



Case Report

1	Case Number	0469/11
2	Advertiser	National Stroke Foundation
3	Product	Community Awareness
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV
5	Date of Determination	07/12/2011
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

2.2 - Violence Community service advertising

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

A lady begins to have a stroke and the voice-over says: "A stroke spreads like a fire in the brain and the longer it goes undetected the more damage it can do. To spot a stroke, think F.A.S.T."

THE COMPLAINT

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

This advertisement is being played every ad break during Funny Home Videos on Go! TV during the 7 - 7.30 pm time slot.

It depicts a person suffering a stroke - not before and after shots - an actual stroke in progress. As well as that it depicts a person whose head appears to be on fire.

This timeslot happens to be the time my family sits at a table to eat dinner and we often have Funny Home Videos or what-ever crazy game show GO! Typically broadcast at this time.

We find ourselves changing the channel when this ad comes on to avoid our children having to see it.

I realise it's a public awareness campaign but I believe its graphic depictions are just not appropriate for family viewing times.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

The National Stroke Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation that works to stop stroke, save lives and end suffering. A stroke is a medical emergency and it is imperative that everyone can recognise the signs of stroke so immediate action can be taken to save lives and reduce disability. The FAST Campaign is an integral component of our key strategy to raise the awareness of the signs of stroke.

FAST stands for:

- *Face – Can the person smile, has their mouth or eyes drooped?*
- *Arms – Can the person raise both arms?*
- *Speech – Can the person speak clearly and understand what you say?*
- *Time – Act FAST call 000 immediately if they can't do any of these things.*

The 'Fire in the Brain' TV ad is an adaptation of a successful UK campaign of the same name. The advertisement aims to educate people with information on how to recognise the signs of stroke while reinforcing what a stroke is via the use of the fire analogy.

The FAST message has been repeatedly field tested and established by international studies as an effective tool for increasing population awareness of the signs of stroke. In Victoria, where the FAST campaign has been fully funded by the state government since 2007, independent, representative surveys have shown that the proportion of adults aware of two or more signs of stroke has risen from 57% in 2006 to 68% in 2010. Furthermore, the campaign has been associated with increases in calls to ambulance for stroke during this time – potentially saving lives and reducing disability.

The advertisement in the complaint aired on Go! and was a pro-bono community service announcement space provided by the Nine Network in support of the FAST campaign. With limited funding available it is through the generosity of the networks we are able to get the campaign on air with sufficient frequency to achieve our aims.

The FAST 'Fire in the Brain' creative received a P classification. We understand the parameters for this classification are as follows:

Weekdays 0900 - 1630

Weekdays 1900 - 0600

Weekends 1000 - 0600

With the complaint centred around a 7 - 7:30pm timeslot this sits inside classification parameters.

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 concern that the advertisement features graphic depictions which are distressing.

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

The Board noted Section 2.2 of the Code which requires that 'advertising or marketing communications not use violence unless it is appropriate in the context of the advertised product or service.'

The Board noted the advertisement is to raise awareness of the symptoms of a stroke and that it features a lady experiencing the symptoms whilst a voiceover describes what is happening to her.

The Board noted that the images presented in the advertisement were confronting and agreed that the advertisement would be distressing to some viewers particularly those who have been affected by a stroke either personally or through family or friends.

The Board noted the important public health message underlying the images used in the advertisement and that such messages justify impactful advertising. The Board considered that the advertisement did not contain material, graphic images or public health messages that would be in breach of Section 2.2 of the Code.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach section 2.2 of the Code.

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