



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	223/09
2. Advertiser	Wicked Campers
3. Product	Travel
4. Type of advertisement	Transport
5. Nature of complaint	Discrimination or vilification Nationality – section 2.1 Portrayal of sex/sexuality/nudity – section 2.3 Health and safety – section 2.6
6. Date of determination	Wednesday, 10 June 2009
7. DETERMINATION	Upheld – discontinued or modified

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This is a print brochure promoting Wicked Campers. On the left hand side of the brochure is a photograph of two kangaroos copulating. The picture is framed by the heading “TRAVEL AUSTRALIA ON THE CHEAP” and below the image “When you leave Broome, make sure you’re in a Wicked Camper.”

The right hand side of the Brochure is headed “PUT THIS ON YOUR LIST OF THINGS TO DO.” “A ROAD TRIP IN A WICKED CAMPER. WHY? 1. Fit into the Aussie culture. 2. Meet shitloads of people. 3. Guaranteed lowest price (boring but important). 1800 246 869.”

On the bottom third of this side a number of other reasons are listed in smaller writing.

“Other reasons: Waking up at the beach having uninterrupted sex every morning, all night parties, loads of room for goon bags, get pissed on by a koala, box a kangaroo, kill your dinner with a boomerang, eat roadkill, free fuel (siphon hose not included), massages with happy endings, free camping at Wolf Creek, romantic alfresco dining, deep and meaningful conversations, snog an aboriginal, score a speeding ticket you never have to pay....plus you can get shit-faced all the time while never missing a sunset!”

THE COMPLAINT

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

It's promoting anti-social behaviour amongst young vulnerable people. It spoils the image of Australia and our culture and the values we've strived to promote.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

We do not believe for one minute that this ‘advert’ is promoting anti-social behaviour, it’s simply encouraging young travellers to make the most of their stay in Australia and support local Australian businesses financially by spending there money on all of the cool things to do while in Australia. I have no doubts whatsoever that any youths would take the wording seriously and it is quite naïve and seemingly petulant of the complainant to think along those lines.

In relation to the quote, ‘snog an aboriginal,’ I am not sure how this can be considered as racist or the vilification of a race at all. Is the complainant saying that they wouldn’t snog an Aboriginal? Why not? Surely that is racist in itself and the vilification of a race?!

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 image of kangaroos and that it has previously considered this image in case number 36/09. In respect of that image the Board has stated that "The Board noted the complainants' concerns about the depiction of two kangaroos mating and the crass nature of some of the accompanying text...The Board considered the photograph of animals mating was not contrary to Section 2.3 of the Code, relating to sex, sexuality and nudity.'

The Board considered the advertisement before it and again determined that the image of the kangaroos was not in breach of the Code.

The Board also noted that the advertisement contained some strong language, in particular 'shit-faced' and 'shit-loads'. Some members of the Board expressed concern that this terminology was inappropriate however the majority of the Board considered that this language, in the context of this advertisement, was not strong or obscene language and did not amount to a breach of Section 2.5 of the Code, relating to language.

The Board noted that the advertisement contained a number of sexually suggestive references but that considering the likely audience of this advertisement, these references were not inappropriate or in breach of section 2.3 of the Code.

The Board also noted the references in the advertisement to not paying speeding tickets, stealing petrol and suggestions of excessive alcohol consumption, and considered that these references were not appropriate as they suggested and encouraged activities that would be considered to be in breach of prevailing community standards of health and safety, specifically speeding and excessive alcohol consumption. On this basis the Board determined that the advertisement breached section 2.6 of the Code. Finding that the advertisement breached the Code, the Board upheld the complaints.

ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE TO THE DETERMINATION

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the determination regarding this advertisement included the following:

This was a one-off print and will not be repeated in any state.