



CASE REPORT

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| 1. Complaint reference number | 66/04 |
| 2. Advertiser | Red Bull Australia Pty Ltd |
| 3. Product | Food |
| 4. Type of advertisement | TV |
| 5. Nature of complaint | Violence Other – section 2.2
Other - Causes alarm and distress to children |
| 6. Date of determination | Tuesday, 13 April 2004 |
| 7. DETERMINATION | Dismissed |

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The advertisement depicts an animated bird in the sky pooing on the shoulder of an animated man below. The man then drinks a can of Red Bull and shoots the bird with a slingshot. When the bird falls to the ground the man kicks it on the bottom and it flies away.

THE COMPLAINT

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

“My family are strong believers in animal rights and can see nothing funny about the mistreatment of animals.”

“The whole advert is disgusting in the fact that it not only promotes, encourages and shows undesirable and anti-social attitudes, it also encourages bullying and animal cruelty!”

“Not only will this ad teach children the wrong thing and advocate animal cruelty over minor inconvenience caused by animals, but we may see adults shooting or hurting birds for dirtying their cars etc.”

“That a ‘cartoon’ is the mechanism by which the greaseballs in advertising try to vindicate themselves is completely unacceptable.”

“To think the RSPCA spends thousands of dollars on trying to educate people in the proper care and respect of animals and you promote such symbols of mindless cruelty.”

THE ADVERTISER’S RESPONSE

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

“The acts complained of do not occur in a vacuum. They occur in the context of an execution that is intended to be imaginary, far-fetched and humorous. In a fanciful and humorous context, an act that, were it to occur in real life, might be considered by some to be ‘cruel’, is taken by audiences as funny.”

“The cartoon-like execution and the fanciful, funny sequence of events are extremely strong cues to the audience that this commercial is not to be taken seriously.”

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 that in the context of prevailing community standards, the majority of people would find this advertisement humorous rather than offensive.

The Board found that the depiction did not contravene the provisions of the Code relating to alarm and distress to children.

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