



## CASE REPORT

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|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Complaint reference number | 348/07                          |
| 2. Advertiser                 | Lever Rexona (Rexona Men Power) |
| 3. Product                    | Toiletries                      |
| 4. Type of advertisement      | TV                              |
| 5. Nature of complaint        | Health and safety – section 2.6 |
| 6. Date of determination      | Tuesday, 13 November 2007       |
| 7. DETERMINATION              | Dismissed                       |

## DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement opens on a clock clicking over to read 7am and the radio announcement to listeners "Remember, today is Random Day – the day you could be driving any vehicle. Traffic is chaotic – be careful out there." This announcement is followed by scenes of an older man opening his garage and looking surprised when he sees a sled with four huskies instead of his car, and an old lady looking confused at a tractor in her garage. A young man is seen in his bathroom putting on Rexona Men Sport, then opening his garage and seeing a brand new yellow Ferrari. On the streets are seen all kinds of vehicles (tractors, golf buggies, aeroplanes and sailboats) being driven by the least expected types of people. The young man drives to the office taking advantage of his Random Day in a Ferrari, by making manoeuvres that would be impossible to do with a vehicle other than a Ferrari, including an elaborate parallel parking job on the street. When its "eagle wing" door opens, the young driver stretches his arms and we see that his shirt is absolutely dry at the armpits. A male voiceover announces "For whatever the day throws at you. New Rexona Men Power. More power than you need. Official deodorant of V8 Supercars" as the product is shown on screen.

## THE COMPLAINT

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

*This advertisement breaches the Code by depicting speeding, unsafe and erratic driving, The car referred to is driven down the middle of the road at speed, and the driver appears to have very little control over the vehicle.*

*As this is an advertisement for deodorant the portrayal of a tank running over a roadside stall is excessive. Furthermore, the way the yellow sports car is being driven and swerves erratically to avoid other road users is a level of aggression nor required for a deodorant commercial.*

## THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

*Firstly, it is extremely important to consider the media environment in which the TVC is viewed. FACTS provided the commercial with a 'PG'-rating restricting media placement until after 19:00. Our TV media buying is against a male target, and as such our spot placements are amongst programming which is male skewed such as sporting matches and programs targeting more mature viewers i.e "the Footy Show". In this environment, the humor and content of the advertisement is consistent with the programming that surrounds it.*

*Secondly, the TVC advertises a well known anti-perspirant deodorant brand not a motor vehicle brand and hence the use of the "random" motor vehicles should be seen as a creative premise to engage men with the concept "More power than you need" and also "Rexona Power for whatever*

*the world throws at you". The entire TVC, and not just a part of it, is set in a fictitious world, where performing driving stunts is an everyday occurrence using fantastic and unusual modes of transport. This Power campaign is also a follow up to the highly successful 2006 Rexona Men "stunt city" campaign which also featured a fantastic stunt packed TVC.*

*We submit that the TVC does not in any way portray violence. The commercial clearly sets up the "random day" creative premise with the male voice over "Remember, today is Random Day – the day you could be driving any vehicle". This fantastic "random" world is further brought to life by the demonstration of random commuting vehicles such as husky dog sleds, excavators, tanks & even sailboats.*

*To further dramatize the "random" concept a controlled stunt using a military tank running over a street stall continues the fantastic and unbelievable theme. The tank driving over the street stall should be viewed within the context of the "random" creative premise, the restricted media environment in which the spots are placed and also that the product being advertised is clearly not related to cars, subject to the creative premise of the TVC.*

*To call the scene violent would be to misrepresent the intention of the advertisement, the "random" creative concept and the Rexona brand.*

*The complainant asserts that the driver "appears to have very little control over the vehicle" and that the driving is also "unsafe" and "erratic". All the stunts in the TVC were performed by trained professionals and the creative execution of the various scenes in no way emulates reality. The entire TVC is hyperbole with over 8 stunts performed in 30 seconds and combined with the humorous and fantastic nature of the stunts, no reasonable person is likely to act adversely as the consequence of watching the TVC.*

*We submit that the driver represented in the commercial is in very expert control of the vehicle at all times during the controlled stunts and that the commercial does not breach section 2.6 with regard to prevailing community standards on health and safety. Furthermore, the TVC creatively illustrates exaggerated driving behavior in a tongue-in-cheek manner with a humorous effect. REXONA MEN is a modern, masculine brand for men and the strategic use of humor in our advertising fits with the personality and positioning of the brand. Humor adds to the experience and enjoyment of consumers when viewing advertising.*

*We submit that the TVC does not encourage viewers to disobey road safety rules or attempt to perform stunts themselves, as the TVC is unquestionably hyperbole and does not intend to emulate reality. Rexona has a proud history of excellent award winning advertising that both entertains and surprises its consumers. It is our view that Rexona Power continues this tradition.*

*In summary, we believe that the context of the TVC is well within prevailing community standards and that the TVC complies with section 2 the Code.*

## **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 whether the acts depicted in the advertisement showed material contrary to prevailing community standards on health and safety.

The Board noted that the advertisement opens with the radio describing the day as Random Day the day where you could be driving any type of vehicle. The advertisement then shows depictions of people getting into strange and unusual vehicles. The star of the advertisement opens his garage to find a Ferrari. The advertisement then depicts the Ferrari driving in an exaggerated manner, weaving between cars, driving at speed and parking in an unusual way - all the while looking quite bemused.

The Board noted the complainant's concern that the advertisement depicts driving that breaches the FCAI Code. The Board noted that as this advertisement is not an advertisement for a vehicle the FCAI Code does not apply. The Board considered therefore that it should consider the advertisement against section 2.6 of the Code, specifically whether the advertisement depicts material that is contrary to prevailing community standards on health and safety.

The Board determined that the over-the-top nature of the stunts, provided the advertisement with a

tongue-in-cheek flavour that the Board felt would leave the viewer in no doubt about the advertisement's imaginary nature. The Board agreed that the humorous 'alternative reality' of 'Random Day' was particularly strengthened by the images of a person taking the sled to work, the older woman getting into a tractor, a tank and a sail boat driving along the street.

The Board considered whether the advertisement was likely to encourage viewers to drive dangerously as a result of viewing the advertisement. The Board noted that it had previously considered and upheld complaints about other advertisements that showed dangerous acts, but the Board agreed that these previous advertisements had contained footage of more realistic scenes. In this case, the Board considered the unrealistic, fantasy nature of the advertisement and concluded that the advertisement was unlikely to encourage dangerous behaviour because the scenes that advertisement depicted were considered by the Board to be 'pure fantasy'.

Further finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on any other grounds, the Board dismissed the complaint.