



## **CASE REPORT**

1. Complaint reference number	66/00
2. Advertiser	S.A Courts Administration Authority (Fine Payment Unit)
3. Product	Community Awareness
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Discrimination or vilification Other – section 2.1
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 14 March 2000
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT**

The television advertisement commences with a scene of a man lying back in a chair in an operating theatre. Another man, apparently a doctor figure, walks in asking ‘What seems to be the problem Mr Nelson?’ to which the seated man replies ‘I haven’t paid my fines’. The doctor says ‘That can be very nasty ... I’ll see what I can do for you’ as he pulls on rubber gloves, appears to insert a pair of forceps up the other man’s nose and extract various items, including the man’s driver’s licence, his wallet and, finally, a television set. During this, voiceover explains the consequences of unpaid fines and the advertisement concludes with the superimposed words ‘Pay now or pay through the nose later’.

## **THE COMPLAINT**

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

*“ ... it legitimises the idea that it is acceptable to use force to extract fines and by implication any debt ... particularly obnoxious as it brings to mind the more sadistic tortures used by Nazi and other far right regimes. I also object on the grounds that it places the dental and medical professions in an unacceptable position.”*

*“I find this ad deliberately frightening, cruel, offensive and unnecessary.”*

*“As a practising Dental Surgeon I find it particularly irritating to see the dental/medical professions used in an advertisement to elicit fear.”*

## **THE DETERMINATION**

The Advertising Standards Board (‘the Board’) considered whether this advertisement breached Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (‘the Code’).

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach the Code and would not offend prevailing community standards. It was noted that, while the man’s simulation of fear was realistic, the depiction of items actually being removed through his nose was clearly fictitious. The Board, accordingly, dismissed the complaint.