



**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

<b>1. Case Number :</b>	<b>0361-19</b>
<b>2. Advertiser :</b>	<b>Alice Hospitality Supplies Pty Ltd</b>
<b>3. Product :</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>4. Type of Advertisement/Media :</b>	<b>TV - Free to Air</b>
<b>5. Date of Determination</b>	<b>13-Nov-2019</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 depicts two chefs in a kitchen making sauce, each getting progressively bigger dishes as they appear to challenge each other, until a woman walks past outside and gives them a look with her hand on her hip.

### THE COMPLAINT

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

*I find this advert very disempowering as a woman. I think it is based on an outdated sexist idea that only men are chefs and only women are cleaners and that women's job is to clean up after the more important workers: egotistical men. The thought of a little girl watching this and absorbing the message that her only purpose can be to get pregnant and endure a lower class job is so saddening. I really feel upset every time it comes on.*

### THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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



*I acknowledge receipt of the complaint received by Ad Standards regarding a commercial we produced for Alice Hospitality Supplies. The complaint has been on-forwarded to me by the owner of Alice Hospitality Supplies.*

*I've enclosed an .mp4 of the commercial, together with the script and concept we wrote, as well our most recent CAD Advice and Classification.*

*I am the Production Manager at Imparja Television, where I've held this position for approx 10 years. I'm responsible for overseeing the production of this television commercial, I approved the final version for broadcast.*

*Imparja Television broadcasts throughout regional Australia to all states and territories excepting Western Australia, reaching more than 1 million viewers. The TVC for Alice Hospitality Supplies was produced in 2012 and has been broadcast on a regular schedule throughout our footprint each year since it was produced. This is the first complaint received.*

*As a woman, a professional, a mother, daughter, and more, I've seen nothing but the humour in this TVC and a clever play on the reference to the store where you can purchase 'hospitality supplies' such as saucepans, ladles, and anything you need for cooking and/or cleaning either at home or in the industry.*

*The humour of the concept can be heard in the choice of music and character voice of the voiceover and can be seen in the 'over the top' choice of old reel style footage with 'vintage' characteristics. As a whole, the commercial has an uplifting and comical feel from my perspective.*

*The intention of the commercial was never produced with an intention to offend, neither was it produced with any gender bias in mind.*

*Imparja Television is based in Alice Springs with a population of approx 25, 000 people. Our 'talent pool' is very limited when trying to produce television commercials. Initially the role of the person with the cleaning trolley had no gender identification, as far as we were concerned this role could be either male or female. The sister of one of our staff members agreed to play the 'comical' role. She was 8 months pregnant at the time, and now has two beautiful children. She didn't find the concept offensive and doesn't to this day. I believe both her son and daughter also find humour in the commercial.*

*This aside, the concept wasn't written to focus on her being the cleaner and having to clean up the mess made in the kitchen, it was having a person in the same work environment as the two chefs 'scoffing' at their silly competitive behaviour. The role of one chef is played by the proprietor of Alice Hospitality Supplies and the role of the other chef is played by a former member of my team, editor and sound director for the final commercial. Again, this role potentially could have been male or female, but our talent pool was limited. We thought it all came together quite well, both were of*



*similar height and played the roles well, what more could you ask when producing something of this light-hearted nature.*

*If we're raising concern for this commercial 'disempowering' a woman and it being "based on an outdated sexist idea that only men are chefs and only women are cleaners...." I would draw similar reference to the following two television commercials currently playing on our station and throughout our footprint, as well as throughout metropolitan footprints, particularly during the highly rated program 'The Block' on Channel 9;*

*Mitre 10*

*<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OY7re913uAk>*

*MYER*

*<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XAM5oEti5nU>*

*The Mitre 10 television commercial only makes visual and verbal references to "tradies" being male, Scotty even yells out "G'day boys". There is no representation of female gender in the role of a 'tradie', suggesting only men are tradies. In-fact I only see 3 women in this TVC, all only in the role of consumers at a hardware store. Some might suggest this infers only men are 'tradies'.*

*The MYER television commercial, although featuring one male, significantly implies that shopping is female dominant, and this TVC primarily focuses on women in the fashion and shopping role. The commercial finishes with 3 women lined up and admiring their appearances giving reference to their shopping experience. Some might suggest this infers only women go shopping, and seek the admiration and endorsement of men regarding their appearance and purchases.*

*There are many more examples and references to be made to gender inequality throughout advertising which I'd suggest the complainant might equally take offence to or should, considering the disempowerment felt watching the Alice Hospitality Supplies television commercial. My thoughts would be that like the commercial we produced, other TVC's such as Mitre 10 and MYER were not produced with intent to offend or disempower. These TVC's appear to me to be light-hearted, fun and friendly.*

*I'm more than happy to discuss the complaint further, however I'd suggest if this TVC is found in fault of discrimination, degradation and more, or challenges the Code of Ethics, then the Community Panel needs to consider the precedent set and measure against which other commercials have been and continue to be produced.*

## **THE DETERMINATION**

The Ad Standards Community Panel (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 based on sexist ideas that only men are chefs and women are cleaners, and that it is the woman's job to clean up after men.

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 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 the practice note for this section of the Code states:

"Stereotypes may be used to simplify the process of communication in relation to both the product offered and the intended consumer. As such, advertisements may feature people undertaking gender-stereotypical roles ... or displaying gender stereotypical characteristics... but they should take care to avoid suggesting that stereotypical roles or characteristics are:

- always associated with that gender;
- the only options available to that gender; or
- never carried out or displayed by another gender.

as this may amount to discrimination on the basis of gender."

The Panel considered that it is not clear in the advertisement that the woman is a cleaner, and that she could very easily be another kitchen worker or even the manager.

The Panel considered that the woman looks pointedly at the man who has made the spill, but does not make a move to clean it up.

The Panel considered there is no suggestion in the advertisement that it is the woman's role to clean up after the man, rather it was suggesting that she was frustrated at the behaviour of the men and the mess they were making.

The panel considered that the voice-over mentions cleaning equipment as the woman is walking away and there is no suggestion that she is the one who will be cleaning up the mess.

The Panel noted that it had previously considered a similar issue in case 0377-19, in which:



“The Panel considered that the advertisement did feature some people in gender stereotypical roles, however there was no suggestion in this advertisement that these roles are only associated with this gender, that they are the only options available to those genders, or that they are never carried out or displayed by another gender. 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.”

The Panel acknowledged that there is a gender stereotype that being a chef is a male profession, however there was no suggestion in this advertisement that this role is only associated with males, that this is the only option available to males, or that it is never carried out or displayed by females.

The Panel considered that the woman was not shown to receive unfair or less favourable treatment than the males in the advertisement, and that the woman was not depicted in a way which humiliates, intimidates, incites hatred, contempt or ridicule.

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.