



## CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	226/09
2. Advertiser	Wicked Campers
3. Product	Travel
4. Type of advertisement	Transport
5. Nature of complaint	Discrimination or vilification Age - Section 2.1
6. Date of determination	Wednesday, 10 June 2009
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

## DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The signage on the back of this Wicked Camper Van reads “The best thing about Alzheimer's is that you get to meet new and exciting people every day.” The signage on the passenger side reads “THE SUCCESS OF AGING AT AGE 4 NOT PEEING YOUR PANTS, AT AGE 10 MAKING YOUR OWN MEALS, AT AGE 12 HAVING FRIENDS, AT AGE 18 HAVING A DRIVERS LICENCE, AT AGE 20 HAVING SEX, AT AGE 35 HAVING MONEY.” The signage on the driver's side says “THE SUCCESS OF AGING AT AGE 50 HAVING MONEY, AT AGE 60 HAVING SEX, AT AGE 70 HAVING A DRIVERS LICENCE, AT AGE 80 MAKING YOUR OWN MEALS, AT AGE 85 NOT PEEING YOUR PANTS”.

## THE COMPLAINT

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

*It's disrespectful to those of all ages especially the elderly who have worked hard for this country, fought in wars, to be only ridiculed for their age and disability. We need more respect for those with mental illness, we need to be educated as a community and this ad undermines that process by making fun of a very sad and disabling condition. We all deserve better than to be influenced by these sayings.*

## THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

*Wicked Campers does not believe that any offence should be taken, nor is any offence intended concerning the success of ageing van. Life is short and can be cruel. When we come into this world kicking and screaming and urinating, our parents look after us and nurture us and when they are old and frail and urinating, it is our turn to look after them. Sadly, these are just facts of life. We don't believe that it is offensive to suggest that people aged 35 want money as it is often the case and it is not suggesting they are greedy or want to be filthy rich, they would just like to be able to live comfortably on their yearly earnings. If the complainant doesn't think that 18 year olds would want to have a driver's license and the freedom that comes with having a driver's license, then that is up to them but to not think that young people think about having sex at age 20 and even age 60 is just completely naïve. I suggest that it is offensive on the complainant's part to suggest that a 60 year old wouldn't want to be still having sex at that age, why not? Sex isn't always just sex and they could've been married for 30 or more years!*

*Clearly the complainant has taken offence to this van and Wicked apologises for this but will eagerly await the board's decision. The Board will we're sure make the right decision as to whether the subject on this van is offensive or NOT.*

## **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 complainant's concerns about the references to older people.

The Board noted the text on the side of the van which makes various comments about the benefits of ageing. The Board considered that none of the individual statements in this text were offensive or inappropriate. The Board considered that this text is quite a well known joke format that makes fun of some of things that happen to people at various ages in their lives. The Board considered that most members of the community would find this amusing and not offensive or inappropriate.

The Board noted also the reference to Alzheimer's. The Board considered that this statements it clearly meant as a joke and not to be taken as a slight on or criticism of people who suffer from the disease. The Board noted that some people would find the statement insensitive and upsetting, but considered that while people in the community may find it in bad taste most would feel it does not vilify or discriminate against sufferers. The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach section 2.1 of the Code.

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