



Case Report

1	Case Number	0544/17
2	Advertiser	NT Official
3	Product	Travel
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Promo Material
5	Date of Determination	06/12/2017
6	DETERMINATION	Upheld - Not Modified or Discontinued

ISSUES RAISED

- 2.5 - Language Inappropriate language
- 2.5 - Language Strong or obscene language

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

An advertisement CU in the NT appeared as a sticker on the back of a vehicle.

THE COMPLAINT

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

The word intended to be seen is offensive to me and I feel uncomfortable when travelling with my wife or daughters.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

Advertiser did not provide a response.

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 the advertisement uses language that is offensive and obscene.

The Board viewed the advertisement and noted the advertiser did not provide a 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 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 noted the sticker advertisement featured the text “CU in the NT” written in large lettering with images of animals and the of Northern Territory. The Board noted that the abbreviations ‘C U’ and ‘NT’ are commonly used to replace ‘see you’ and ‘Northern Territory’ and that most people who viewed the advertisement would be aware of this.

The Board considered that the abbreviations may have their own meanings but the advertisement had been clearly designed to highlight letters to form a strong reference to the word ‘cunt’. The Board noted community standards research into language had shown that the community considered the ‘c-word’ to be obscene and not appropriate in advertising in any form.

The Board noted that it had previously upheld complaints about a similar promotion on Facebook for the same advertiser (0515/16) where the advertisement featured the text “CU in the NT” written in large white lettering against a backdrop of Uluru and other NT destinations.

In that case, the Board considered the ‘c-word’ to be obscene and not appropriate in advertising in any form.

Consistent with this previous determination, the Board considered that the wording used in the advertisement would be viewed by a broad audience and used language that is not appropriate in the circumstances including for the relevant audience.

The Board considered that the advertisement did use strong, obscene and language in a manner that is inappropriate particularly given the medium of a car bumper sticker and did breach Section 2.5 of the Code.

Finding that the advertisement did breach Section 2.5 of the Code, the Board upheld the complaint.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE TO DETERMINATION

The advertiser did not provide a response to the determination. The ASB will continue to work with the advertiser and the relevant bodies regarding this matter.

