



## **CASE REPORT**

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| 1. Complaint reference number | 137/04   |
| 2. Advertiser                 | Volkswagon Group Australia (Bora)  |
| 3. Product                    | Vehicles   |
| 4. Type of advertisement      | TV   |
| 5. Nature of complaint        | Discrimination or vilification Other – section 2.1<br>Violence Other – section 2.2 |
| 6. Date of determination      | Tuesday, 8 June 2004   |
| 7. DETERMINATION              | Dismissed  |

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT**

The advertisement depicts a young man being told by the boss of a company that the company will one day be his. The two men walk across to the window and the boss says he can't think of what would stop the young employee from sitting in the boss's very office. The young man then pushes the boss out of the window and looks down on his VW Bora parked outside. The tagline is "People in a hurry love Volkswagen Bora."

## **THE COMPLAINT**

Comments which the complainant/s made included the following: *"How could you possibly endorse an advert with such appalling social insensitivity?" "... I cannot tell you how offended and concerned I am that an advert for your company which is so successful has such dark and threatening overtones."* *"I'm not without a sense of humour, but this is bad for our collective psyche. Today is the anniversary of the death by a jump from a building – eerily the same as my 15 year old daughter. Our community should not make jokes of this kind of stuff. PLEASE ACT URGENTLY so this doesn't seep into our collective psyche."* *"I find the ad offensive because it treats cold blooded murder as OK if you want something badly enough and VW think their car is worth having badly enough to entice a young guy to murder another person in order to take possession."*

## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the complaint/s included the following: *"We feel the commercial we have produced communicates the position of the car in an interesting and comical way. We feel that generally consumers will see this as comedy and not that the execution of the idea condones, promotes or uses violence as the complaint states. We in no way condone this kind of behaviour."*

## **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 that in the context of prevailing community standards, the majority of people would find this advertisement humorous rather than offensive.

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

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