



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	133/04
2. Advertiser	Sony Australia Pty Ltd (Wag)
3. Product	Housegoods/services
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Discrimination or vilification Political belief – section 2.1
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 13 July 2004
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The advertisement depicted a number of different types of people of different races using Sony products and who had a tail attached to their buttocks which was wagging. The tagline is: ‘It’s a Sony.’

THE COMPLAINT

Comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:

“I am concerned about the (probably unintentional) racist aspect this series of advertisements contains.”

“All the actors who have tails are of Afro-Caribbean or Latin American ethnicity and the message could be construed to equate their behaviour to be bestial or less than human.”

“I can only see this as racism, totally unnecessary to the product and highly discriminatory against black people.”

THE ADVERTISER’S RESPONSE

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

“Given it was shot in Brazil, the cast are made up of local Brazilian actors – one African/Latino and one Caucasian/Asian, two Caucasians, and three Caucasian/Latinos.”

“Sony would like to clarify that all featured ‘hero’ actors, that is, the seven actors who form the ‘Sony’ gang or group of friends, have tails.”

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 advertiser’s response that there were Caucasian actors who had tails.

The Board found that the depiction did not contravene the provisions of the Code relating to discrimination (race)/vilification.

Further finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on any other grounds, the Board dismissed the complaint.