



Case Report

1	Case Number	0525/17
2	Advertiser	Sabco
3	Product	House Goods Services
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV - Free to air
5	Date of Determination	22/11/2017
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

2.5 - Language Inappropriate language

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The advertisement shows a person cleaning. Something falls off the table. Voice says FIG JAM. Floor is cleaned and mop is shown being spun dry.

THE COMPLAINT

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

FIG JAM is the accromyn for "F -k I'm good, just ask me. Either it's a 100 to 1 that fig jam was selected to be spilt on the floor or the advertising team thought they would be funny and put Fig Jam in the ad and are laughing thinking not many people now what it stands for. It's OK to say it in your own home but not on national TV

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

Comments in Relation to Complaint: The concept for the TV commercial centres on self-censorship and aligns slice of life mess-moments that occur within the household. In this instance we visualize a number of scenarios that depict a household spills and use voice over

to carry out the self-censorship in line with our “keep it clean” tag line. With regards to the fig spill we actually feature fig jam on the spoon that drops onto the floor and makes a mess (the other mess-moment reference in the commercial is to footprints). It was never the intention of the writers of this commercial to align to anything else, acronym or otherwise.

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board (the “Board”) considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the AANA Advertiser Code of Ethics (the “Code”).

The Board noted the complainant’s concern that inappropriate language was used and broadcast on national television.

The Board viewed the advertisement and noted the advertiser’s response.

The Board 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 the phrase FIG JAM has been used in the advertisement that shows an image of a spoon full of fig jam falling to the floor in conjunction with a voiceover that says "Figjam" followed by images of the floor being clean by a mop then spun dry. The Board also noted the complainant’s observation that the phrase Fig Jam is understood to be an acronym for "F -k I'm good, just ask me.

The Board noted that there is a genuine level of community concern about strong or inappropriate language (Community Perceptions Research, https://adstandards.com.au/sites/default/files/community_perceptions_report_2012.pdf,2012) particularly where children are exposed or included.

The Board accepted that the inference of a word could be considered offensive by some members of the community.

The Board considered that although the word ‘Fig Jam’ had been used and could be interpreted as being an acronym for an obscene word, an actual obscenity is not used and the word ‘Fig Jam’ itself is not strong or obscene.

The Board noted that it had previously dismissed complaints about an advertisement where a word that is ‘beeped out’ (0491/17) where:

The Board considered that although the simultaneous use of images on screen and the words being “beeped out” could be interpreted as an obscene word, an actual obscenity is not used and the term ‘beep’ or an overlay of symbols on a screen in itself is not strong or obscene

Consistent with this previous determination, the majority of the Board noted based on the absence of audible, offensive language the wording used in the advertisement is unlikely to be considered strong or obscene by most members of the community.

The Board considered that the advertisement did not use strong or obscene language and that the term 'Fig Jam' was not inappropriate in this context and determined that the advertisement 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.