



CASE REPORT

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Complaint reference number | 171/06 |
| 2. Advertiser | IAG Insurance (SGIO) |
| 3. Product | Insurance |
| 4. Type of advertisement | TV |
| 5. Nature of complaint | Health and safety – section 2.6 |
| 6. Date of determination | Tuesday, 9 May 2006 |
| 7. DETERMINATION | Dismissed |

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement is set in a suburban kitchen where a man speaks to the camera as his wife smiles knowingly in the background. The man tells us “Well, I like fixing things...Fixed the radio...and the toaster...” We then see in flashback various other scenarios when he has fixed home appliances – a washing machine sprays water all over the laundry, as he listens to taking instructions from his wife, who is passing on what the insurance agent is advising her over the phone. The shot then returns to the present day kitchen while he relates “The washing machine was a bit of a challenge.....so Bev called the SGIO Helpline...” as his wife emphasises “Again!” We return to the laundry flashback to see an SGIO Helpline Operator giving instructions over the phone as to how to stop the water spraying from the washing machine. Back in present day, Bev pours water into a cup for tea, but the plastic cover falls into the cup, and she smiles indulgently at her husband. Text on screen reads “SGIO. We can’t help but help”.

THE COMPLAINT

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

The advertisement displays a husband performing his own repairs on a number of electrical appliances. As a qualified electrician I am fully aware of how dangerous and illegal this practice is. By rights SGIO should be telling him to get the items repaired by a qualified licenced (sic) Tradesman. Instead they are endorsing the attitude of anyone can play with high voltage appliances by themselves.

THE ADVERTISER’S RESPONSE

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the complaint/s regarding this advertisement included the following:

It was not our intention to recommend or portray any unsafe “do-it-yourself” practices.

Our intention...is to use a humorous situation to convey in an entertaining way the benefits offered through out Helpline.

We were very careful not to portray situations where the customer has repaired and electrical components he has referred to.

When he refers to the toaster, we have a shot of the toaster showing a cosmetic repair which has been made to the outside of the toaster, clearly not impacting the toaster electric. At the end of the ad the part of the spout falls off the kettle...implies that our “do-it-yourselfer” has tried unsuccessfully to repair the spout which is completely unrelated to the electrical components of the kettle.

When our customer is dealing with water spraying at the back of the washing machine...they are clearly dealing with a plumbing problem. Once again there is no electrical reference.

We are very conscious of not promoting unsafe or dangerous practices...

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board (“Board”) considered whether this advertisement breaches section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the “Code”). In particular, the Board considered whether this advertisement breached section 2.6 of the Code in presenting material contrary to prevailing community standards on health and safety.

The Board noted the complainant’s view that the advertiser was endorsing the attitude that anyone can play with high voltage appliances by themselves. The Board however disagreed with this analysis of the advertisement and noted that in the context of the advertisement as a whole, performing your own repairs to electrical appliances was not something that a viewer would consider advisable or recommended after seeing the advertisement.

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