

CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	10/07
2. Advertiser	Queensland Dept of Communities (Violence Prevention Unit)
3. Product	Community Awareness
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Discrimination or vilification Gender - section 2.1
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 13 February 2007
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement features a male voiceover saying regretfully "If only I'd read the warning signs" (woman is seen looking in wardrobe, putting on shoes and picking up purse and car keys) "like controlling what she wore. Telling her where she could go, who she could see. How much she spent". A flashback scene shows her being pushed over by her husband as the voice continues, "Yelling at her. Then I started to hit her." (woman is seen looking in a mirror at her bruised face). "Fear in the eyes of my kids" (scared children are seen observing the parent's altercation). Back in the present the man is seen returning home to find the house empty and realising his family has left him. He relates "Until finally I destroyed everything important to me". Text appears on screen reading "Domestic and family violence. See the signs. Be the solution." The man is seen picking up the phone and telling the person on the other end "I need some help..." Text on screen advises "Freecall Mensline 1800 600 636".

THE COMPLAINT

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

At the end of the ad - the only service offered for counselling is Mensline - there is no support offered for women at all and yet 30% of all Domestic Violence is female initiated (according to the ABS personal Safety Survey).

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the complaint/s regarding this advertisement included the following:

The Queensland Government recognises that both men and women may be affected by domestic and family violence wither as perpetrators or victims. The campaign and advertisement were developed after considering a range of information and research. This included a report (The Cost of Domestic Violence to the Australian Economy) which estimated that in 2002-03 the total number of Australian victims of domestic violence was 408,100 of which 87% were women. It also estimated that the number of perpetrators of domestiv violence was similar to the number of victims and that 98% of perpetrators were male.

As the research suggests, men continue to be the majority of perpetrators of domestic and family violence.

The department also funds Womensline which offers a similar service to women who are affected by domestic and family violence.

The department believes that targeting male perpetrators and men in general has been a

successful strategy and has contributed to the prevention of incidents of domestic and family violence.

While the advertisement targets male perpetrators of domestic violence, it does not unfairly discriminate against or vilify men.

The portrayal of violence is justified with respect to the service offered.

THE DETERMINATION

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

The board viewed the advertisement and considered whether it breached Section 2.1 of the Code dealing with discrimination against gender.

The Board agreed that the advertisement clearly targetted male perpetrators of domestic violence, encouraging them to seek help to prevent violent behaviour. However the Board also agreed that the advertisement did not imply that men were the only perpetrators of domestic violence. Finding that the advertisement did not discriminate on the basis of gender, the Board held 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.