



Case Report

1	Case Number	0325/11
2	Advertiser	Australian Pork Corporation
3	Product	Food and Beverages
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Radio
5	Date of Determination	14/09/2011
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

2.3 - Sex/sexuality/nudity Treat with sensitivity to relevant audience

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

We hear people talking in a bar and one of the woman asks her friends to look after her boyfriend whilst she goes off for a second. Her friends comment that their relationship appears to be going well and ask him if he has porked her yet. We then hear some eating/dining sound effects and some appreciative noises as the voiceover says, "when you make your spag bol using pork mince, everyone'll want a piece of the action. Ger some pork on your fork."

THE COMPLAINT

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

Given this is a time when children are being taken to school (1) the sexual nature of the ad makes it inappropriate in this timeslot and (2) it is about a male doing something to a female and perpetuates the culture that the sex act is about males doing things to females and not a couple engaging in an act together.

Using filth and sexual innuendo to promote an animal product is degrading to the animal insulting to sex in general and is so far below what is acceptable in advertising.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

The complaint, lodged by an undisclosed complainant on 11 August 2011, refers to Australian Pork's Get Some Pork on Your Fork – Meet the Friends (radio) advertisement.

BACKGROUND

Australian Pork Limited (APL) is a pig producer-funded organisation that undertakes R&D, marketing, and government communication for the industry – things that individual farmers cannot do for themselves.

APL invests between \$2-3 million above-the-line each year to promote fresh pork products, which account for about ten per cent of all fresh meat sales nationwide. We spend a comparable monetary figure on research, retailer collaboration and new product development.

Following recent consumer usage and attitude research in late 2008, APL redeveloped the positioning strategy (target audience and brand proposition) for pork to target 36% of Australians who account for 61% of fresh pork consumption, as the research suggests they are targets who can most effectively be influenced.

THE COMPLAINT

The complaint in your letter refers to Section 2.3 of the AANA Advertising Code of Ethics. This section will be addressed in terms of the Get Some Pork on Your Fork – Meet the Friends (radio) advertisement.

2.3 – Portrayal of sex/sexuality/nudity

Get Some Pork on Your Fork – Meet the Friends (radio) aims to entertain viewers by bringing to life a common situation often experienced between couples and friends. That is, when a new partner must “meet the friends” for the first time, illustrating how innocent misinterpretation can lead to awkward, yet humorous scenarios.

To ensure the misinterpretation between male and female characters is delivered in a respectful, appropriate manner, APL worked closely with Shift (creative agency) during the development process to ensure audio cues were tasteful and non-suggestive. Producing anything contrary would not only turn off APL's target audience (thus rendering the ad counterproductive), but would also detract from the insight which the advertisement was scripted from.

During production, numerous takes of the male character's dialogue were recorded to ensure the final response was one of shock and confusion - not sexual. Without such a response, the advertisement would not effectively convey the nervous tension often experienced by people in new social situations, thus losing its humour appeal.

The reference to “pork” is further clarified by the concluding voiceover which suggests that spaghetti Bolognese made using pork will impress the friends (ultimately what the male character is aiming to achieve).

Finally, it should be noted that the vast majority of people who have heard Get Some Pork on Your Fork – Meet the Friends (radio) have also been exposed to APL's Meet the Friends (television), along with other Australian Pork ads containing similar misinterpretations. An example of this is APL's flagship advertisement Get Some Pork on Your Fork - Script One. Both TV advertisements (Script One and Meet the Friends) have been reviewed by the Advertising Standards Bureau with all suggestions of inappropriateness being successfully dismissed.

I trust the explanation above has provided a more comprehensive understanding of the extensive efforts made by APL to ensure an appropriate and effective advertising campaign, while addressing your concerns.

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 offensive as it includes sexual references.

The Board reviewed the advertisements and noted the advertiser’s response.

The Board considered whether the advertisements were in breach of Section 2.3 of the Code. Section 2.3 of the Code states: “Advertising or Marketing Communications shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and, where appropriate, the relevant programme time zone”.

The Board noted the advertisement features a group of friends talking and suggesting that the male friend should “pork” his girlfriend.

The Board considered that the references to ‘porking’ the girlfriend in the advertisement are mildly sexually suggestive. The Board considered however that the sexual suggestion is unlikely to be understood by children, and that the sexual innuendo would be understood by most in the community as humorous and a play on the meaning of the word ‘pork’ in the context of the advertised product.

The Board acknowledged that some members of the community might be offended by the use of the term ‘pork her’ but considered that it is only mildly sexualized. The Board determined that the advertisement did treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and 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 complaint.

