



Case Report

1	Case Number	0397/13
2	Advertiser	Bonds Industries Ltd
3	Product	Lingerie
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV
5	Date of Determination	27/11/2013
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

2.4 - Sex/sexuality/nudity S/S/N - general

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This commercial shows a group of Bonds clad men, women and kids on a mission to surprise unsuspecting Australians with Christmas joy by singing on their doorsteps. The commercial shows a range of people of all ages dressed in different types of Bonds clothing - from Men in their undies and apparel, to pregnant ladies in maternity clothing, to kids and babies all dressed in Bonds favourites.

A Bonds bus delivers the group to a suburban Australian street, where they peel off in groups to door knock unsuspecting residents and commence signing the song 'Put a little love in your heart' when the front doors are opened.

The finale of the commercial shows all Bonds dressed people come together in front of a lit up Bonds bus with the words HAPPY XMAS from Bonds and the residents from the street joining in on the fun.

THE COMPLAINT

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

Inappropriate images:

1. Grown men in their underwear dancing alongside young children
2. Close up images of men and women in their underwear- zooming in on their genital region.
3. Young children in strangers front yards without adult supervision
4. People singing & dancing in random people's door steps, all very thin & attractive and in their underwear.

I am not a prude or easily offended. I am a 45 years old mother & teacher & this is the first time I felt compelled to voice my complaint. The first reason mentioned about my complaint is the one that's most disturbing and in discussion with friends & relatives I've discussed this commercial with they've all said that they agree that this image is totally wrong. At the very least, the final scene where there is a man in his underwear dancing next to a child and smiling down at them should be edited & removed.

It is inappropriate, disrespectful and casting a negative vibe on a wholesome family celebration like Christmas...Kids are taught in some families about the spirituality of Christmas and this ad promotes something negative.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

We write on behalf of our client, Bonds (Pacific Brands Underwear Group) in response to the complaint reference number 0397/13 specifically relating to the following issue:

2.4 Sex/sexuality/nudity S/S/N

Specifically relating to the concern about the Bonds Christmas commercial airing at an inappropriate time, the program mentioned in this complaint ('Slide Show') aired in primetime on Channel 7 at 8pm on the 6th November has a rating of PG. The Bonds Christmas commercial has a rating of W, hence its acceptable placement within this program as booked by Pacific Brands media agency - Mediacom.

The tone of this commercial is intended to be fun, wholesome and playful with the focus of this advertisement on Bonds spreading the joy of Christmas to all Australians, as demonstrated by a group of Bonds talent who move through a suburban Australian street signing to unsuspecting residents. The talent used in this commercial were deliberately chosen because they represent a cross-section of Australia in terms of healthy looks, body shapes and ages. Some were even street casted rather than being selected from modelling and acting agencies to achieve a more real and authentic output. All were casted specifically because of their playful spirit which together with the fun and playful direction of this commercial aligns directly with the Bonds brand and values. Under no circumstances were any of the talent featured in this commercial retouched or altered to give an unrealistic view of their bodies.

We therefore strongly disagree with the claim that through our Bonds Christmas commercial we are encouraging eating disorders or setting unrealistic body image expectations for young men and women. It was never our intention to produce a commercial which is regarded in this manner. We trust upon receiving the script, commercial, CAD rating and our response that you will agree.

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 complainants' concerns that the advertisement depicts skimpily clad

men and women dancing in a sexualised manner and that it is not appropriate for viewing by children.

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

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 that the advertisement features male and female models of different ages wearing Bonds' underwear and singing.

The Board noted it had dismissed complaints about a similar advertisement for the same advertiser in case reference 0489/12 where it noted that, "it was reasonable for an advertiser to depict its products being modelled in its advertising. The Board noted that in some scenes we see women dancing and considered that the dancing was not sexualised and that the close up of the underwear in these, and in other, scenes was appropriate for an underwear advertisement."

In this instance the Board considered that the overall tone is gentle and innocent rather than sexually suggestive.

The Board noted the complainant's concerns that the scene featuring a man in underwear dancing next to a child is inappropriate. The Board noted that this scene also features lots of other adults and children, all dancing together, and considered that there is no suggestion of any inappropriate behaviour between the man and child or between any other actors in the advertisement.

The Board noted that the advertisement had been rated "W" by CAD and considered that the content of the advertisement was in keeping with the potentially broad viewing audience which could include children.

The Board determined that the advertisement did treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and that it did not breach Section 2.4 of the Code.

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