



Ad Standards Community Panel
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AdStandards.com.au

Advertising Standards Bureau Limited
ACN 084 452 666

Case Report

1	Case Number	0363/18
2	Advertiser	GROW Super
3	Product	Finance/Investment
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Transport
5	Date of Determination	22/08/2018
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

2.5 - Language Inappropriate language

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The transport advertisement appears on the back of a bus and features the text 'too busy to care about your superannuation? Don't be an idiot'. The advertisement features an emoji of a man covering his face with his hand and the business details.

THE COMPLAINT

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

Don't be and Idiot!!

this is not appropriate language to be used on advertising! this is not funny, polite, it is abrupt, un-educated statement which has no taste. It doesnt teach manners or clever thinking!

im sorry -would you like 6year child who just learn how to read said that sentence to you or to teacher? i think this is fundamentally wrong! ifeel this 'Australian so called humour' is a offensive and inapropriate! this should NOT be on public display!

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE





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

GROW Super does not believe that the advertisement under complaint is in breach of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (specifically 2.5 - Language Inappropriate language). The advertisement under complaint was approved by the Outdoor Media Association who follow a Code of Ethics.

GROW Super's intended message is to suggest that ignoring your superannuation is an idiotic thing to do as superannuation is often the single largest personal investment Australians can make to protect themselves from financial hardship in their most vulnerable years of retirement.

GROW Super does not ever intent to upset or offend.

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 concerns that the advertisement uses offensive language and is inappropriate to be seen by children.

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

The Panel 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 Panel noted that this transport advertisement reads "too busy to care about your superannuation? Don't be an idiot".

The Panel noted the complainant's concern that the language is offensive and inappropriate for a child to view.

The Panel considered that the word "idiot" is very mild and in this context is not used in an aggressive or obscene manner.

The Panel noted that "don't be an idiot" in this context is a rephrasing of "don't make a mistake". The Panel considered that this is a common phrase that would be recognised by most members of the community.



The Panel also considered that there is no indication that the word “idiot” is a reference to a person of low intelligence or mental disorder.

The Panel considered that the language used in the advertisement is not inappropriate for a broad audience which may include children and determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.5 of the Code.

Finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on other grounds, the Panel dismissed the complaints.

