



## **CASE REPORT**

1. Complaint reference number	186/05
2. Advertiser	Telstra Corporation Ltd (Bigpond.com)
3. Product	Telecommunications
4. Type of advertisement	Print
5. Nature of complaint	Discrimination or vilification Gender - section 2.1 Discrimination or vilification Other – section 2.1 Violence Other – section 2.2
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 12 July 2005
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT**

This print advertisement depicts a young man wearing an AFL jersey jumping on the back of an elderly woman in a shopping market to gain access to products on higher shelves. The words: “*AFL Your Religion?*” appear in black, bold text against a white background at the top of the advertisement.

## **THE COMPLAINT**

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

*“This advertisement is tasteless and offensive, and encourages hooliganism and violence against innocent people in environments that should be safe.”*

*“The advertisement is ageist and sexist and displays elements of young male aggression and violence. The consequences of the male action depicted could only be disastrous to the female represented, as his descent from the top row of Sorbent products could only result in serious injury to the female victim below.”*

*“It is clearly irresponsible to encourage an ethos of football hooliganism in places such as supermarkets, where a culture of regard and courtesy for other customers should prevail in a civilized society.”*

*“The advertisement clearly intends to promote violence against women and older people.”*

## **THE ADVERTISER’S RESPONSE**

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

*“Based on our customer research to date, this broadband content is suited to an audience of hardcore AFL fans... The proposition that was developed for this campaign based on the product and the defined customer segment was “fanatical immersion 24/7”.*

*“The print concepts... were developed based on this premise. Our intent was to communicate this immersion in everyday situations.”*

## **THE DETERMINATION**

The Advertising Standards Board (“Board”) considered whether this advertisement breaches section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the “Code”).

The Board noted that the image displayed was one of fantasy and used humour to portray a fan’s

obsession with his sport. The Board considered that the use of humour in the advertisement would clearly indicate to consumers that the image was not meant to be taken literally. The Board determined that the image does not condone or promote violence against people on the grounds of their age or sex.

The Board was of the view that in the context of prevailing community standards the majority of people would find this advertisement humorous rather than offensive.

The Board found that the depiction did not contravene the provisions of the Code relating to the portrayal of people (age/sex) nor did it contravene the provisions of the Code relating to violence.

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