



Case Report

1	Case Number	0395/17
2	Advertiser	Paramount Pictures Australia
3	Product	Entertainment
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV - Free to air
5	Date of Determination	13/09/2017
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

- 2.3 - Violence Causes alarm and distress to Children
- 2.3 - Violence Graphic Depictions

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement promoting the new movie, Mother, opens on a man entering a home and saying hello to the main female character as he removes his hat. Other scenes from the movie follow, including the female character asking the man why he is visiting them, referring to him as a stranger, and then being questioned by other characters as to what she is doing, why she doesn't want kids, and why she is crying. On screen text says the movie is from the director of Black Swan and opens on September 14.

THE COMPLAINT

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

Horror movie displayed at time children are watching.

The film is as yet unclassified, but I am sure when it is classified it will be well above a PG level, however the ad was shown in the 6-7pm timeslot when my child was able to view. I find the content was unsuitable for children and should only be shown past 9pm.

The advertising was quite scary for my children to see at this time of the night.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

I am writing in regards to recent complaints to the Advertising Standards Bureau regarding TV spot placement for recent advertising campaign for the film Mother!

As the Investment Director responsible for planning and booking all media related to this campaign, I can confirm that all TV spots were bought and placed to target a People 25-44 demographic.

Furthermore, I can confirm TV networks in all markets ran all TV spots to comply with the approved Free TV Australia CAD classification.

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 depicts material from a horror movie which is not appropriate for children to view.

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

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.3 of the Code. Section 2.3 states: "Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not present or portray violence unless it is justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised".

The Board noted that this television advertisement promoting a new movie, 'mother!', features scenes from the movie which include a man shouting, a woman screaming, and people looking scared.

The Board noted that the advertisement had been rated PG by CAD. The Board noted that the classification is based on the rating of the content of the advertisement and not the rating of the movie being promoted. The Board noted Free TV's Placement Code (http://www.freetv.com.au/content_common/pg-cad-placement-codes.seo) which provides that PG-rated advertisements: "May be broadcast at any time of the day, except during P and C [Preschool and Children's] programs or adjacent to P or C periods."

The Board noted the complainant had viewed the advertisement at 8.40pm during Survivor, a PG rated program, and considered that the advertisement had been aired appropriately with regards to its classification.

The Board noted it had previously dismissed similar complaints about a PG-rated television advertisement promoting a horror-style movie in case 0427/16 where:

"The Board noted that both versions of the advertisement contain scenes from the Blair Witch

movie and considered that while there is a suggestion of suspense and fear, in the Board's view the actual content does not depict scenes of violence or horror.

The Board acknowledged that some members of the community would prefer that this type of movie not be advertised, especially at times when children can view them, but considered that in the context of a horror movie the actual content of the advertisement is relatively mild.

The Board noted that the rating of the advertisement means it would likely be viewed by children but considered that the content of the advertisement, although suspenseful, was not inappropriate for a broad audience and in the Board's view the content is justifiable in the context of promoting a movie in the horror genre."

The Board noted the content of the current advertisement and considered that whilst the voiceover and the dramatic background music lends a strong element of suspense, in the Board's view the actual content is relatively mild and no actual violence is depicted but rather is alluded to. The Board noted that it is clear from the montage of scenes and the on-screen text announcing that this movie is 'in cinemas September 14' that it is a movie being promoted and considered that consistent with previous determinations for similar advertisements, (0448/14, 0211/15, 0427/16, 0310/16) the images in the advertisement are clearly presented in the context of excerpts from a movie and are not so violent as to be inappropriate for a broad audience which would include supervised children.

The Board determined that the advertisement 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.