



CASE REPORT

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| 1. Complaint reference number | 462/08 |
| 2. Advertiser | Wicked Campers |
| 3. Product | Travel |
| 4. Type of advertisement | Transport |
| 5. Nature of complaint | Language – use of language – section 2.5 |
| 6. Date of determination | Wednesday, 12 November 2008 |
| 7. DETERMINATION | Upheld – not discontinued or modified |

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This transport advertisement appears on a "wicked camper" vehicle. It has the word "F**K" written across the side of the van.

THE COMPLAINT

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

My wife and I have recently returned from Hervey Bay. For the last week of our stay, we were joined by our daughter and her children, eldest of whom are aged eleven and nine. We were shocked one morning when we awoke to find a camper van parked next to our tent with the word "F-CK" painted, in very large letters, on both sides of the vehicle. I have omitted the vowel (U) from the word out of respect to you and your staff. Unfortunately, the owners of the van are not as considerate, as the complete word was displayed for all to read, including the many children at the park. I approached the manager of the park, however his only suggestion was that I should write to the company that owns the camper vans. I really can't see any point to that, as they would probably take that as a positive indication that their advertising method is working, and draws attention. I know that we live in changing times, but surely it is still not acceptable to have our children subjected to this type of "rubbish" in public areas and on our roads. I trust that your department is able to take some form of action in this matter.

I think it is obscene and revolting that any company can have the temerity to paint such disgusting, filthy language on vans which travel Australia and are in full view of children of all ages, let alone adults. And to do it in such huge, hot pink letters appears to simply be thumbing the nose at the standards of society in general and an endeavour to offend. Surely it breaches moral and ethical standards if not the law relating to offensive behaviour.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

These are not advertisements. I have no further comment.

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board ("Board") considered whether this advertising communication breaches Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the "Code").

The Board considered the application of Section 2.5 of the Code, relating to the use of language. The Board noted that Section 2.5 requires advertising communications to only use language which is appropriate in the circumstances and strong or obscene language is to be avoided. The Board noted

that this advertising is displayed where any member of the general public could see it, including children. The Board considered that under prevailing community standards the word "f**k" would be regarded as obscene.

The Board therefore determined that the advertising communication breached Section 2.5 of the Code and upheld the complaint.

ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE TO DETERMINATION

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the determination regarding this advertisement included the following:

The business owner has agreed to paint over the vans. As you will understand, a few of these vans are out on hire around Australia. Our painter is in Brisbane, so next time these vans pass through town we will ensure they are painted over.