



## **CASE REPORT**

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|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Complaint reference number | 603/09                          |
| 2. Advertiser                 | Wicked Campers                  |
| 3. Product                    | Travel                          |
| 4. Type of advertisement      | Transport                       |
| 5. Nature of complaint        | Health and safety – section 2.6 |
| 6. Date of determination      | Wednesday, 20 January 2010      |
| 7. DETERMINATION              | Dismissed                       |

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT**

Wicked Camper vehicle with the phrase: "running around getting whacked off scooby snacks".

## **THE COMPLAINT**

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

*Copy of letter sent to Prime Ministers's office*

*On a recent around Australia trip with my wife we were disappointed and shocked by a company known as Wicked Campers which rents out vehicles for use predominantly by unsuspecting overseas tourists as camper vehicles. This company uses a disgraceful, and what is possibly illegal advertising and marketing on the side and backs of its vehicles.*

*I am attaching an ad which appears in the magazine titled the Colours of Broome. I am certain that this ad which appears on page 18 and shows two kangaroos copulating is highly illegal. I am seeking your intervention to have this company Wicked Campers cease from using this form of advertising in the magazines and on the size of their vehicles.*

*Also attached are a number of photographs we took on our around Australia trip. I'm sure you'll agree that these images do nothing for the reputation of Australia when tourists fly into Australia and pick up their vans with this kind of irresponsible and immoral spray-painting on the side of their vehicles.*

*Many times we saw young German female tourists driving around in vans with disgusting wordage and images on them which they could do nothing about. Surely this can do nothing for our tourism reputation. Mr Rudd is there anything we can do about the situation.*

*The catchphrase of Wicked Campers is Pay with your soul not your wallet.*

## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

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

*We are sorry if the slogan on the back of the van has caused offence this is not our intention.*

*However this van does not breach the code of ethics section 2.3. It has no reference to sex/sexuality/nudity.*

*It is suitable for the target audience of adults as children would not understand the meaning.*

*Many adults also may not understand the meaning. I hope you can see that we have not breached any code of ethics with this slogan, we especially have not breached section 2.3*

## **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 complainants' concerns about the degrading nature of the advertisements which appeared on the side and backs of Wicked Camper vans.

The Board considered whether the phrase "running around getting whacked off scooby snacks" was in breach of section 2.6 of the Code that deals with prevailing community standards on health and safety.

The Board viewed the image of the Wicked Camper van and agreed that it was not altogether apparent what a "scooby snack" was, (although it might be referring to the snack that the cartoon television character Scooby Doo eats).

The Board researched the words "scooby snack" and noted that in the urban dictionary, there was a reference to weed particles.

The Board agreed that most members of the community would not perceive the phrase to have any particular intelligible meaning, and would not understand that the reference to the word "whacked" was a mild reference to an intoxicating substance.

The Board considered that the phrase was ambiguous and not likely to offend most members of the community as most reasonable adults would consider that the phrase is not out of step with prevailing community standards on health and safety.

The Board determined that the advertisement was not in breach of section 2.6.

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