



CASE REPORT

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 1. Complaint reference number | 221/06 |
| 2. Advertiser | Ford Motor Co Aust Ltd (Falcon ute - magnet) |
| 3. Product | Vehicles |
| 4. Type of advertisement | TV |
| 5. Nature of complaint | Discrimination or vilification Gender - section 2.1 |
| 6. Date of determination | Tuesday, 13 June 2006 |
| 7. DETERMINATION | Dismissed |

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement (Following on the theme of previous Ute commercials) opens on a Falcon Ute with two men driving into a country town and past a truck stop. As the Ute drives by we see a close-up of the “Magnet” decal. Inside the café a Golden Retriever wakes, walks outside and begins trailing the Ute. A Blue Heeler holding a hose in its mouth, washing a semi-trailer, also becomes mesmerized by the Ute and follows it. Various other breeds leave homes and buildings to follow the car, including an Alsatian belonging to the “Police Dog Squad”. Seeing the trail of dogs following the Ute, the passenger says: “It’s funny how the dogs always go for you mate”.

THE COMPLAINT

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

I can hear average men Australia wide chuckling at the innuendo, too stupid to realise the sad irony that most of them will have to pay for sex. It is a pity that the prairie dogs that inhabit overcrowded workstations in the bowels of the advertising machine are sufficiently devoid of the intelligence to realize, that not only are they overtly sexist towards women, but they are also doing men a great disservice as women’s opinions of men in general takes a turn for the worse.

THE ADVERTISER’S RESPONSE

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

The Ford Falcon XR Magnet Ute TVC is based on the hugely successful “unbelievable” tag line that has been used to promote the Falcon Ute brand since 1999.

Our objective was to bring to our target customers’ attention the availability of the Ute, whilst at the same time demonstrating...the “unbelievable pulling power” theme.

This commercial was designed to be humorous in its own right, with no dependence on the previous commercial.

Utes and dogs are synonymous with each other, on worksites, farms and in everyday life. Dogs are often considered “man’s best friend” so it should not be unreasonable to feature dogs in a Ute Advertisement.

The comment “It’s funny how the dogs always go for you” is a direct reference to the fact that canines are following the vehicle. The unbelievable number of dogs following the Ute is the reason the man has a dig at his mate, suggesting it is him they are attracted to, not the Ute.

We are not making any direct comparison or parallel between women and dogs.

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 advertiser had had two earlier advertisements that employed a similar theme. In one of the earlier advertisements the advertiser portrayed young, attractive women following the Ute. In the second advertisement the advertisement portrayed dogs following the Ute.

In relation to the previous dog advertisement, the Board determined that the advertisement was capable of and did, in fact, stand on its own. The Board was of the opinion that the advertisement did not portray people or depict material in a way that discriminates against or vilifies a person on account of their sex.

The Board considered that the current advertisement was a minor variation on the earlier ‘dog’ advertisement, and was further removed from any innuendo about women. The Board considered that the advertisement did not discriminate against or vilify women.

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