



## **CASE REPORT**

1. Complaint reference number	324/03
2. Advertiser	Heinz Watties Australia (Spaghetti)
3. Product	Food
4. Type of advertisement	Outdoor
5. Nature of complaint	Language – use of language – section 2.5
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 14 October 2003
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT**

There were two outdoor advertisements for consideration. Both depict a can of Watties Spaghetti set against a yellow background. A quotation bubble appears on each, connected to the can. The words “Get Stuffed” appear on one advertisement, and “Stuff You” on the other, in white bold and capital letters set against a black background. In the bottom right hand corner of the advertisement appears the following text “One mean spaghetti”.

## **THE COMPLAINT**

Comments which the complainant/s made included the following:

*“...I was horrified to think that language of this nature would be allowed to be put on public display. What made this even worse was that this is a product which is often focussed toward children. Most adults would agree that this tone of language is not pleasant or appropriate. ... while I am sure the ad is meant to be comical and a play on words I find the humour quite vulgar and completely uncalled for...”*

*“surely there is enough aggression in the world today without having it advertised in such a manner”*

## **THE ADVERTISER’S RESPONSE**

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

*“The intention of the advertisement was to reinforce the message that Watties spaghetti is a great spaghetti through the well used colloquialism of describing something good as “mean” or “the best”. The product description of the can was deliberately exaggerated in a humorous way and was not intended to be an aggressive statement....use of the “Stuff you” copy line is part of the vernacular and supports the core products proposition of Watties spaghetti being a very a very filling meal. ...ultimately our intention was not to offend but to communicate with humour.”*

## **THE DETERMINATION**

The Advertising Standards Board (the “Board”) considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the AANA Advertiser Code of Ethics (the “Code”).

The Board considered that the play on words “get stuffed” and “one mean spaghetti” would be interpreted by most viewers as being humorous and because the play on words is made humorously and not seriously and therefore the language used is not inappropriate. The Board found that the content did not contravene the language provision of the Code, or any other provision of the Code.

Accordingly the complaint was dismissed.