



Case Report

1	Case Number	0512/14
2	Advertiser	Crawford Productions Pty Ltd
3	Product	Entertainment
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV - Free to air
5	Date of Determination	14/01/2015
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Race

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This advertisement features a series of clips from the TV show 'Acropolis Now'. In one scene the character refers to himself as a 'wog'.

THE COMPLAINT

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

I find the use of the phrase "They call me wog" and the word wog highly offensive. For reference the term wog is an offensive word in Australian slang to represent persons of specific cultural backgrounds and many Australians like myself find it highly racist.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

Your letter addressed to Crawford Productions Pty Ltd regarding the above complaint is acknowledged. Crawford Productions is a wholly owned subsidiary company of WIN Corporation Pty Ltd and I respond on behalf of that company.

The advertisement was for the sale of dvd's of the Series "Acropolis Now" from the

Crawford's library, it was a 30 second advertisement, key number WZNWoo1950 and was cleared for broadcast by CAD, reference number FYMOBEPA and classified "F".

The Series consisted of 63 episodes of Australian comedy produced from 1989 – 1992. It was born out of the stage play titled "Wogs Out of Work" created and performed by Italian, Greek and other 2nd generation immigrants of the time and is part of Australian television production history. The core of the humour at the time of the series production is based on the concept that by 'owning' and using the term 'wog' often and freely amongst themselves, they de-fuse and render the term powerless. The subtlety of the humour of this series in this day and age understandably can be missed. The character who the complainant is quoting is played by George Kapiniaris - himself a proud Greek.

At this time, Crawfords has provided some footage of this Series to the ABC who are currently in production of a documentary about Australian humour in which Nick Giannopolous and Mary Coustas are interviewed and discuss in considerable detail this very issue – the use of the word 'wog'. We have requested a copy of the script of that interview from the ABC, however, we have not been able to obtain it in time to provide your Board's consideration.

In relation to the AANA Advertiser Code of Ethics, section 2.1 – the humour of the Series does not intend to discriminate or vilify persons or sections of the community, the content of the series depicts historically the Australian humour of the time.

Section 2.5 – the advertisement does not use strong and obscene language.

In the event that the Board does not agree, Crawfords will edit the word 'wog' out of the advertisement.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the complaint.

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 uses the word 'wog' which is offensive and racist.

The Board viewed 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 the advertisement features scenes from a television series called 'Acropolis Now' and that in one scene a character refers to himself as a 'wog'.

The Board noted the advertiser's response that the television series was created by and acted in by Greek and Italians and that the use of the term 'wog' was intended to depict the characters as owning that term.

The Board noted the complainant's concerns about racial discrimination but felt that the

advertisement was reminiscent of the style and humour of similar programs such as Fat Pizza and would appeal to the intended target audience.

The Board noted that there was no intentional discrimination along racial lines and that in the context of 'self- referencing,' the use of the term 'Wog' does not amount to discrimination.

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

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 complaint.