



## **CASE REPORT**

1. Complaint reference number	203/07
2. Advertiser	Coca-Cola South Pacific Pty Ltd (Coke/Zero)
3. Product	Food & Beverages
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Health and safety – section 2.6
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 10 July 2007
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT**

This television advertisement features mirror images of various young men and women, and of bottles of Coke and Coke Zero from which they drink. As they drink and the fizz hits their throats they react with widening eyes, hair standing on end, and erratic movements, dancing as if in shock. As they act ecstatically, the advertisement ends with bottles of Coke and Coke Zero and the words "Two great hits. One great taste."

## **THE COMPLAINT**

A sample of comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:

*The ad shows young people imbibing coca-cola drinks from the bottle and then suddenly becoming alarmingly hyperactive. The drink does contain caffeine but the result in the ad suggests more the action of amphetamines.*

*The advertisement implies that drinking the product will produce a sudden near psychedelic effect. Its images seem schizophrenic. The punch line message of "hits" is synonymous with drug use.*

## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

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

*The creative focuses on the experience of drinking Coca-Cola, using bold and dynamic red, black and white imagery and 'sounds' of consumption from the opening of the bottle to the noises of enjoyment of the product. The commercial celebrates the thing consumers have loved about Coca-Cola for 120 years and Coca-Cola Zero for just over a year – the unique taste.*

*The tag line at the end of the TVC is "Two great hits, one great taste", which communicates to consumers that there are two products – one with sugar, one without – which both deliver the same great taste.*

*There is no intention that the advertisement communicates the negatives related to a 'psychedelic' or 'schizophrenic' experience. There is also no intention to make reference to drug use. Rather the word 'hit' is about the emotional uplift delivered by the product.*

*With all our advertising we are careful to ensure that the communication and visuals are appropriate for the target audience and do not cause offense.*

*I submit that the content of this commercial does not breach of the Code of Ethics.*

## **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 the complainants' concern that the advertisement suggests that drinking Coca Cola will produce a drug like effect. The Board viewed the advertisement. The Board did not agree with the complainants and considered that the advertisement indicates a feel good effect of drinking two types of Coca Cola which most consumers would realise is related to the sugar or caffeine content of the product, or, as the advertiser would prefer, the taste of the product. The Board considered that there were no drug references or endorsement of drug taking in the advertisement.

Finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on any grounds, the Board dismissed the complaint.