



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	299/06
2. Advertiser	Bank of South Australia (Bunny)
3. Product	Finance/Investment
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Violence Other – section 2.2
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 8 August 2006
7. DETERMINATION	Upheld – discontinued or modified

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement shows Arthur, a small store owner sweeping the pathway outside his store. His comments silently to himself about how much his competitor's business, opposite his store, has not only recently expanded and is celebrating with an enormous sale, but has now employed a mascot dressed in a pink fluffy rabbit costume to lure customers into the store. As the Bunny dances and entices customers, Arthur gets more frustrated or envious and finally uses his broom handle to trip the Bunny, causing it to fall to the ground. The screen focuses on a small girl who has seen the incident and looks upset. The screen then focuses on Arthur who smiles then looks a bit uncomfortable. Text next to Arthur's face says 'Don't talk to yourself. Talk to us.'

THE COMPLAINT

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

The bank displays unprovoked assault as a way to sell banking services. The ads display violence and assault (sic) against people for no reason. These assaults are not acceptable standards as evidenced by the looks of outrage on the people in the adverts.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

This commercial has been running...since April 2005....

Section 2 of the AANA Advertiser code of Ethics has been reviewed and in the Bank's opinion our ad does not breach any of the stated regulations.

The purpose of this commercial was to reinforce BankSA's understanding of and empathy with business owners looking to grow their business. We certainly did not intend to cause any offence to viewers.

THE DETERMINATION

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

The Board viewed the advertisement and considered that the tone of the advertisement was one of financial jealousy on the part of Arthur towards his competitor. The Board noted the violence in the advertisement and noted that some parts of the community would find this advertisement humorous. However the Board was of the view that the violence depicted was not justifiable in the context of the product advertised – the bank's business lending. In particular the Board considered that the tone of

the advertisement was one which suggested that financial envy justifies violence against a competitor and that the tone was not sufficiently light or humorous to mitigate against this suggestion.

The Board considered that, although a small child is seen to be upset by the behaviour, the closing focus on Arthur, indeed his hint of a smile, does not provide any suggestion that his behaviour was improper.

On this basis the Board considered that the advertisement did breach section 2.2 of the Code and upheld the complaints.

ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE TO DETERMINATION

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the Board's determination to uphold the complaints included the following:

Bank SA confirms that the television commercial will no longer be aired in its current form. Bank SA is however currently investigating modifying the television commercial in line with the Board's determination.