



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	391/09
2. Advertiser	Telstra
3. Product	Telecommunications
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Discrimination or vilification Gender - section 2.1
6. Date of determination	Wednesday, 9 September 2009
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

A young man on the train telephone his mother on mother's day. His mother who works in a florist answers the phone and asks what is wrong. The son responds, nothing is wrong, he is heading back to the city and is coming to see her. The mother is pleased and exclaims "he is coming to visit"!

THE COMPLAINT

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

No mention of Dad whatsoever. If the ad promoted to call mum & dad then it would be fine, however it doesn't. Nor is there any similar ad promoting just to call Dad. Completely sexist and offensive as it treats fathers as irrelevant.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

We regret that the complainant has taken issue with this one execution of a wider campaign that features a range of familiar family scenarios and family members, including Fathers. This particular execution features a call to Mum, but there is nothing to suggest the son has not also called Dad, or that by his absence in this particular scenario that he is "irrelevant". Our "Call Mum" campaign features fathers prominently in other executions, and the complainant may be reassured to know that we have produced special advertisements recognising the importance of fathers for Father's Day.

As to there being "no reason" for the call, the version of the advertisement at issue features a son calling to reassure his Mother that he is all right, and on his way to visit her - we think that is a good enough reason for a call and we are confident most parents would agree with us on that point.

We've had a positive reaction to the campaign which uses subtle humor in "slice of life" scenarios that most people can relate to. The overall campaign reminds people to keep in contact with their Mum, Dad, or other family members, all the time, not just on special occasions.

For these reasons we maintain that the advertisement is not "sexist", and encompasses fathers and does not breach the AANA Advertiser Code of Ethics.

THE DETERMINATION

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

The Board noted the complainant's concern that the advertisement did not portray a father and was therefore sexist towards men.

The Board reviewed the advertisement and considered whether the advertisement was in breach of section 2.1 of the Code.

Section 2.1 of the Code states: Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not portray people or depict material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, age, sexual preference, religion, disability or political belief.

The Board noted the advertiser's response that the advertisement was depicting a usual scenario whereby children telephone their mother or father to let them know that they are alright and will be coming home. In this instance, the advertisement shows a son calling his mother, however, the Board agreed with the advertiser, that there is no direct or indirect suggestion that he would not contact his father or indeed, any other family member.

The Board agreed that the advertisement did not breach section 2.1 of the Code and finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on other grounds, the Board dismissed the complaint.