

CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	129/07
2. Advertiser	Harcourts International Ltd
3. Product	Real Estate
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Health and safety – section 2.6
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 8 May 2007
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement opens on a farmer walking through a field with his dog, when suddenly he floats up into the air and glides over a wire fence where he can survey the countryside. The scene changes to a cityscape where we see a woman in a business suit floating upwards past skyscrapers overlooking the city area. An old man is then seen floating up to join his wife seated in a large tree. In a suburban street, a father raises his little daughter up into the air where she floats until her father rises to join her. The advertisement concludes with a male voice over announcing "Harcourts. For the best view in real estate".

THE COMPLAINT

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

The last scene of the advertisement shows a father throwing his daughter into the air and then he jumps into the air and follows her upwards. From the first time that I saw this advertisement I got the shivers as I have dealt with children abused by parents. (I am working with one at the moment.) I would hate anyone to think they could throw their son or daughter around when out of control. While that is not the purpose of the advertisement, I fear that it might influence some people.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

The complaint that this advertisement depicts or could represent child abuse is outrageous. It is extremely clear that it in no way does this advertisement contravene the AANA Advertiser code of Ethics, and in particular section 2 as implied in the complaint.

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 may depict or condone violence against children. The Board viewed the advertisement and was of the view that the advertisement was very clearly depicting a fantasy situation of people rising into the air to get a better view. The Board considered that the girl was depicted being lifted slowly and gently into the air by her father and was then quickly followed by her father. The Board determined that there was no evidence of throwing in the advertisement. The Board considered that most members of the community would find no suggestion of violence or harm to the girl. The Board determined that the advertisement did not portray violence or a suggestion of violence and did not breach clause 2.2 of the Code.

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