



## Case Report

1	Case Number	0311/16
2	Advertiser	Gun World Australia
3	Product	Sport and Leisure
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Billboard
5	Date of Determination	27/07/2016
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

### ISSUES RAISED

- 2.3 - Violence Cruelty to animals
- 2.3 - Violence Violence
- 2.3 - Violence Weapons

### DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This billboard advertisement features background scenery of a deer on the right with the company logo "Gun World Australia" on the left. The middle contains the company logo described as "target with a map of Australia in the middle", and the website address "gunworld.com.au"

### THE COMPLAINT

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

*There is enough violence in the world at the moment. Do we REALLY need to see this HUGE advertisement in the middle of a family oriented suburb? The bullseye target on the Map of Australia is disgusting. No matter how much money is paid for this advertisement, surely, there is something nicer to see???*

*Promoting violence, cruelty to animals and guns. All three of these things I do not think belong on a billboard anywhere really but absolutely not somewhere my children ask what it means at the entrance to our suburb.*

*This is highly inappropriate in the current climate and to my knowledge we DO NOT shoot*

*Deer in Australia. This is highly offensive and needs to be removed immediately.*

## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

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

*Gun World Australia is a licensed firearm dealer based in Hillcrest Queensland. Gun World sells firearms, ammunition, hunting apparel, and other like products for recreational, commercial and government use.*

*We would describe the advertisement as follows:*

*A billboard containing background scenery of a deer on the right with the company logo "Gun World Australia" on the left. The middle contains the company logo described as "target with a map of Australia in the middle", and the website address "gunworld.com.au"*

*We reject that our advertisement has breached any AANA Code of Ethics. For more than 12 years, Gun World's owners have been responsible members of the community and been careful to manage community perceptions of the recreational firearms industry.*

*Our response to each section of the AANA's Code of Ethics is as follows;*

### *2.1 - Discrimination or vilification*

*Our advertisement does not portray any people or depict material that discriminates against any person in the community. Our advertisement consists of a deer scene, our company logo and website address.*

### *2.2 - Exploitative and degrading*

*Our advertisement does not employ any sexual appeal.*

### *2.3 – Violence*

*Our advertisement does not present or portray violence. Gun World strongly rejects the opinion of a vocal minority which claims that it does. There have been suggestions that our logo promotes violence through the implied connotation of linking any sort of firearm to violence. In Queensland the prevailing legislation deals with licensing appropriate people to possess these items. Our company logo consists of a "target with a map of Australia in the middle", this logo was modelled from a 150-year-old firearms manufacturer in Austria - Steyr Mannlicher. The logo's placement is not intended to depict or promote any violence against animals, and has been placed away from the animal in the centre of the advertisement. Gun World fully supports members of the public who hold the appropriate licenses to engage in safe, ethical hunting activities.*

*Contrary to the belief of some, many species of deer are a declared pest animal in Queensland. Under the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001, animals that hold this declaration must be killed in a way "that causes the animal as little pain as is reasonable"*

42(2)(a). *Gun World fully supports the position of this legislation in Queensland and actively promotes ethical hunting practices.*

*There have been numerous government sanctioned feral animal management programs such as the activities undertaken at the Sundown National Park and Sundown Resource Reserve. The integrated pest control program in this park utilises "aerial shooting program for goats and deer in the park" (pg 7, Sundown National Park and Sundown Resources Reserve Management Statement 2013). This activity complies with all legislative requirements including the abovementioned Animal Care and Protection Act 2001.*

#### *2.4 - Sex, sexuality and nudity*

*Our advertisement does not contain any sexual connotations.*

#### *2.5 – Language*

*Our advertisement contains two blocks of words. Our website [gunworld.com.au](http://gunworld.com.au) along the bottom, and our trademarked logo\business name "Gun World Australia". This wording is appropriate for the relevant audience and medium.*

#### *2.6 - Health and Safety*

*Our advertisement does not depict any material contrary to prevailing community standards on health and safety. Gun World treats safety very seriously and works closely with appropriately licensed customers to ensure that high safety standards are maintained.*

*Should you have any questions or we can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.*

### **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 complainants' concerns that the advertisement of a target near a deer's head is promoting shooting of animals, violence and guns, and is offensive.

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

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of 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 Board noted that the image of a target with a picture of Australia is the advertiser's logo. The Board noted the complainants' concerns that the advertisement depicts an animal, so promotes the killing and targeting of animals. The Board considered that the image of a deer near the target may be suggestive of shooting deer when considered alongside the advertiser's product, however, the still image is of itself not a depiction of violence. The Board considered that whilst an inference could be drawn by those viewing the advertisement of the

shooting of a deer, there is no violence portrayed.

The Board noted the advertiser's response that the logo's placement is not intended to depict or promote any violence against animals, and is placed away from the animal in the centre of the advertisement and that they fully support members of the public who hold the appropriate licenses to engage in safe, ethical hunting activities.

The Board acknowledged the complainants' concerns about gun use and considered that whilst many people do not agree with the use of guns and killing of animals, the Board noted that guns are a licensed product and able to be sold. The Board considered that the image used in the advertisement does not glorify the use of guns or violence in the community, and no firearms are shown.

The Board noted that as the advertisement is on a billboard in the public domain it has a broad audience that would include children however, the Board considered that the image does not present or portray violence, is relevant to the advertised product and is not so strong as to be inappropriate for general viewing.

The Board determined that the advertisement 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 complaints.