



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

Ad Standards Limited  
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## Case Report

<b>1. Case Number :</b>	<b>0259-20</b>
<b>2. Advertiser :</b>	<b>Toyota Motor Corporation Australia</b>
<b>3. Product :</b>	<b>Vehicle</b>
<b>4. Type of Advertisement/Media :</b>	<b>TV - Free to Air</b>
<b>5. Date of Determination</b>	<b>9-Sep-2020</b>
<b>6. DETERMINATION :</b>	<b>Dismissed</b>

### ISSUES RAISED

AANA Code of Ethics\2.1 Discrimination or Vilification

### DESCRIPTION OF ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement features a man and woman getting into a blue car, with the woman in the driver's seat. The woman puts an address into the GPS and the GPS voice states, "Calculating route".

The man is seen blowing on the lid of a takeaway coffee and the GPS states "continue straight".

The woman makes a disapproving face and says, "no" before turning right.

The man is thrown off balance and spills his coffee.

The voice over states, "return to route".

The man says, "I don't know if you heard... did you hear the..." and gestures to the GPS.

The GPS states, "take first exit".

The woman is seen driving onto a round about indicating right.

The man says, "It really wants us to take this exit. And there it goes".

The GPS states, "Take any exit", then "continue straight."

The woman does a u-turn.

The GPS states, "Straight. Straight. Oh come on".

A voice over states, "turn on the fun with Toyota Corolla. Oh what a feeling. Toyota".

### THE COMPLAINT

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



*The advertisement portrays young men in a negative light. The advertisement makes them out to be weak, stupid and brainless buffoons.  
The portrayal of men in this advertisement does nothing to help build the confidence, self esteem or worth of young men in our society today.*

## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

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

*Toyota is of the view that Sections 2.2 to 2.6 of the AANA Code are not relevant to the Advertisement. As the concepts covered by those sections do not arise in the complaint.*

### *Section 2.1 – Discrimination or Vilification*

*Toyota does not believe that the Advertisement shows unfair or less favourable treatment based on gender or any other basis. Toyota also does not believe that the Advertisement engages in vilification of any particular group.*

*The Advertisement does not support a stereotype that men are “stupid and brainless buffoons” as it is purely intended to promote the easy and enjoyable handling of the Toyota Corolla. The Advertisement suggests that the Toyota Corolla is so easy and enjoyable to drive, that the Toyota Corolla driver did not want the driving experience to end, and so ignored the satellite navigation even if it humorously repeated directions. By depicting the passenger as being confused with the driver’s deliberate action to ignore the satellite navigation, is not necessarily a reflection of the male gender being a weaker gender, but of the vehicle being so easy and enjoyable to drive, the driver cannot help but take a longer route if necessary, just to keep the driving experience longer.*

*The fact that the passenger is confused (as the driver did enter the directions in the satellite navigation before setting off to travel) is intended to be humorous, especially as most drivers do tend to follow satellite navigation directions.*

*Toyota does not believe that the Advertisement engages in vilification of a particular gender, but simply uses humour to demonstrate the features of the vehicle. The driver and passengers could have been any other combination of genders and relationships, including as the woman as the passenger and the man as the driver in the same scenario depicted in the Advertisement. In fact, the passenger is depicted as super vigilant as he notices that the driver is ignoring the satellite navigation and therefore the antithesis of “weak, stupid or a brainless buffoon”.*

### *2.7 – Clearly Distinguishable Advertising*

*Toyota believes that it is clear to the relevant audience that the Advertisement is commercial in nature.*



*In light of the above, Toyota submits that the Complaint misinterprets the content of the Advertisement and that the Advertisement has not breached the AANA Code. Consequently, Toyota requests that the Complaint be dismissed.*

## **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 concerns that the advertisement portrays young men in a negative light, making them out to be weak, stupid and brainless.

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

The Panel 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 Panel noted Practice Note to Section 2.1 which includes the following definitions:

"Discrimination – unfair or less favourable treatment.

Vilification – humiliates, intimidates, incites hatred, contempt or ridicule."

The Panel noted the advertiser's response that the advertisement is intended to create a humorous situation between a driver and passenger, and that these characters could have been in any combination of genders and relationships.

The Panel noted that the relationship between the man and the woman was not clear, however, as the woman was driving she was shown to be in control of where the vehicle was headed. The Panel noted that the male passenger was seen to be confused by the driver ignoring the directions of the GPS and choosing to go in other directions. The Panel considered that he was portrayed as confused and irritated, however was not depicted in a way which ridiculed or humiliated him.

The Panel considered that the situation depicted was light-hearted and humorous. The Panel noted that the driver was seen to be caught up in the moment of driving, ignoring both the GPS and the passenger, and considered that she was not seen to treat the passenger unfairly or with contempt or ridicule.

Overall the Panel considered that the advertisement did not portray or depict material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of gender and determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.1 of the Code.



Finding that the advertisement did not breach any other Section of the Code, the Panel dismissed the complaint.