



ADVERTISING
STANDARDS
BOARD

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Case Report

1	Case Number	0363/16
2	Advertiser	Wicked Campers
3	Product	Travel
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Transport
5	Date of Determination	14/09/2016
6	DETERMINATION	Upheled - Not Modified or Discontinued

ISSUES RAISED

- 2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Religion
- 2.4 - Sex/sexuality/nudity S/S/N - general
- 2.5 - Language Inappropriate language

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This transport advertisement features on the side of a yellow-coloured Holden with Victoria plates: ZUQ 886.

On the side panel is an image of Dennis Hopper and the quote, "I ate so much pussy in those days my beard looked like a glazed donut".

On the rear panel it reads, "Rent me! Worldwide. 1800246869. Wickedcampers.com. @I'm a believer!"

THE COMPLAINT

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

The language was highly offensive ("pussy") as was the description of the behaviour. It was spoken by a man (as a quote) and linked this sexual experience with entertainment and made a joke of it for men to laugh at. It was freely visible to all passing motorists, including women and children. The Arabic-looking writing (I don't know what it said or if it was real) was designed, I believe, to link the concept of Islam with this sexual statement in order to shock, and to attract curiosity and attention to wonder what the writing says, and then people would

read the quote. It has nothing whatsoever of relevance to a hire car - it is simply titillation and shock-value and offence, pushing the boundaries to become noticed by people who wish to be seen as defying society's standards of decency and respect for women. It casts women in a powerless light and is negatively suggestive towards Muslims. It is completely gratuitous.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

The advertiser did not provide a response.

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 concern that the advertisement features offensive language with sexual references not appropriate for a broad audience which would include children, and that the Arabic-style writing is offensive to Muslims.

The Board viewed the advertisement and noted the advertiser had not provided a response.

The Board 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 Board noted that this advertisement on a Victorian registered Wicked Campers car features a picture of Dennis Hopper and a quote attributed to him: “I ate so much pussy in those days my beard liked like a glazed donut.”

The Board noted the complainant’s concern that the red symbol on the rear of the Wicked Campers vehicle appears to be Arabic and that to use this style of writing in conjunction with a sexualised message is negative towards Muslims.

The Board noted that the red symbol the complainant is referring to is the ‘at’ symbol and considered that this symbol is part of the common Australian vernacular and is not an Arabic symbol or intended to be representative of any aspect of Islam or the Muslim culture.

The Board considered that the complainant’s interpretation of the ‘at’ symbol in the advertisement is an interpretation unlikely to be shared by the broad community.

The Board 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 their religion and determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.1 of the Code.

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.4 of the Code. Section 2.4 of the Code states: “Advertising or Marketing Communications shall treat sex,

sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience”.

The Board noted it had previously upheld the same slogan on a different vehicle registered in Queensland in case 0549/14 where:

“the Board noted that the word ‘pussy’ is a colloquial reference to a vagina. The Board noted that the quote from Mr Hopper states “I ate so much pussy....my beard looked like a glazed donut.” The Board agreed that the interpretation of this quote is very clear and that the most members of the community would understand that the quote is referring to the oral sexual act performed on a female’s genitalia (cunnilingus)...

...and considered that this reference to a sexual act is not appropriate for the back of a mobile van which would be seen by a broad audience including children.”

Consistent with its previous determination the Board considered that the advertisement’s reference to oral sex does not treat the issue of sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant broad audience which would include children.

The Board determined that the advertisement did breach Section 2.4 of the Code.

The Board then considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.5 of the Code. Section 2.5 of the Code states: “Advertising or Marketing Communications shall only use language which is appropriate in the circumstances (including appropriate for the relevant audience and medium). Strong or obscene language shall be avoided”.

The Board noted that the use of the word ‘pussy’ in relation to a sexual act is a blatant sexual reference not suitable for a broad audience. The Board considered that this amounts to language which is inappropriate in the circumstances.

The Board considered that the advertisement used language which was inappropriate and determined that the advertisement did breach Section 2.5 of the Code.

Finding that the advertisement did breach Sections 2.4 and 2.5 of the Code, the Board upheld the complaint.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE TO DETERMINATION

The advertiser has not provided a response to the Board's determination. The ASB will continue to work with the relevant authorities regarding this issue of non-compliance.

