



CASE REPORT

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. Complaint reference number | 3/02 |
| 2. Advertiser | The Australian Laser Clinic Pty Ltd |
| 3. Product | Professional Services |
| 4. Type of advertisement | Print |
| 5. Nature of complaint | Discrimination or vilification Other – section 2.1
Portrayal of sex/sexuality/nudity – section 2.3
Health and safety – section 2.6 |
| 6. Date of determination | Tuesday, 12 February 2002 |
| 7. DETERMINATION | Dismissed |

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENTS

Two print advertisements reviewed by the Board feature photographs of a man whose torso is naked and a woman wearing a bra, embracing. In the first photograph, the woman has an expression of displeasure; she subsequently is portrayed happier. A caption under the photographs reads: ‘No matter what you do to remove unsightly body hair, you can be sure that it will grow back. Until now. That’s because our fourth generation laser technology is approved by the influential US FDA for *permanent hair reduction*. So, if you really want to see the back of your hair problem, book yourself in with Australasia’s largest and most experienced laser clinic.’ The advertisement also includes a toll-free telephone number and a website as well as the name of the advertiser and details of clinic locations.

THE COMPLAINT

Comments which the complainants made regarding these advertisements included the following:

‘In a polyethnic society such as Australia’s (where members of some communities have more body hair than others), I feel it is wrong to present such physical characteristics as a source of fear for women.’

‘I find this advertisement to be offensive, pornographic (and) sexist, in that the woman’s exposed breasts are being used to attract the reader’s eye to an advertisement dealing with male hair inappropriate for publication in a newspaper.’

‘It is generally offensive and demeaning to men who are, as a species, generally hairy.’

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board (‘the Board’) considered whether these advertisements breach Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (‘the Code’).

The Board determined that the material within the advertisements did not constitute discrimination or vilification and that, on the basis of prevailing community standards, it did not contravene the Code in relation to their portrayal of sex, sexuality and/or nudity or the provisions relating to health and safety.

Finding that the advertisements did not breach the Code on these or any other grounds, the Board dismissed the complaint.