



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	158/02
2. Advertiser	World Society for the Protection of Animals
3. Product	Education
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Violence Other – section 2.2
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 9 July 2002
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The advertising material referred to the Board opens on scenes of a captive polar bear engaged in repetitive movement as an announcer says: “This bear has been driven mad. Driven mad by its barren environment, and driven mad by entertaining tourists.” As the scene changes to one where another bear is being led by a chain, and then to one where bears are being set free, the announcer says: “You can help set them free with WSPA, the World Society for the Protection of Animals.” As another chained bear is shown dancing to the sound of a tambourine, the announcer continues: “Join the animal rescue team. We’ve help stop bear dancing in Greece and Turkey .” As vision appears of a bear behind bars, and another chained and muzzled, the voice-over continues: “We’ve helped stop bear baiting in Pakistan , but there’s more illegal cruelty and more to do for more animals. And we need your support.” As the vision returns to the bear repetitive pounding its paws, the announcer concludes: “Please call today. Join the Animal Rescue Team. It’s less than a dollar a day. A dollar a day. A dollar a day.”

THE COMPLAINT

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

“There was no warning before this ad was shown, so I was completely unaware of what was coming. It was the same as if someone sneaked into my lounge room and stabbed me. The damage done to me is not physical thought, it is mental.”

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board (‘the Board’) considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (‘the Code’).

The Board shared the complainant’s view that some scenes within this advertisement were disturbing.

Noting advice from the advertiser that while the television commercial had received a G classification, the complainant’s point had been recorded, the Board determined that the content of the advertisement did not contravene the provisions of the Code relating to the portrayal of violence.

It further determined that the advertisement did not breach any other provision of the Code, and therefore dismissed the complaint.