



Case Report

1	Case Number	0395/15
2	Advertiser	National Stockyard Systems Pty Ltd
3	Product	Hardware/Machinery
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Print
5	Date of Determination	14/10/2015
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Gender

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This print advertisement for National Stockyard Systems features an image of a field with fences to guide cattle. The descriptive text includes the wording, "This headbail is so innovative, that even a lady or a child can put more than enough pressure on a neck to hold an animal securely."

THE COMPLAINT

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

The ad states "This head bail is so innovative, that even a lady or a child can put more than enough pressure on a neck to hold an animal securely." The implication of this denigrating statement is that all men are superior to women in their strength and ability. It is a stereotype and degrading to women and entirely sexist. How this ad was allowed to be created let alone published in The Land, a subsidiary of Fairfax, is beyond comprehension. The use of the term "lady" is not a justified colloquialism to justify the negative connotation. Regardless of any potential intention the semantics do not deter from the blatant sexism. I am offended by the ad itself but also by the disregard to the guidelines by National Stockyard Systems and The Land. This ad violates s 2.1 of AANA Code of Ethics. There is also systemic discrimination based on gender principles of rural readership.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

This same ad - with minor changes with regard to site numbers at differing field days we attend - has been run extensively in publications over the past 2 years or so. This is the first complaint that I am aware of.

As you can infer from the ad, I am attempting to alert potential customers that this head bail can be operated by people who previously could not catch and hold a large animal, due to their lack of physical strength. The mechanical advantages and safety innovations on this new head bail has resulted in industry awards. Similar if you like that a hoist will now enable a person of limited physical strength to lift a 100kg object off the ground and put it on the back of a ute as the hoist has mechanical advantage.

I did not mean to offend anyone.

Can you please ask the complainant if she would feel vilified if I replaced ".....that even a lady or child...." with ".....that even a petite lady, child, diminutive gentleman....." in future ads.

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 suggests that men are superior to women and is sexist and degrading.

The Board viewed the advertisement and noted the advertiser's 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 print advertisement for a headbail which secures cattle and that the description of the product includes the statement, "This headbail is so innovative that even a lady or a child can put more than enough pressure on a neck to hold an animal securely".

The Board noted the complainant's concern that the advertisement suggests that men are superior to all women.

The Board considered that the suggestion that the advertised product allows women and

children to use a product is not of itself discriminatory or vilifying of women and children as there is no suggestion that not being able to use the product ordinarily is a sign of weakness or means that men are superior, but rather that the difference in physiology between men and women/children means that women and children would be generally less likely to have the same strength as most men.

The Board noted the complainant's concern over the use of the word 'lady' to describe females and considered that this word is not an inappropriate word and in the Board's view is not being used to 'justify the negative connotation' of the advertisement as it is a word often used to describe adult females.

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 gender.

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

Finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on other grounds, the Board dismissed the complaint.