



## **CASE REPORT**

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|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Complaint reference number | 502/06                          |
| 2. Advertiser                 | Hasbro Australia (Super Soaker) |
| 3. Product                    | Toys & Games                    |
| 4. Type of advertisement      | TV                              |
| 5. Nature of complaint        | Other - Environmental issues    |
| 6. Date of determination      | Tuesday, 12 December 2006       |
| 7. DETERMINATION              | Dismissed                       |

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT**

There are two television advertisements for the Super Soaker guns, Arctic Shock and Aqua Armies. Both show groups of children using the water soakers in play-fights with the voiceover “Which one of the new Super Soaker elite blasters will rise to the top? Will the Arctic Shock blaster with its freezable ice core send shivers down their spine, or will the Flash Flood blaster’s surpriseability to unleash an entire tank of water in one burst be too much for its opponents to handle. No matter who wins one thing is certain, you won’t get wet you’ll get soaked! Super Soaker – the battle rages on at [supersoaker.com](http://supersoaker.com).”

## **THE COMPLAINT**

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

*Australia at the moment and particularly Victoria, is in the midst of severe drought. The major towns in Victoria are experiencing heavy water restrictions. I personally know of Dairy farmers who have had to sell their whole stock due to having not enough water for them. Here in this ad there is a group of people just spraying water all over the place as if there is no end to it. I find it offensive to see such waste and it also contradicts water restriction laws.*

## **THE ADVERTISER’S RESPONSE**

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

*In planning the distribution and promotion of the Super Soaker product, we are cognizant of water restrictions around Australia. There are a number of products in the range which we do not bring in due to their features being the use of additional tanks or backpacks of water, which we felt were not appropriate.*

*The product we do bring in has a fill feature which allows the soaker to be filled from ‘dunking’ into say a pool or a bucket of water. This means a measured approach can be taken in the amount of water used. We have also activity promoted the use of soakers at the beach using the same ‘dunking’ fill, so that water is drawn from the ocean.*

## **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 the complaint and determined that the complaint was concerned with the nature of the product, ie: a toy that uses water, rather than the advertisement itself. The complainant's real concern was that it was inappropriate to advertise a product that uses water, in Australia's current

drought situation. The Board noted that it is not illegal to sell or use such products and that there is therefore no obstacle to the appropriate advertising of such products. The Board considered that the advertisement did not of itself breach any provisions of the Code.

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