



Ad Standards Community Panel
PO Box 5110, Braddon ACT 2612
P (02) 6173 1500 | F (02) 6262 9833

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Ad Standards Limited
ACN 084 452 666

Case Report

1. Case Number :	0291-20
2. Advertiser :	Fiat Chrysler Australia Pty Ltd
3. Product :	Automotive
4. Type of Advertisement/Media :	TV - Free to Air
5. Date of Determination	7-Oct-2020
6. DETERMINATION :	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

AANA Code of Ethics\2.1 Discrimination or Vilification

DESCRIPTION OF ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement opens on an aerial shot of a remote petrol station in Australia. Two men stand in front of a petrol station discussing the new Jeep that has stopped at the petrol station. One man comments "What's a car like that doing in a place like this?". During their conversation they comment on how such a stylish, urban looking vehicle is so far from the city. They are surprised that the driver only popped in for a sandwich and didn't need any vehicle parts, a tune up, or a spare tyre, especially as they are 500km away from the next petrol or service station. One man explains to the other that apparently the driver is covered by the support provided by Jeep. The driver heads off down the dirt road smiling as she grips the wheel.

THE COMPLAINT

Comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:

I believe it deliberately infers that aboriginal and rural and remote people live in undesirable places. It was totally racially offensive and uses exceptionally negative stereotypes. Never put in a complaint before but this was way out of the park and I couldn't let it go.



THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

In terms of the intent behind the Compass TVC, the advertisement is centred around in a subtle manner highlighting that Jeep has recognised that it may have failed its customers over recent years and that it now has mechanisms in place to better support its customers such as capped service plans, roadside assistance and parts repricing on over 17,000 parts. Through this process, FCA Australia is seeking to re-establish trust in the Jeep brand and let customers know that we have listened to their concerns and that we are taking action.

As such, the key message the Compass TVC seeks to generate is to communicate the initiatives that Jeep have committed to in re-establishing consumer trust being:

- *MORE AFFORDABLE PARTS TO REDUCE COST OF OWNERSHIP*
- *CAPPED PRICE SERVICING PLAN*
- *LIFETIME ROADSIDE ASSIST WHEN YOU SERVICE WITH JEEP*

The advertisement depicts the Jeep Compass in a remote area suggesting that Jeep has the confidence to back its new initiatives to support customers even where they are taking their Jeep to remote areas which supports the Jeep passion for freedom, adventure and authenticity and that Jeep vehicle owners have long been known that "Go Anywhere, Do Anything" (although this may have faded a little in the Australian context).

FCA Australia's contention, as supported below, is that the Compass TVC complies with section 2 of the AANA Code substantively but also in spirit and intent, and therefore does not breach the section.

The advertisement seeks to convey that the Jeep Compass is an enjoyable, athletic and exciting vehicle which can "Go Anywhere, Do Anything". Indeed, this is the very point of the advertisement, to convey the sort of feeling that a driver and passenger can expect from driving the new JEEP Compass into remote areas where Jeep customers may not have had the confidence to go based on the lack of customer support previously. The comment "What's a nice car like that doing in a place like this?" is a reflection on Jeep rather than the talent that was used in the Compass TVC who were locals.

Furthermore, the Compass TVC and the specific dialogue 'What's a nice car like that doing in a place like this?' is intended to highlight that the Jeep Compass does not compromise on urban style and legendary capability. Whilst the vehicle's stylish appearance is what you would typically expect to see in an urban environment, its capability (backed by the reliability of the brand) means you have the trust and confidence to "Go Anywhere, Do Anything."



FCA Australia's view is therefore that the Compass TVC does not discriminate or vilify any person or race. The talent who act as the mechanics were cast locally and were enthusiastic to be involved throughout the process. The location itself is not intended to be, nor is it portrayed as an undesirable place, rather a remote location with friendly characters who serve a customer a sandwich and comment on the good looks and capability of their vehicle.

FCA Australia believes that the advertisement in question falls within all the guidelines of the AANA Code and that while we appreciate the complainant's concern we do not feel that the Compass TVC breaches the AANA code and therefore request that the Ad Standards Community Panel accordingly dismiss the complaint.

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 offensive by suggesting that Aboriginal and rural and remote people live in undesirable places.

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 the complainant's concern that the advertisement is offensive towards people that live in rural and remote locations. The Panel noted that where someone lives is not an issue identified under Section 2.1 of the Code and the Panel could not consider this aspect of the complaint.

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

"Discrimination – unfair or less favourable treatment.

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

The Panel noted that the intention of the advertisement is to highlight that Jeep customers can travel anywhere with confidence that the company will support them. The Panel noted that the comment "What's a car like you doing in a place like this?" is intended to convey that Jeep customers in the past may not have been confident about travelling to rural or remote locations because there was limited service/support if they had mechanical problems.



The Panel considered that the advertisement does not suggest that rural or remote places are undesirable, but rather the location depicted in the advertisement is shown as a place with fuel, mechanical services, food and nice people who worry about visitors.

The Panel noted the advertiser's response that the two men shown in the advertisement were local to the area in which the advertisement was filmed, and noted that the advertisement makes no reference to the race of the men. The Panel considered that the Indigenous man in the advertisement is shown as a skilled person who is competent in his role. The Panel noted that the woman in the Jeep is shown to beep her horn to acknowledge the men as she drives away.

The Panel considered that the advertisement did not show the Indigenous man to receive unfair or less favourable treatment because of his race, and did not humiliate, intimidate or incite hatred, contempt or ridicule because of his race.

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 race 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.