lynx Body Buffer. Finally an older man, 'Mr Gilbert' is called on stage. He carries two deflated medicine balls. After the volunteer has cleaned the medicine balls they look inflated and shiny, and are handed back to a happy 'Mr Gilbert'. Throughout the Commercial the presenter and the tennis star use innuendo associated with dirty sports balls to encourage good hygiene practices among men as a way to improve their self-confidence. The Commercial is aired in two versions which differ only in the last frame. The last frame of one version promotes a "Free Body Buffer" as long as stock lasts. The last frame of the second version does not contain this message. 2. Compliance with AANA Code of Ethics 2.1*

*Award winning concept of the Commercial A different version of the Commercial was aired in the United States of America in 2010 and is still available on Youtube. The US version of the Commercial has won multiple awards including the Cannes Gold Lion in 2010 for Best Internet Film, the Andy's Awards 2011 (Bronze) for Personal Products and the Webby's award in 2010 for Best Viral Marketing Campaign. We have taken great care to change the script of the US version to ensure it reflects prevailing community standards in Australia and is compliant with the AANA Code of Ethics. For example, in the US version the female tennis star is shown cleaning the dirty sports balls. In the Australian Commercial this has been changed to a male volunteer to avoid any unintended suggestion of sexism or discrimination of females in the Commercial. Some of the language and expressions used in the US version were also changed to be more in line with Australian community standards and reflect socially acceptable vernacular, while some scenes were shortened or removed completely. 2.2 Programming (a) TV CAD provided the Commercial with a "C" (General Unrestricted) rating whereby the Commercial "May be broadcast between 9.00pm and 5.00am on any day except in G or PG programs or sport; Starting at 8.30pm; Starting before and continuing past 8.30pm; Or in a break preceeding a program which starts at 8.30pm. If the program continues past 10.30pm this restriction ceases to apply." Unilever has taken great care to ensure that the Commercial has been placed in programming as prescribed in the CAD approval. The TV media buying is targeted at the young adult male audience and as such the spot placements are amongst programming that is targeted at its intended audience on the channels ONE, 7Mate and Eleven during programs like 'Comedy-Specials', 'Jail', 'The Loop' or 'Wild Justice California'. The Commercial is consistent with content, themes and style of humour the audience would be*

exposed to during this type of programming. (b) PayTV We attach a number of spot lists showing the placement slots and times in PayTV. Similar to the placement in TV, the spot placements were after 9.00pm and amongst programming that is targeted at a specific audience including programs like "Cops: Adult Only", "The Late Late Show with Craig Ferguson" or the movie "Max Payne". The Commercial is consistent with content, themes and style of humour the audience would be exposed to during this type of programming. (c)

Cinema The Commercial is shown before M and MA 15+ rated movies that are classified as mature adult content not recommended for people under 15 years of age. We have ensured that the content, themes and style of humour of the Commercial is consistent with the movies "Prometheus" and "The Dictator" before which it is screened. These movies contain a high level of graphic violence, adult themes and language that go far beyond the content of the Commercial. (d) Internet The Commercial also aired on Youtube, on [www.lynxeffect.com.au](http://www.lynxeffect.com.au) and on the Lynx facebook site where consumers who find the humour that is used in Lynx advertisements amusing and relevant can make a conscious decision to view the ad.

2.3 Positive consumer feedback We monitor responses to the Commercial on Youtube and news media outlets and note that the Commercial has received an overwhelmingly positive response. The Commercial has been viewed more than 500,000 times on Youtube and has a positive rating of 91% (figures as at 18 June 2012). Other comments include: Melbourne 3AW Talkback Radio: "There is nothing wrong with this ad it's funny and well [I don't] believe it's degrading to either men or women it's telling men to think about the personal hygiene in a way and it was [very] well done". (Rachel Thursday 14 June, 2012 - 1:29 AM) Herald Sun Website: "As a bloke in the target market I thought this was very humorous..," (Matt of Bundoora posted at 11:25 PM June 11, 2012) Youtube comment: "I've never seen this ad.....until now.....pwahahahahaha!!! I've never laughed so damn much in my life!! Epic ad.....just epic!!" (XxPopGenerationxX) Facebook comment: "Cleans your balls ! Best advert ever haha" (Kimberly Doulton)

2.4 Section 2.1 of the Code of Ethics Under Section 2.1 of the Code of Ethics 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 gender. (a) No discrimination against women We submit that the Commercial does not portray women in a way that discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of gender. In particular, the Commercial is not sexist or sexual, and the women in the Commercial are not portrayed as sexual objects. In adapting this advertisement for the Australian audience we have ensured that neither the female presenter nor the female tennis star are shown to be cleaning the sports balls. The women talk about cleaning balls in the context of sports balls and then invite a male volunteer from the audience to assist with cleaning process. At no point during the Commercial are the two women shown cleaning sports balls, or touching sports balls in a way that could be interpreted as sexual or otherwise inappropriate. The words "Feel just how clean those balls are, Stephanie" - "Stephanie: (feeling the balls) Wow. I could play with these balls all day" relate to two golf balls that were cleaned by the male volunteer. At all times when the women are talking about cleaning balls the correlating visuals are of a variety of sports balls and the context of the Commercial makes it clear that all references to balls are references to sports balls. The Commercial shows the audience being impressed with the cleaning power of Lynx Show Gel and the Lynx Body Buffer on dirty sports balls. In fact, the Commercial is showing the presenter and the tennis star as two empowered women who are leading the audience through the TV show without appearing in a sexualised way. Unilever conducted a consumer survey in which 500 Australian women between the age of 16 and 64 were shown the Commercial and then asked about their opinion. 82% of the surveyed women did not feel that the Commercial is discriminating against women: (b) No discrimination against

men The Commercial also does not portray men in a way that discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of gender. One of the complainants states that the use of the Lynx Body Buffer cleaning a variety of sport balls “is an insult to male masculinity and extremely sexist”. We submit that although the Commercial refers to ‘balls’ this does not happen in a sexist or sexual way. All references to ‘balls’ are clearly made in connection with sports balls. The use of innuendo does also not lead to a discrimination against men. Lynx Shower Gel is a body wash that is meant to be used for the whole body including men’s testicles. We do not believe that it is an “insult to the male masculinity”, as stated by one of the complainants, when an advertisement of shower gel and a washing tool that are meant to be used for the whole body references specific body parts. It is our view that this light-hearted reference to the word “balls” in the context of sporting equipment is in line with prevailing community standards and any associated innuendo is used to engage the target audience around good hygiene practices which are important for health and wellbeing in a humorous and non-threatening way. We do not believe the word “balls” can be interpreted as a discriminatory to men in this context. The intention of the TVC is to advertise the Lynx Shower Gel and Body Buffer by promoting good hygiene and healthy behaviour. The fact that some of the men in the audience of the mock TV sales show are shown holding dirty or deflated sports balls does not create the impression that the testicles of men in general are dirty or deflated. We strongly believe that men understand the innuendo and the humour intended and that the video shows men feeling more confident after the sports balls have been cleaned. (c) No discrimination on the account of race Some complainants argue the fact that a man of African- American appearance man in the audience throws a sack of soccer balls on the stage to have it cleaned is discriminating against African American people. We submit that the Commercial and in particular this scene is in no way discriminating against any minority groups in the Australian population including people of African American descent and that it does not convey a negative impression of people of a specific ethnicity or race. The Commercial shows both white men and black men throwing sport balls on stage to have them cleaned. The African American actor in the audience was not chosen to imply that African American men have bigger testicles than for example Caucasian men. The sport balls range in size and include golf balls, tennis balls, cricket balls, soccer balls and medicine balls. For example, the medicine balls that are carried on stage by the older man (‘Mr Gilbert’) are bigger than the soccer balls and tennis balls. In no way does the Commercial create the impression that the size of the sport balls shown are representative of the size of the testicles of the respective men in the audience who are holding these sport balls, or that the skin colour of these men is of any relevance in this context. (d) No discrimination on the account of age Some complainants state that the Commercial is offensive and disrespectful to elderly people because an older man (‘Mr Gilbert’) shown carrying old medicine balls on stage and asking if these “saggy old balls” can be cleaned. We submit that the Commercial does not stereotype elderly people in any way. The men who appear in the Commercial are representative of a wide range of age groups, from young to old, and all of these men are asking to have their sport balls cleaned which are dirty or, stained or deflated for different reasons. Please note that the sports balls of all men who appear in the Commercial are dirty and that all men, young and old, are asking to have them cleaned. Mr Gilbert is shown as a friendly elderly man. The Commercial uses humour to show that the sport balls of ‘Mr Gilbert’ also look shiny and new after they have been cleaned. Due to the fact that the Commercial treats both young and elderly men in an identical way it is incorrect to suggest that the Commercial is discriminates against elderly men on the account that ‘Mr Gilbert’ is shown carrying dirty and deflated medicine balls. 2.5 Section 2.2 of the Code of Ethics Under section 2.2 advertising or marketing communication should not employ sexual appeal in a manner which

*is exploitative or degrading of any individual or group of people. According to the Practice Notes to the Code of Ethics the term “exploitative” means “clearly appearing to purposefully debase or abuse a person, or group of persons, for the enjoyment of others, and lacking moral, artistic or other values”. “Degrading” means “lowering in character or quality a person or group of persons”. We submit that the Commercial does not contain any visuals or words that could be interpreted as objectifying women in the way described above.*

*Objectification generally refers to the practice of regarding a person merely as an object with no regard to the person’s personality, and a sexual objectification would require that a woman is regarded simply as an object of sexual gratification or who is sexually attractive to provide pleasure for men with no regard for the person’s personality. One complainant states that the fact that Sophie Monk has appeared topless in men’s magazines would make the Commercial discriminating against women. Sophie Monk was chosen to appear in the TVC because she is popular amongst the target group of young adult men. The fact that Sophie Monk has appeared in magazines for men does not make the Commercial itself discriminating. In the Commercial Sophie Monk is presented as a professional tennis player wearing a style of sports clothes that are commonly worn by tennis players including world class female tennis players who are frequently shown on television. The Commercial does not show Sophie Monk in a sexualised way but as a celebrity in a fictitious TV sales show commenting on the cleaning power of Lynx Shower Gel and Body Buffer products while wearing a commonly used sports outfit. We also submit that Sophie Monk and the female presenter do not touch the sports balls in a sexualised way that would imply that they would want to touch men’s testicles or ‘play’ with them. We note that some of the complainants appear to have viewed the US version of this advertisement which shows the female tennis star cleaning sport balls and the female presenter holding two golf balls in one hand. The US advertisement was launched in 2010 and has not been endorsed by Unilever Australia Ltd.*

*2.6 Section 2.4 of the Code of Ethics Under section 2.4 advertising and marketing communication shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensibility to the relevant audience. One complainant states that the Commercial is “obviously actually referring to testicles” and that it would contain “Sexist pornified connotations and images of overtly sexual and pornified nature“. We submit that the Commercial does not contain any references to sex, sexuality or nudity. The Commercial makes clear that the statement “no-one has played with them for years” is made in reference to those particular sports balls. Some men in the audience wear sports clothes, e.g. tennis clothes or cricket clothes and throw tennis, cricket and soccer balls on the stage. It is obvious for the viewer that this statement means that no one has played with the sport balls for years because they are dirty or deflated. The messages that no one wants want to play with dirty sports balls when they are dirty and “I could play with them all day” are a means promote the issue of men’s hygiene and good health in a humorous way that is accepted by and relevant to men. We have ensured that the video shows a male volunteer cleaning the sports balls and that the female presenter and tennis star are not cleaning the balls or touching them in a sexualised way. The theme of the Commercial is firmly set in the realms of a funny advertorial television show with themes consistent with the style of themes that viewers of the television programming and cinema releases around which the advertisement has been placed would be regularly exposed to. The Commercial is entirely appropriate with respect to the programme time zones and its audience. We submit that, in light of the prevailing community standards, the Commercial does treat sex and sexuality with sensibility to its audience and is not likely to cause serious or widespread offence. We believe that the audience understands the humour intended. 2.7*

*Section 2.5 of the Code of Ethic Under section 2.5 advertising and Marketing communication shall only use language which is appropriate in the circumstances (including appropriate for the relevance audience and medium). Strong or obscene language shall be*

avoided. The Commercial describes sports balls in different ways. As stated above, on each occasion the presenter, the tennis star or 'Mr Gilbert' talk about cleaning a particular sports ball the relevant visual of the sports ball is shown in the Commercial. Examples: When the words "No-one wants to play with them when they're dirty, that's why you have to keep your balls clean" and "Well how can guys clean their balls properly - so they're more enjoyable to play with?" are spoken a dirty soccer ball and the Lynx Body Buffer are shown. The question "Can it clean these filthy balls?" is asked by a man in the audience holding dirty tennis balls. The response "Chuck those hairy balls down here" refers to these tennis balls. Tennis balls have a soft surface that can be, and is commonly described as fluffy or hairy. Another man in the audience is holding a sack of soccer balls asking the question "What about my ball sack?". The term ball sack is commonly used by the public and by manufacturers of sports balls to describe a bag or a net of sports balls, for example for soccer balls or rugby balls. 'Mr Gilbert' is holding two old and deflated medicine balls and asks the presenter "Can you help me with these saggy old balls?". The adjective "saggy" is commonly used to describe something that appears to be deflated. We submit that the audience understands that the language used in the Commercial is language that is commonly used in relation to sports ball in the media and by the general public. The language is used in a light hearted and humorous way manner that is consistent with modern Australian vernacular. The fact that the same words may be used by some parts of the community to describe male testicles does not make this language inappropriate. Lynx Shower Gel is a body wash that is designed to clean the whole body including men's testicles. The same applies to the Lynx Body Buffer. The fact that double entendre is used does not make the language inappropriate. Double entendres are generally used to convey a delicate message without using vulgar or obscene words. The main issue is if the message behind the double entendre is inappropriate and not if the words are inappropriate as the words are words that are used every day by the general public and in the media. Double entendre's are widely used in film and TV to convey a message. Even if the word "balls" was used without the use of double entendre we believe that it is not inappropriate and conflicting with the prevailing community standards as it is widely used vernacular by younger generations, in the media and on the Internet. The Practice Notes to the AANA Code of Ethics state that words 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). The Practice Notes list the following words as examples: "bugger", "shit", "pissed-off", "crap", "bloody", "cheap bastard", "bum", "honk if you did it last night". We submit that the language used cannot be classified as strong or obscene language that is inappropriate in the circumstances or language would generally be considered to be offensive. There may be some viewers who may feel offended by a low-level use of innuendo and double entendre but the language used is well within the prevailing community standards and the standards set by the AANA Code of Ethics. 3 Conclusion We submit that the context of the Commercial and the language used are well within prevailing community standards and that Commercial complies with the Code of Ethics. Please contact me should you require any further information.

## **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 discriminatory toward older men and stereotypes a range of men from different demographics, that it objectifies women, is demeaning to men, contains

inappropriate sexualized scenes and dialogue of a sexual nature and features inappropriate language. The Board also noted complainant concerns that the advertisement is vulgar and in bad taste. The Board reviewed the advertisement and noted the advertiser's response. The Advertising Standards Board ("Board") considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the "Code"). The Board first considered whether the advertisement was in breach of section 2.1 of the Code. Section 2.1 of the Code states that 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, gender, age, sexual preference, religion, disability, mental illness or political belief." The Board noted complaints that the advertisement stereotypes several different types of men and is discriminatory towards men. The Board considered that the advertisement does depict a number of stereotypes about men from different ethnic or professional backgrounds. The Board considered however that, with the exception of the depiction of the older man, the depictions were not offensive or demeaning to any person or section of society. The Board considered that the advertisement did not discriminate against men. The Board also considered complainants' concerns that the advertisement is demeaning of men by suggesting that they are unclean and are motivated by the suggestion that women will pay attention to them sexually if they use the advertised product. The Board considered that the advertisement is most likely to convey an impetus to men to use the product and would not be taken as a serious suggestion that men would use this product for the purpose of sexual gratification. The Board considered that the advertisement is not demeaning to men. The Board considered whether the advertisement discriminated against women. The Board noted complainants' concerns that the women are depicted in a demeaning manner. The Board considered that the advertisement is sexually suggestive but that the depiction of the women and their relationship to the sports presentation style scenario is evident and the advertisement is not suggestive of the women themselves being available to clean the genitalia of men. The Board considered that the advertisement does not discriminate against women. The Board noted the complainant's concerns that the advertisement is offensive and discriminates against elderly men in particular as it refers to their "old saggy balls not being played with for years". The Board considered that the older man is depicted in a negative manner with the inference in the advertisement being that the older man does not receive any attention due to his age. The Board considered that this is a negative depiction of an older person and that this depiction does amount to discrimination against older men. Based on the above the Board determined that, in this instance, the advertisement did depict material that discriminated against or vilified a person or section of society and did breach Section 2.1 of the Code. The Board considered whether the advertisement complied with Section 2.2 of the Code which states, "Advertising or Marketing Communications should not employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative and degrading of any individual or group of people." The Board noted the complainants' concerns that the depictions of the women cleaning the balls, continually making sexually suggestive references to 'balls' and holding and playing with the balls in a sexually suggestive manner is demeaning to and objectifying of women as is the depiction of the women in the 'infomercial' style. The Board considered that the women are depicted in a mock 'infomercial' in a manner which is consistent with how such infomercials appear. The Board also considered that the depiction of Sophie Monk as a tennis pro, attired in tennis wear, was consistent with the sporting scenario depicted in the advertisement. The Board considered that these images are not objectifying of the women as the women are presented as active presenters and participants in the fake advertisement. The Board noted that the women are fully covered by their outfits and considered that the images do not contain inappropriate nudity and do not employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative and degrading of any individual or group of people. The Board considered the

women's role as 'ball cleaners' and the repetitive references to dirty balls. The Board considered that the double entendre in the advertisement is strongly sexually suggestive but that the sexually suggestive nature of the conversation in this particular advertisement is not a breach of section 2.2. In the Board's view the advertisement did not use the women's sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative and degrading of the women. The Board then considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.4 of the Code. Section 2.4 of the Code states: "Advertising or Marketing Communications shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience". The Board noted the use of the term "balls" is a double entendre intended to be humorous. The Board accepted that 'balls' is a common vernacular reference to men's genitals. Some members of the Board expressed concern that the frequency of the reference to balls, dirty balls, clean balls, and playing with balls increased the sexually suggestive tone of the advertisement to a concerning level. The Board noted that the television advertisement was classified with a 'C' rating and was able to be broadcast between 9pm and 5am except in G or PG programs or sport. The Board considered however that as the advertisement was given this rating and was aired within the appropriate time slots that the relevant audience is an adult or mature audience. The Board considered that the double entendre and sexually suggestive nature of the advertisement was all suggestive and that there was no actual nudity or sexual activity. The Board considered that the sexual references were appropriately sensitive for the mature audience. The Board determined that the advertisement did not contain strong sexual references and treated sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and did not breach Section 2.4 of the Code. The Board then 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 and strong or obscene language shall be avoided." The Board noted the advertisement features the words, "Balls" and the various descriptors of balls and considered that in conjunction with the sports presentation setting and the use of a variety of actual sporting balls, the language is not inappropriate. The Board considered that the use of the term 'balls' is an accepted reference to men's genitals in Australia and would not be considered strong or obscene. Although the frequency of the reference increased the effect of the word, making it more sexually suggestive, the Board considered that the advertisement did not use strong or obscene language and determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.5 of the Code. The Board noted significant concern from complainants that the advertisement is in poor taste and is crude. The Board noted that the only grounds on which a complaint can be upheld are those specified in the Code of Ethics. The Board noted that the advertisement was also considered on Pay TV (0246/12), Cinema (0247/12) and on the Internet (0240/12) and was upheld on the basis that the advertisement breached section 2.1 in relation to older men. Finding that the advertisement breached section 2.1 of the Code on the above grounds, the Board upheld the complaints.

## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE TO DETERMINATION**

I refer to your letters in which you advised us that the Advertising Standards Board has upheld the complaint(s) about the Lynx Commercial. We are disappointed by the Advertising Standard Board's determination that the commercial discriminates against older men in breach of section 2.1 of the AANA Code of Ethics. Lynx is a brand with a history of fun, tongue-in-cheek, playful advertising and it is always our intention to amuse, not offend. The men who appear in the commercial are representative of a wide range of age groups, from young to old, and all of them are portrayed in a humorous and good-natured way. It was never the intention of the commercial to discriminate against elderly people. Unilever takes the AANA Code of Ethics seriously and we will of course abide by the Board's

determination. We wish to advise you that we have amended the commercial to comply with the findings. The version of the commercial that was the subject of the Board determination will no longer be made available to the public.

## **INDEPENDENT REVIEWER'S RECOMMENDATION**

## **THE DETERMINATION ON REVIEW**

## **ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE TO IR DETERMINATION**