



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	14/98
2. Advertiser	Hallas Trading Co. Pty Ltd (Ella Bache)
3. Product	Toiletries
4. Type of advertisement	Print
5. Nature of complaint	Discrimination or vilification Other – section 2.1
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 10 March 1998
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

THE COMPLAINT

Comments which the complainant made regarding the advertisement included the following:

‘This ad is offensive to me as a person of certain racial characteristics, suggesting they are inferior. It is insensitive and irresponsible, treating an emotionally charged issue at a time of attempted reconciliation with levity and contempt; and it purveys a divisive message in respect to race.’

‘I would propose that if the words “black” and “fair” be substituted for “white” and “bronze” then there would be no question of its offensiveness and unsuitability.’

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board (‘the Board’) considered whether this advertisement breached Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics. In particular, the Board considered paragraph 2.1 of the Code.

2.1 Advertisements should not portray people in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, age, sexual preference, religion, disability or political belief.

The Board was of the opinion that this advertisement did not breach Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics and accordingly dismissed this complaint.

Members of the Board noted in passing that the advertisement was tongue-in-cheek and was a clever play on the anachronistic ‘White Australia’ policy.

Members of the Board also noted in passing that, contrary to undermining the spirit of reconciliation, the advertisement, albeit humorously, actually supported the concept.