



## **CASE REPORT**

1. Complaint reference number	385/99
2. Advertiser	Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services
3. Product	Community Awareness
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Discrimination or vilification Other – section 2.1 Portrayal of sex/sexuality/nudity – section 2.3
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 7 December 1999
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT**

The television advertisement consists of a gradual pan through of a group of people in a forest setting, most of whom are dressed in underwear or swimming costumes, beginning with a young baby and successively showing people of increasingly older ages. Throughout this, voiceover says ‘As we go through life, we gain experience with every passing year ... throughout time, this knowledge has been passed down from generation to generation ... and while younger people may carry the human race forward, it’s the older people who light the way ...so, of all the things we ever learn, remember, there’s no such thing as old, just older’. The advertisement concludes with a scene of an elderly man holding a young baby, followed by the superimposed words ‘A Commonwealth Government Initiative for the International Year of Older Persons 1999.’

## **THE COMPLAINT**

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

*“... to depict older persons as in the current TV commercial is an embarrassment, it does not advance the quality of the older person, older/very old bodies are best kept clad ... There is a time in life for everything, and the time for myself and older persons is not now to be presenting bare bodies that, being kind, have lost the bloom of summer.”*

## **THE DETERMINATION**

The Advertising Standards Board (‘the Board’) considered whether this advertisement breached Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (‘the Code’).

The Board was of the view that the portrayal of the people within the advertisement did not constitute discrimination or vilification, nor did the advertisement breach community standards in its treatment of sex, sexuality or nudity. Rather than presenting older people in a demeaning manner, the Board regarded the advertisement as sending a positive message on the naturalness of the aging process. The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach the Code on these or any other grounds and, accordingly, dismissed the complaint.