



CASE REPORT

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| 1. Complaint reference number | 166/98 |
| 2. Advertiser | Warner Lambert Consumer Healthcare Pty Ltd (Listerine) |
| 3. Product | Toiletries |
| 4. Type of advertisement | TV |
| 5. Nature of complaint | Health and safety – section 2.6 |
| 6. Date of determination | Tuesday, 13 October 1998 |
| 7. DETERMINATION | Dismissed |

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The Board viewed three advertisements in the series. In all three advertisements, the central character stands at the bathroom mirror and demonstrates the effectiveness of Listerine mouthwash. The graphics and imagery used creates the impression that having swilled the Listerine an ‘explosion’ or ‘assault’ is imposed on the germs inside the mouth. In one advertisement, tiny sticks of what appear to be dynamite seem to be smouldering between teeth. The graphics also create the impression that the subject’s mouth’s are being ‘punched’ or ‘knocked about’. The advertisements all end with the words, ‘Listerine, its dynamite against germs’ superimposed on the screen together with a voiceover to the same effect.

THE COMPLAINT

Comments the complainant made about the advertisement included:

‘I find the Listerine advertisement particularly offensive, with grown men and women puffing out their cheeks and spraying germs everywhere. How do we explain to our kids that this perfectly acceptable behaviour?’

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 determined that the advertisement did not depict material contrary to prevailing community standards on health and safety and did not breach the Code. The Board dismissed the complaint.