



Case Report

1	Case Number	0457/15
2	Advertiser	Pacific Brands Holdings Pty Ltd
3	Product	Lingerie
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV - Free to air
5	Date of Determination	25/11/2015
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

- 2.4 - Sex/sexuality/nudity S/S/N - general
- 2.4 - Sex/sexuality/nudity S/S/N - sexualisation of children

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement opens on a suburban house at night. A Christmas tree on the porch flickers with light before a young boy appears and begins to dance, his moves causing Christmas lights that line the house to flick on. With each move, more of the house comes to life – the windows, the door and the roofline.

We then see the side of the house where three Bonds girl are dancing towards camera in undies and apparel. As they come towards us, bushes on either side of their path illuminate with Christmas lights and we see close ups of the new Bonds range the girls are wearing.

The next scene shows two young men take a short run up and break into a sequence of cartwheels. As they do so, the yard and trees come alive with a carpet of light (like a 3d map render) and we see babies wearing tu-tu outfits looking wide-eyed at the acrobatics before them.

The final on screen text reads, “Show your glow”.

THE COMPLAINT

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

My children aged 9 and 13 were present when the ad promoting youth underwear aired. As a parent I feel this highly sexualizes children and believe it is very inappropriate. Please take appropriate responses

The part I find unacceptable and offensive is the teenage girls are wearing two piece underwear sets that are revealing and they are dancing in a sexually suggestive and provocative way. I also feel the way the toddlers are dancing is borderline suggestive. This is completely inappropriate because it portrays children as being people who can be sexualised and that this is normal and acceptable. It is NOT acceptable for children to be portrayed in that way.

The ad sexualises young women. There is an age incremental progression from female toddler to young woman. It is inappropriate to sexualise many of the age groups presented in the advert, in fact it may even be illegal.

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 made against the Bonds Christmas campaign, specifically relating to the following sections of the AANA Code of Ethics: 2.4 - Sex/sexuality/nudity S/S/N - general

On 2 November 2015, the Bonds 'Show your Glow' campaign launched to celebrate the Christmas season and promote Bonds' new range of products available in store and online.

Bonds is an underwear and apparel company, best known for its wide range of products for all ages. The campaign is a celebration of the Christmas season and the bold, bright range of Bonds products.

In regard to the complaint that has been made to the ASB under Complaint Reference Number 0457/15, regarding section 2.4 of the AANA Advertiser Code of Ethics, we take the opportunity to refute the complaint as follows:

In reference to section 2.4 we disagree that the advertisement treats sex, sexuality and nudity without sensitivity to the relevant audience.

The complaint refers to the sexualisation of young women: the women appearing in the advertisement are shown wearing a mix of underwear and apparel reflective of the product range being advertised. Given we are advertising female underwear product to a predominantly female audience, the wardrobe of the female talent are entirely appropriate given the context of the advertisement. We also take this opportunity to refute the inference that women's bodies are inherently sexual.

Bonds advertisements are known for their high energy dance sequences and important to our branded communications. The dance movements are fun and energetic and much consideration and care was given to ensure the choreography is fun, playful and to avoid any possible sexualisation or sexual undertones.

The complainant also insinuates the ad sexualises ‘many of the age groups’ in the ad and complains of showing toddlers to young women in an ‘incremental progression’ of age. The ad celebrates the breadth of the Bonds ‘Show your Glow’ range by featuring adult women, adult men, a young boy and a group of toddlers. As the complaint centres on the sexualisation of women, it bears highlighting that the only females shown in the ad are the female dancers (the youngest of whom is 18 years old and wears sports apparel - crop top and leggings).

All talent have been chosen for their ability to represent aspects of the Bonds Christmas product range and movement, context and wardrobe have been considered with due sensitivity to the audience.

We trust upon viewing the advertisement in question, and our written response, you will agree that the Bonds Show Your Glow campaign does not breach the AANA Advertiser Code of Ethics.

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 sexualises under-age girls and is not appropriate.

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 this television advertisement features men and woman of various ages dancing whilst a camera focuses on the different types and styles of Bonds’ underwear they are wearing.

The Board noted it had previously dismissed complaints about similar television advertisements for the same advertiser in cases 0304/13, 0397/13, 0401/14, 0514/14, 0002/15 and in case 0251/15 where:

“The Board the advertisement features women dancing in their underwear and considered that it was reasonable for an advertiser to depict its products being modelled in its advertising. The Board noted that whilst there were some close-up views of the underwear, the Board considered that these images were to highlight the product rather than the models’ bodies.”

In the current advertisement the Board noted that the actors in the advertisement range between toddlers to young adults. The Board noted the complainant's concern over the ages of the women in the advertisement and that "...it may even be illegal".

The Board considered that the issue of legality falls outside its jurisdiction and its role is to consider whether the advertisement presents children in a sexualised manner. The Board noted that the female models do look young. The Board noted the advertiser's response that apart from the two toddlers, the youngest woman in the advertisement is 18 years old and considered that although the women look young they still look like older teenagers and in the Board's view there is no strong suggestion that these women are underage or trying to appear underage.

The Board noted the style of lingerie the women are wearing and considered it covers their private areas and is not revealing. The Board noted the dancing performed by the women and considered that it is fun and energetic and not sexualised or inappropriate. The Board recognised that some members of the community would find the dancing and clothing inappropriate however in the Board's view most people in the community would consider that regardless of the age of the women in the advertisement their clothing and dancing are not sexualised or inappropriate.

The Board noted that the advertisement also features male models who dance and cartwheel across a garden. The Board noted that their private areas are covered and considered that their movements are not sexualised or inappropriate.

Consistent with its previous determinations the Board considered that the overall tone of the current advertisement is fun and innocent, the dancing is not sexualised and there is no nudity.

The Board noted the advertisement had been rated 'W' by CAD and considered that the content of the advertisement is not inappropriate in the context of the relevant audience which would include children.

The Board determined that the advertisement 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.

