



## **CASE REPORT**

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| 1. Complaint reference number | 406/03  |
| 2. Advertiser                 | Stiletto  |
| 3. Product                    | Other   |
| 4. Type of advertisement      | Transport                                       |
| 5. Nature of complaint        | Portrayal of sex/sexuality/nudity – section 2.3 |
| 6. Date of determination      | Tuesday, 9 December 2003                        |
| 7. DETERMINATION              | Dismissed                                       |

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT**

The advertisement depicts a side-angle photograph of the lower half of a woman's body. The woman is depicted on her knees in a suggestive scrum-like position, naked from the waist down. The image is accompanied by the caption "Fancy a Ruck?" "Knock-on Tonight at Stiletto"

## **THE COMPLAINT**

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

*"I found this advertisement offensive due to the portrayal of sex and nudity, and the association of the word "Ruck" with the f-word and with the image. I also considered this advertisement grossly inappropriate for the audience who would have viewed the billboard, which may possibly have included children."*

*"We certainly would not like our children to be exposed to this type of advertising, especially given the violent sexual abuse of women and children occurring in recent times."*

*"I found this ad not only very demeaning to women but the words FANCY A RUCK in huge letters also very offensive as I had my children in the car with me."*

## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

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

*"Stiletto's RWC campaign 2003 will finish on Friday 28 November and the creative will not be used again."*

*"The ad is a clever play on words and is not intended to offend but make people laugh out loud and this has been the reaction/feedback we have received from the driver of the truck, clients & general public."*

*"Brothels are fully licensed businesses in NSW and we should be afforded the same creative flair as all other companies marketing their products & services. Sex is used all the time to market product most of which have nothing to do with the adult industry. We actually sell a full sex service this is our product and there is no getting away from it, so there are always going to be implications with regard to what we are implying in ads."*

## **THE DETERMINATION**

The Advertising Standards Board ("Board") considered whether this advertisement breaches section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the "Code").

The Board considered firstly that, since brothels are legal, they should be entitled to advertise and noted that there are many such advertisements for brothels and similar services available in various publications.

The Board noted further that the advertisement uses humour to play on the fact that this advertisement is part of Stiletto's Rugby World Cup promotion. The Board acknowledged, however, that the advertisement might offend some people exposed to it because of the fact that it is part of an outdoor campaign.

Having made these observations, the Board expressed its concern as to whether outdoor media was appropriate for display of any and all advertisements. The Board noted that whilst certain advertisements might be appropriate for display in print media and television (with a rating), the same advertisements might not be appropriate for general broadcast. The Board reasoned that because outdoor advertisements are open for mass consumption and mass display without censorship, advertisers needed to exercise sensitivity toward the broader community in deciding whether the images they intend broadcasting in this manner are suitable for all age groups.

The Board found, on balance, that the depiction itself did not contravene the provisions of the Code relating to Portrayal of Sex/Sexuality/Nudity.

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