



CASE REPORT

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| 1. Complaint reference number | 339/09 |
| 2. Advertiser | Suzuki Aust P/L |
| 3. Product | Vehicles |
| 4. Type of advertisement | TV |
| 5. Nature of complaint | Discrimination or vilification Gender - section 2.1
Portrayal of sex/sexuality/nudity – section 2.3 |
| 6. Date of determination | Wednesday, 12 August 2009 |
| 7. DETERMINATION | Dismissed |

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The television advertisement shows the new Suzuki Grand Vitara, a compact SUV, being driven on the road and various images of children, and people and the car skidding in the sand and through various terrain from dry land, across water and cross-country, The advertisement shows a woman driving the vehicle and then the advertisement cuts to the same woman later in the day, wearing a bikini and sitting in hot springs. The advertisement concludes with a voice over: “the new Suzuki Grand Vitara just got better, a new generation of freedom”.

THE COMPLAINT

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

1) I fail to see how the car related to the girl in a bikini..especially in cold climate. using women to sell car is poor taste. and demeaning to women..as you are using sex sells to capture male buyers.this is inappropriate use of women.2) The same applies to above..only this time ..during the current problems with footballers and sex romps..you have successfully linked this to this car..well done ad company you should be ashamed of this.

THE ADVERTISER’S RESPONSE

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the complaint/s regarding this advertisement included the following: *Suzuki Australia Pty Ltd believe that the aforementioned advertisement complies with the Code of Ethics, particularly Section 2 in that it does not portray any form of sex, sexuality or nudity. The advertisement expresses freedom, of which it is depicted in one image by a women using a hot spring spa, obviously wearing a swimming costume.*

Suzuki also confirms that the advertisement complies with the FCAI motor vehicle code, as all on road driving is done so within legal speed limits and road regulations. Other shots are off-road (in particular the one referred to by the complainant), and we can confirm that the Suzuki Grand Vitara is an official off-road vehicle.

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board (“Board”) considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (“the Code”) and the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries Voluntary Code of Practice for Motor Vehicle Advertising (“the FCAI Code”)

The Board acknowledged the complainants’ concern that the advertisement is demeaning to women because it inappropriately features a woman (wearing a bikini).

The Board considered section 2.3 of the Code which states that “advertisements shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and, where appropriate, the relevant programme time zone”.

The Board considered the advertiser’s response which explained that the advertisement was intended to engender a sense of freedom that was associated with the vehicle and therefore the woman in the hot spring, was commensurate with the tone of the advertisement.

The Board reviewed the advertisement and noted that the woman was featured throughout the entire advertisement and was at all times sufficiently clothed and not portrayed in a sexualized manner. The Board agreed that the advertisement did not contravene section 2.3 of the Code.

The Board also considered whether the advertisement depicted speeding or unsafe driving. The Board noted that there did not appear to be any speeding depicted in the advertisement.

The Board further noted that having regard to the type of vehicle that was being advertised, the use of varying terrain was suitable to the product being advertised.

The Board noted that there was one image of the vehicle skidding in the sand and considered that this did not amount to significant environmental damage, particularly in advertising for off-road vehicles pursuant to section 2(e) of the FCAI Code.

The Board considered that the advertisement did not breach the FCAI Voluntary Code of Practice for Motor Vehicle Advertising and finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on any other grounds, dismissed the complaint.