



ADVERTISING
STANDARDS
BUREAU

Level 2, 97 Northbourne Avenue, Turner ACT 2612
Ph (02) 6173 1500 | Fax (02) 6262 9833
www.adstandards.com.au

ACN 084 452 666

Case Report

1	Case Number	0423/13
2	Advertiser	Renault Australia
3	Product	Vehicle
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV
5	Date of Determination	11/12/2013
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Gender

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

In a Renault dealership, two strangers are both admiring the same car. They both get in the Brown Renault Koleos and accidentally touch hands - instantly they fall in love. There is a montage of scenes as their relationship grows using the Koleos as their mode of transport. The woman is depicted as having taste in food and fashion – whereas the man is depicted as practical and capable: he carries a chair the woman has chosen, he adds a cable TV antenna to a tent. The ad closes on a cliff at sunset where they characters kiss – and their dogs kiss too. A voice-over reads “The new Renault Koleos – Beautiful meets Capable.”

THE COMPLAINT

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

The advertisement is sexist. Ultimately it discriminates against women by saying they are not as capable as men. It discriminates against men by saying they have no concern for aesthetics. It reinforces untrue, inaccurate and unattainable standards that men and women should adhere to in order to be acceptable socially. It says that women's only concern is things being beautiful and they that are not capable. It creates and then reinforces untrue stereotypes about gender. As a woman I find the ad insulting to me and other women.

The ad was incredibly sexist and misogynistic. It inferred that the only reason the woman had to exist was to add aesthetic value and that she needed a man around to take care of practical matters. Even by Australian stereotype standards it was disturbing. Whoever approved this

ad for broadcast needs disciplinary action.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

Thank you for forwarding the customer feedback regarding our recent Koleos commercial. I can assure you we take these comments seriously and would like to explain our advertisement to the Advertising Standards Bureau.

In response to the comments regarding our portrayal of male and female characters, it was not our intention to imply that the "Beautiful" character in the ad is unintelligent or incapable, nor did we intend to portray the "Capable" character as smarter than "Beautiful".

The commercial is designed to be a comical portrayal of two human traits – Beauty and Capability – which act as a metaphor for the diverse nature of the our compact SUV, the Koleos. As a vehicle, the Koleos is both stylish and has exemplary 4WD capabilities which we believe are displayed by the tagline "Beautiful meets Capable".

We believe that this commercial is a satirical, comical portrayal that parodies Australian stereotypes whilst representing our vehicle in a humorous and inventive way. You will notice that we even continue the theme through to their two dogs to ensure that humorous creative concept is clearly demonstrated.

At Renault we take these comments seriously but I trust that this explanation has shed some light on the intention behind the commercial.

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 the advertisement is sexist in its suggestion that woman should be valued for their beauty, whereas men are not concerned by how they look, and that women are not as capable as men.

The Board reviewed 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 the advertisement features a man performing practical tasks for his female partner such as carrying a chair she has chosen to buy, erecting a satellite dish outside a tent whilst she adds a vase of flowers and catching a fish whilst she presents a tray of food she has prepared.

The Board noted that the tagline of the advertisement is "beautiful meets capable" and considered that whilst the man is presented in a manner which suggests he is capable and the woman is presented as providing feminine touches, in the Board's view these depictions are not negative stereotypes but are accurate reflections of the tasks commonly performed by each gender in the situations depicted. The Board noted it had previously dismissed an

advertisement which featured a man and woman behaving in a stereotypical manner (0504/12) where it noted that the couple in the advertisement were depicted as a team. In this instance the Board noted that the advertisement does not suggest that the woman is not capable of performing any of the tasks the man undertakes, and that it does not suggest that the man does not value aesthetics, and that overall this couple is also presented as a team whose tasks complement each other. The Board considered that overall the stereotypes of the gender roles used in the advertisement do not amount to depictions which discriminate or vilify men or women.

The Board noted that the overall tone and theme of the advertisement is intended to be light-hearted and humorous and considered that the advertisement did not depict material that discriminated against or vilified any person or section of the community.

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 complaints.