



# Case Report

<b>1</b>	<b>Case Number</b>	<b>0546/14</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Advertiser</b>	<b>Woolworths Supermarkets</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Product</b>	<b>Retail</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Type of Advertisement / media</b>	<b>TV - Free to air</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Date of Determination</b>	<b>14/01/2015</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>DETERMINATION</b>	<b>Dismissed</b>

## ISSUES RAISED

2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Race

## DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement starts with two animated birds flying and the "cheap cheap" soundtrack is playing in the background. Various shoppers are seen in Woolworths stores picking up items as a voiceover explains that "At Woolworths it's cheap cheap every day". Each shopper picks up a different product and comments on the price being cheap.

## THE COMPLAINT

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

*The man of African decent is the only one to speak differently, not normal, I beleive they used racial stereotypes of African American movie stereotypes to make him speak in a gangster sort of way.*

## THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

*Woolworths does not agree with the suggestion by the complainant regarding racial stereotyping. Casting brief for this commercial was for exuberant people. The talent was not asked to put on any accent, rather be himself and react as he would in real life to the*

*situation. As with all other talent casted in this edit, the talent said the lines in their own voice.*

## **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 depicts a man of African-American descent in a manner which is stereotypical 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 depicts various shoppers at Woolworths commenting on the cheap prices. The voiceover describes the products throughout the advertisement and the individual shoppers comment on how cheap the prices are.

The Board noted that one of the shopper’s is of African-American decent and speaks with a slight accent as he takes some ice-cream from the freezer compartment and says “man, that’s cheap.” The Board noted the advertiser’s response that the actor was not asked to put on an accent or behave in any manner other than his natural behaviour when shopping.

The Board noted that the advertisement depicts many different shoppers and shows couples, individuals, families and both men and women. The Board agreed that the advertisement accurately depicts a diverse group of people and does not focus on a particular individual or section of the community

The Board noted the complainant’s concerns about the man’s accent at the particular part of the advertisement, and considered that the man is not depicted in a way that would be interpreted as racially stereotypical by the broader community. In the Board’s view, the man is represented as being impressed and happy about the cheap price of the ice-cream and his comments and way he speaks reflects this.

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.

