



## **CASE REPORT**

- |                               |                              |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Complaint reference number | 447/06                       |
| 2. Advertiser                 | Mildalia Steel (cat/dog)     |
| 3. Product                    | Hardware/Machinery           |
| 4. Type of advertisement      | TV                           |
| 5. Nature of complaint        | Violence Other – section 2.2 |
| 6. Date of determination      | Tuesday, 14 November 2006    |
| 7. DETERMINATION              | Dismissed                    |

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT**

This television advertisement is set in a warehouse where a dog is seen walking through rows of steel products. Further up the warehouse he spies a white cat which pokes its tongue out at the dog, resulting in the dog starting to chase the cat. The chase takes place over piles of steel, a roller machine, rows of girders, until eventually the cat sees a way out through the warehouse entrance. Spotting the cat heading in the direction of the escape route, the dog uses its nose to push the button controlling the operation of the door, and it shuts just as the cat reaches it, trapping the cat inside with the dog. The cat miaows in distress as the dog smiles and says “Steel the one. Mmmmate”.

## **THE COMPLAINT**

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

*The idea that a large and powerful animal can trap a smaller animal, in a Mildalia Steel shed, is really appalling. Will your next advertisements show the violence that one expects will follow at the abrupt end of the advertisement?*

*As pet owners, we find this advertisement in poor taste, and hope you will withdraw it in the near future.*

## **THE ADVERTISER’S RESPONSE**

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

*As a responsible advertising agency, we are sensitive to any social issues that might be controversial, and in no way have we promoted ‘bullying’ in this campaign. The animals used in the commercial were handled by a professional trainer and were treated very well by their keepers. At no time was the cat in danger of being attacked by the dog.*

*Given the humour of the campaign and general acceptance that dogs chase cats, we believe that this is an isolated complaint that should attract no further action.*

## **THE DETERMINATION**

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

The Board viewed the advertisement and considered the complainant’s comments that the advertisement was offensive in its portrayal bullying and violence.

The Board considered whether the advertisement breached section 2.2 of the Code dealing with violence.

The Board noted the portrayal of the dog chasing the cat in the factory. The Board noted that there is no violence depicted in the advertisement. The Board also noted that a humorous depiction of a dog chasing a cat is merely a depiction of natural behaviour of a species rather than pre-meditated 'bullying'.

The Board hence determined that the advertisement did not show violence and therefore did not breach Section 2.2 of the Code.

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