



Case Report

1	Case Number	0482/14
2	Advertiser	Nupipe Plumbing
3	Product	House Goods Services
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Radio
5	Date of Determination	26/11/2014
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Nationality

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

Two men have a conversation about what had happened with the plumbing. One man has an Irish accent. The voiceover then provides the details of the business Nupipe who should be contacted to solve the problem.

THE COMPLAINT

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

They have a theatrical Irish voice that sounds like he is a simpleton Irishman. the advert is supposed to be aimed at the broader Australian community, selling a plumbing service. I am Irish, I felt offended. The Irish accent doesn't represent a true Irish accent, more of a simpleton accent which lampoons Irish. I have complained to the radio station and to the plumbing company. they disagree with me, but concede the Irish accent is there for light heartedness. I object to Irish people being portrayed as fools.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

Please be aware I have not set out to make the Irish as simpletons as Mr Doyle pointed out. 6PR ask me how would I like the script and I said humorous to catch the attention of the public. The complainant had contacted me and I explained to him I was not trying to belittle anyone. I did also mention to him that I had an Irish back ground through my Mothers side of the Family.

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 a man speaking with what is meant to be an Irish accent but it is offensive and mocks Irish people.

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 this radio advertisement features two men speaking and one of the men has a thick Irish accent and he describes the scenario with his blocked toilet and the need to call NuPipe Plumbing to get it fixed. The voiceover provides the details of the business and their contact phone number.

The Board noted the complainant’s concerns that using an Irish accent in this manner makes the man sound like a simpleton and does not represent a true Irish accent.

The Board considered that the manner in which the accent was delivered and noted that the accent is consistent with an exaggerated and amateur delivery of the accent rather than intentionally trying to mock or discriminate against a person of Irish heritage.

The Board considered that the advertisement was intended to sound humorous and noted the use of jokes to discuss the issue of blocked toilets and the difficulty associated with getting a plumber in to fix the issue.

The Board noted that the advertisement did not poke fun at the man with the Irish accent and that the use of this accent was not mocking or inappropriate.

The Board considered that the advertisement did not portray or depict material in a way which discriminates or vilifies a person on account of their race or nationality.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.1 of the Code.

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 there were many references throughout the advertisement to ‘poo’ and other words that mean excrement. The Board noted that some people may find these references to be in poor taste. The Board considered that overall references did not amount to language that was strong or obscene and 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.

