



## **CASE REPORT**

1. Complaint reference number	397/09
2. Advertiser	Cotton On
3. Product	Clothing
4. Type of advertisement	Outdoor
5. Nature of complaint	Portrayal of sex/sexuality/nudity – section 2.3
6. Date of determination	Wednesday, 14 October 2009
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT**

Poster in the front of the shop "Cotton on" the young woman is shown wearing underwear and her bottom is clothed but is the focus of the poster.

## **THE COMPLAINT**

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

*It is really soft porn; it sexualises girls; it is inappropriate, especially for a large window display; it encourages males to consider girls/women as sexual objects; it gives the message to girls that this is best and appropriate way to present themselves or to think of themselves.*

## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

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

Image relates to June/July Sale. Further comment not provided.

## **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 was the equivalent of "soft-porn" and that it encourages males to consider girls/women as sexual objects.

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of section 2.3 of the Code.

Section 2.3 of the Code states:

*"Advertising or Marketing Communications shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and, where appropriate, the relevant programme time zone".*

The Board viewed the advertisement and noted that the woman was not wearing a top and although her bottom was covered, it was a very prominent feature of the advertisement. The Board considered that although some members of the community may consider the representation of the woman in the poster to constitute objectification, that she was not portrayed in an overly sexualised manner and the featuring of the woman wearing briefs was relevant to the product being advertised and did not constitute a breach of section 2.3 of the Code.

Finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on other grounds, the Board dismissed the complaint.