



## **CASE REPORT**

1. Complaint reference number	41/08
2. Advertiser	iSelect Pty Ltd (Tossin' Possums)
3. Product	Insurance
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Discrimination or vilification Gender - section 2.1
6. Date of determination	Wednesday, 13 February 2008
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT**

This television advertisement opens on a young woman (Cass) seemingly eyeing off the backsides of young men standing around a backyard barbecue and thinking "Decisions decisions. They're all so good." Her friend (Mill - the iSelect campaign girl) comments "Pretty tasty selection huh?" and Cass explains she was thinking about health insurance. Mill recommends iSelect and provides information about how it works. Mill concludes with iSelect's punchline "You'd have to be tossin' possums to buy health insurance any other way."

## **THE COMPLAINT**

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

*This ad used crass sexualisation of a non-sexual issue at a time when children are watching. I don't want my five year old daughter to be encouraged to check out various male bums.*

## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

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

*iSelect view that the premise of the ad is typical of a social barbecue gathering and relates to general social interaction. The ad centers on dialogue between two central female characters discussing how to choose health insurance options and one characters confusion choosing private health. The ad initially uses the parody of choosing what's on the barbecue for dinner confused with the young men at the barbecue. The creative is not designed to be sexist or demeaning to any gender, rather it is aligned to comical situations and we believe reflects generalist contemporary human behavior.*

*The ads are currently on air and began screening on January 6 2008.*

## **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 about the reference to looking at men's bottoms.

The Board noted that advertisers will often include sexual innuendo or references in an advertisement about products (not sex related). The Board noted that this is acceptable provided that the advertisement complies with Section 2.3 of the Code which requires sex, sexuality and nudity to be treated with sensitivity to the relevant audience and, where appropriate, the relevant timezone.

The Board considered that the advertisement depicts two women admiring men at a party, which is then turned into a discussion about health insurance. The Board considered that the advertisement is a realistic depiction of two women's conversation and that the reference to admiring the men is mild. The reference to the men is intended to be a humorous misunderstanding as the woman accused of looking at the men is actually thinking about health insurance. The Board considered that that sexual reference was very mild and was not inappropriate to the likely audience. On this basis the Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.3 of the Code.

The Board also considered the reference to 'tossin possums' and noted that some members of the community might consider that this reference was sexual. The Board considered that most people in the community would consider this a nonsense reference with no particular meaning and not as strong or obscene language. The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.4 of the Code.

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