



# Case Report

<b>1</b>	<b>Case Number</b>	<b>0396/15</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Advertiser</b>	<b>The Victory Hotel</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Product</b>	<b>Bars/Clubs</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Type of Advertisement / media</b>	<b>Billboard - Mobile</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Date of Determination</b>	<b>28/10/2015</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>DETERMINATION</b>	<b>Dismissed</b>

## ISSUES RAISED

2.5 - Language Inappropriate language

## DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

These billboard advertisements were strapped to the back of two separate walkers. They were headlined with TFIF and then followed with "Thank F&\$@ it's Friday..." and provided information about \$3 sliders and the different types of beer available at the Victory Hotel.

## THE COMPLAINT

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

*Although the advertiser used symbols it was very easy to decipher their intended use of the word fuck. I have children aged nine and eleven who would easily understand this and I am not happy for them to be exposed to this. I observed an elderly couple who read the sign when I did and overheard them discuss their offence to the advertising.*

## THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

*I am writing to you in response to the complaint received by the Advertising Standards Bureau.*

*In response to the complaint the following statements are made.*

1. The advisement does not specifically use swear words. It is a tongue-in-cheek reference to a common phrase used when refereeing to Fridays. TFIF similar to TGIF thank god it's Friday.

2. The Ad does not advertise alcohol pricing at all. It advertises sliders.

3. The ad is targeted at the city office worker looking for a "knock off" drink on a Friday afternoon. The ad boards are on promotion staff that work within a three block radius of the venue in the centre of the CBD in Brisbane and do not go anywhere else that would be around schools etc. The mobile billboards and staff are only out from 2pm – 6pm on Friday afternoons. They have been running for 5 weeks already with only 1 week left in the program. The advertisement will cease by the end of October 2015

The Victory Hotel wishes to fully co-operate with your organisation and look forward to your 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 concerns that the advertisement features the phrase, "Thank F&\$@ it's Friday" and that the suggestion of the word 'fuck' is not appropriate for outdoor display where children can view it.

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

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 this advertisement appears on a sandwich board worn by employees to promote the Victory Hotel and that as these employees are walking around the Brisbane CBD the advertisement would be viewable to a broad audience which would include children.

The Board noted it had previously dismissed a similar complaint regarding a poster advertisement which featured the phrase, "Why F@ck with a Good Thing" (0095/13) where: "The majority of the Board however considered that the reference was not strong or obscene as it merely suggested and did not use the word 'fuck', and that the context of the use of the word was consistent with common language and was not used in a strong or aggressive manner. In the majority of the Board's view, even if the poster is displayed in a variety of road side and store window locations, it is not inappropriate to use this phrase in the context of a reference to a product and in a manner which would be unlikely to be read by young children as a strong word. The majority of the Board considered that the advertisement did not breach section 2.5 on this basis."

In the current advertisement the Board noted that the word 'fuck' is not used in full in the advertisement but rather the last three letters are replaced by symbols. The Board noted the

phrase 'TFI Friday' is part of the common Australian vernacular as meaning 'Thank fuck it's Friday' and considered that the acronym and phrase is unlikely to be quickly understood by children.

The Board noted the results of ASB's 2012 research which suggests that the community are becoming increasingly more aware of and concerned about the use of inappropriate, strong and/or obscene language in advertising that is available to children. The Board noted the complainant's concerns and agreed that there is a genuine community concern about the use of such language. However the Board considered that as the modified word was not used in an aggressive manner, did not depict the word 'fuck', and did not use the word in conjunction with offensive imagery, it did not amount to an inappropriate use of language or language that would be considered strong or obscene.

The Board 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 Board dismissed the complaint.