



Ad Standards Community Panel  
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AdStandards.com.au

Advertising Standards Bureau Limited  
ACN 084 452 666

## Case Report

1	Case Number	0247/18
2	Advertiser	Crimsafe
3	Product	House Goods Services
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV - Free to air
5	Date of Determination	23/05/2018
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

### ISSUES RAISED

2.3 - Violence Causes alarm and distress

### DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement features a woman watching television who appears to be home alone, who seems to hear a suspicious noise. She puts her cup of tea down and turns to look behind her. The voiceover states "Did you know that break-ins often happen while people are at home? Don't give them an easy way in. Insist on Crimsafe. If it's not Crimsafe it's not crim safe."

### THE COMPLAINT

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

*I was watching MKR with my 10 year old daughter. I looked over at her after this ad and she had gone white - I asked her if she was okay, she said she'd never thought about someone breaking in while she was at home before. We talked about it and I said that this was just the company's technique to try and scare people to get them to buy the product. She said someone should tell that company that their ad is too scary and should come with a warning so you can choose not to watch it. I agree with her - I*



*would have preferred not to see it either - it's unnecessarily distressing and at that time of night (pre 8.30pm when children may still be watching) I think that advertisements of that style should not be allowed. I'd also hate to think how a lady in that age group would feel after seeing an ad like that - she'd probably hand over all her pension money to Crimsafe the next day just to make her feel better. And I really don't know about their statement that break ins often happen at home - what percentage is often? I would think that it would have to be more than 30% to qualify as often. I also can't find any information on Crime Statistics Agency Victoria (all VicPol data) regarding burglaries when someone is in the home so I don't even know if this information is available, and if it's not, they can't make that statement. I would really like to know what statistics they are basing their claims on. I think the whole thing is just fearmongering and neither my daughter, me or anyone else needs to be subjected to it.*

#### **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

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

*COMPLAINT REFERENCE NUMBER 0247/18*

*Thank you for your correspondence dated 9 May 2018 in relation to the above complaint. Please find following our response as requested.*

#### *Description of the advertisement*

*The complaint relates to a 15 second TVC entitled 'Home Alone'. The ad focuses on a woman home alone, who seems to hear a suspicious noise. She looks concerned on hearing this noise.*

*The primary message of this commercial is to raise awareness of the importance of home security, even when you are home. As regularly reported in the media and by police services, many break-ins are 'opportunistic' through unlocked or poorly secured doors and windows, even when people are at home.*

*The ad says 'Don't give them an easy way in' – and promotes that Crimsafe is a proven and trusted brand of security screen that can help secure your home against intruders.*

*Crimsafe response to the complaint and all aspects of Section 2 of the AANA Code of Ethics*

*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, gender, age, sexual preference, religion, disability, mental illness or political belief.*



*The commercial does not discriminate against any person or section of the community.*

*2.2 Advertising or marketing communications should not employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative and degrading of any individual or group of people.*

*There is no sexual connotation or appeal, either intended or implied, within this commercial.*

*2.3 Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not present or portray violence unless it is justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised.*

*The commercial does not contain any violence. The ad shows a woman at home watching television, who hears a strange noise and looks concerned.*

*The ad voice over says that “break-ins often occur while people are at home”. This fact is frequently highlighted in media stories, police notices and insurance company reports.*

*Supporting information:*

*1. An online report by RACV Insurance provides statistics about ‘aggravated burglary’, which specifically occurs while someone is at home.*

*Their report states:*

*“In 2016, there were 31,373 non-aggravated burglaries in Victoria, an increase of 8 per cent over 2015. But aggravated burglaries – or home invasions – leapt from about 2500 to 3554, an increase of 40 per cent.*

*Home invasions happen all over Melbourne and are not restricted to one area, despite reports of a number of incidents in the south-east. These “aggravated” incidents are very different to simple burglaries and much more dangerous to home occupiers who are present when they occur.”*

*Full article (also submitted as a PDF with this letter):*

*<https://www.racv.com.au/membership/member-benefits/royalauto/home/in-the-home/what-to-do-in-a-home-invasion.html>*

*2. A similar article published online by RACQ Insurance states that 27% of break-ins occur while people are at home:*

*“RACQ has issued a warning to all Queenslanders to be vigilant after new data revealed one in five had experienced a break in at their home. RACQ spokesperson Kirsty Clinton said even more frightening was of the break-ins, 27 percent occurred while the occupants were home.”*

*Full article (also submitted as a PDF with this letter):*



<https://live.racq.com.au/2017/07/risk-home-break/>

*Similar articles and warnings appear regularly on news websites and social media sites, providing examples of a break-in while people were at home.*

*The ads are not intended to cause fear or distress, they communicate a documented trend that highlights the benefit of home security at all times, including when you are at home.*

*2.4 Advertising or Marketing Communications shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience.*

*There is no reference to sexual activity or nudity within this commercial.*

*2.5 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.*

*There is no inappropriate or offensive language in these commercials.*

*2.6 Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not depict material contrary to Prevailing Community Standards on health and safety.*

*The commercial does not contain any content relevant to community health and safety standards.*

## **THE DETERMINATION**

The Ad Standards Community Panel (the "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 is distressing and frightening.

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

The Panel noted that this television advertisement features a woman watching television who appears to be home alone, and she hears a noise in the home. The voiceover states, "Did you know that break-ins often happen when people are at home. Don't give them an easy way in. Insist on Crimsafe'.

The Panel considered whether the advertisement breached Section 2.3 of the Code. Section 2.3 states: "Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not present or portray violence unless it is justifiable in the context of the product or service



advertised".

The Panel noted the complainant's concern that the advertisement is too scary especially when run at a time when young children could be watching.

The Panel noted the advertiser's response that the advertisement is not intended to cause fear or distress, their intention is to highlight the benefit of home security at all times.

The Panel considered that the advertisement does not contain any acts of violence or depictions which would be considered graphic or inappropriate.

The Panel noted that it had previously considered a similar advertisement from the same advertiser in case 0092/17, where:

"The Board noted that the intruder breaks in while people are in the home and that he is not seen harming anyone or damaging the home. The Board considered that the intention of the advertisement is to draw the attention of the viewer to the safety product and to the real risk that could occur if the home is not secured properly.

The Board noted that the advertisements do not contain any violence or violent acts and noted that the realistic nature of the advertisement is what causes the alarming reaction of the viewer.

The Board considered that the advertisements are not intended to generate fear but rather to highlight the need to be aware of home security and the products available to assist with better securing the home".

Consistent with the previous determination, in the current advertisement the Panel considered that in the context of advertising a product designed to make the home more safe and guard from intruders, the Panel considered that the advertisement uses an acceptable level of menace which is justifiable and relevant to the product and that there was no actual violence shown.

The Panel considered that the level of menace in the advertisement was justifiable in the context of the product being advertised and in the Panel's view the advertisement did not breach Section 2.3 of the Code.

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

