



## CASE REPORT

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|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Complaint reference number | 113/09                       |
| 2. Advertiser                 | iSelect (Tazer Gun)          |
| 3. Product                    | Insurance                    |
| 4. Type of advertisement      | TV                           |
| 5. Nature of complaint        | Violence Other – section 2.2 |
| 6. Date of determination      | Wednesday, 8 April 2009      |
| 7. DETERMINATION              | Dismissed                    |

## DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

A female is reading a letter and proceeds to screw up the letter after reading it. A male is resting on a couch behind her in the background. After crumpling the letter up into a ball she tosses it over her shoulder and it bounces off the man's shoulder. He doesn't react. Why is everyone so lard de fekin da about health insurance going up again and again and again. She is holding a designer shoe and moving it in her hand and gesturing with it as she speaks and then tosses it over her shoulder and we see a cut back as it bounces off his back and again he doesn't react. Female is holding a simulated taser she takes aim into the air and fires the taser at the screen. Voice over says "Shocked by price rises get a second opinion compare funds call 131920 or go to [iselect.com.au](http://iselect.com.au) to compare, select and save."

## THE COMPLAINT

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

*I simply do not agree with the use of a Tazer Gun to prompt the person on the lounge into choosing iSelect. Let alone the throwing of objects at the person. I have called the marketing dept of iSelect to voice my opinion and got the response "it is only a tongue in cheek ad and meant to be funny" There is no tongue in cheek when it come to the use of a Tazer for fun. NSW Police do not have Tazers so why do iSelect think it is OK to produce one to prompt people. I strongly feel that the Tazer should be eliminated from the ad. I do not feel any time slot is appropriate for this to be viewed. The only people to be in charge of these TAZers should be law enforcement officers. So sorry I find this ad NOT FUNNY AT ALL and would like to see the Tazer removed from the screen. Phone contact details provided.*

*As a woman with two sons, I believe in gender equity. I would complain if the advertisement was about a man who was planning to use a tazer on his wife. That sort of violent and sexist behaviour is never acceptable.*

*I object to this ad because it implies that using a stun gun on your partner will get him to do what you want. It promotes violence in other words.*

*A tazer gun is nothing to make fun of and the add should not be shown at all especially during the morning when children are around. Sixty Minutes last Sunday showed how dangerous these guns are and the advertising agents have made a joke of it.*

*I was quite surprised by the woman on the ad being shown to use a tazer gun, as if that was what she'd have to resort to to get the man to wake up about rising health cover rates. I thought it was quite unnecessary to show such a violent thing, even in an ad. It looks like a normal gun shape and I don't think that's good for anyone to see on tv, especially in an ad. Also, she doesn't swear but she says words in place of swear words. I can't remember exactly what she says but swearing is implied. Again that seems unnecessary.*

## THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

*The ad/s **rated PG** use comedy to take hold of the apathy of pricing prices. The intent and positioning of the advertising is a whimsical and humorous message and some low level of simulated violence is used and or implied to illustrate the frustration of apathy of just accepting another price rise. The advertising leverages the catch phrase and visual parody of "shocked by rising prices" particularly Private Health Insurance premiums which affect some 43% of the Australian population and the fact that they have just risen 6.02% for most Australians. The advertising uses comedy, a tongue in cheek approach and simulated low level comical violence to express the frustration and the associated need to do something about rising health insurance premiums.*

## 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 complainants' concerns about the suggested use of a tazer gun and the use of the word 'friggin'.

The Board noted that the advertisement is suggestive of the woman using a taser gun or similar product on her partner. The Board noted that the advertiser states that this is a visual parody of people being 'shocked' by rising prices.

The minority of the Board considered that the advertisement should not depict or imply the use of an illegal product. The majority of the Board determined that the article that was suggested to be a taser gun was not actually used and was clearly a lighthearted, humorous suggestion. The Board considered that the advertisement did not depict or seriously suggest any violence and that it did not breach section 2.2 of the Code.

The Board considered that the term 'friggin' is low level language that is not used in an offensive or violent manner in this advertisement and is not directed at any person. The Board considered that most people in the community would find the use of this term was not offensive, strong or obscene and not in breach of section 2.5 of the Code.

Finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on other grounds, the Board dismissed the complaint.