

CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	202/05
2. Advertiser	Nissan Motor Co (Aust) Pty Ltd (Pathfinder)
3. Product	Vehicles
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Discrimination or vilification Other – section 2.1
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 9 August 2005
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The opening scene in this television advertisement depicts a Nissan Pathfinder travelling along a dirt track in a forest setting. A close-up shot reveals that the occupants of the car include a family of four (a mother who is driving, a father in the front passenger seat and two children in the back seat). The voiceover states “Just what is the modern day family? Is it the perfect nuclear family?”. At this point, the vehicle comes to a stop along the dirt track. The father in the passenger seat is shown to be ejected from the vehicle. The voiceover states: “The single parent family?”

The Pathfinder continues down the dirt track transporting different types of “family” including one with many children, one with no children, and finally a couple with their dogs. The voiceover states: “The all new adaptable seven seat Pathfinder... for the modern day family. Whatever that is.” The Nissan logo then appears.

THE COMPLAINT

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

“... there is one shot of a couple with kids, then it asks: “Single family?” and the dad gets evicted from the car. This is offensive because it is reinforcing the stereotype that of course a single family means that the father is the loser, he has lost his wife and kids. Unfortunately this happens in the majority of cases, but there are many people who are working very hard to try to overcome this stereotype, and giving support to men who have quite unfairly found themselves in this situation. It does not help when Nissan make light of it and treat it as a common, to be expected occurrence, which is a normal part of life and therefore should be laughed at...”

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

“... Nissan is not seeking to make fun of any of the situations depicted in the commercial – all that it is trying to do is to assert its claim that the new Pathfinder suits the Australian family – whatever the make-up of that family is...”

THE DETERMINATION

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

The Board considered that in the context of prevailing community standards the majority of people would not find this advertisement offensive.

The Board was of the view that the depiction of the father being ejected from the vehicle did not amount to that person being treated in a derogatory or demeaning way. The Board considered that the advertiser was not passing a comment on the situation or on the characteristics of the father.

The Board found that the depiction did not breach the provisions of the Code relating to the portrayal of people.

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