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# CASE REPORT

| 1. | Complaint reference number | 15/01  |
|----|----------------------------|--|
| 2. | Advertiser                 | AAPT Ltd (Mates)                                   |
| 3. | Product                    | Telecommunications                                 |
| 4. | Type of advertisement      | TV   |
| 5. | Nature of complaint        | Discrimination or vilification Other – section 2.1 |
|    |                            | Other - Miscellaneous                              |
| 6. | Date of determination      | Tuesday, 13 February 2001                          |
| 7. | DETERMINATION              | Dismissed  |

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENTS**

1. 'Chinese': A (Chinese) man sits at a kitchen table reading a (Chinese) newspaper and his mobile telephone rings. A woman's voice, speaking in a foreign language, is heard off-screen. He answers in non-English and the action moves to his (Chinese) male caller who says, 'Mate'. The first man responds likewise and the camera moves between the two. (Text) 'Mate', says his caller again, then a woman enters the kitchen, mutters (in Chinese) as she takes the phone and says, 'Mate'. The first man grimaces.

2. 'Old Ladies': An elderly woman sits knitting in an armchair in a lounge and her telephone rings. In refined tones she answers, 'Hello', her caller says, 'Mate', she responds likewise and the action moves between the two. (Text) 'Mate', says her caller again, before the camera moves back to the first woman who says, again in a genteel accent, 'Hold on, dear, I have another call. Hello.' A third woman says, 'Mate'.

3. 'The Bishop': An elderly clergyman sits reading in an armchair in a study as a telephone rings. A woman enters the room and says, 'Excuse me, vicar. It's the bishop on the phone – from Sydney.' 'Right, thank you', he responds. She leaves the room and listens behind the door. The vicar picks up the phone and says, 'Mate', and the startled woman jumps backward. (Text) The vicar is seen concluding his 'a-a-a-ate'.

4. 'Kids': The advertisement begins with a shot of the hall of a house where a telephone is ringing. A little girl carrying a doll picks up the phone and says, 'Hello'. 'Mate', says the caller, a second little girl, to whom the first responds likewise. (Text) The first little girl puts her doll to the telephone mouthpiece, saying 'Mate' in a baby voice.

.../2

#### THE COMPLAINT

Comments which the complainants made regarding these advertisements included the following:

#### Complaint reference number 15/01 Page 2

'The depiction of people screaming over the phone to each other in a blabbering idiotic manner are (sic) most degrading to the categories of people shown in the advertisement – ie elderly women, clergy, migrants, children.'

'It is not only annoying and offensive, but also demeaning to older Australians.'

'This advertising material is puerile, tasteless, offensive to the eye and the ear, a shocking example to young Australians and a massive desecration of the ideal of Australian mateship.'

'I find them most offensive as they make all Australians look like idiots and that this is the way we answer and talk on our phone (sic).'

'It is extremely loud, irritating and rude – an example of very bad behaviour which even uses children. What a bad example to our children!'

'..... such an add' (sic) plays into the hands of those people who take pleasure in making nuisance phone calls .....'

'It is an insult to anyone's intelligence to expect him or her to listen to such a ridiculous and unpleasant noise. ..... Surely this type of advertisement cannot be deemed suitable to inflict on the viewing public.'

### THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board ('the Board') considered whether these advertisements breach Section 2 of the AANA Advertiser Code of Ethics ('the Code').

The Board, while appreciating the points of view expressed by some complainants that the advertisements were discordant, felt that the material within them neither constituted discrimination or vilification nor contravened prevailing community standards. The Board determined that the advertisements did not breach the Code on these or any other grounds and, accordingly, dismissed the complaint.