



CASE REPORT

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| 1. Complaint reference number | 73/04 |
| 2. Advertiser | 99 Group Centre (AA Premium paper) |
| 3. Product | Officegoods/services |
| 4. Type of advertisement | TV |
| 5. Nature of complaint | Discrimination or vilification Gender - section 2.1
Health and safety – section 2.6 |
| 6. Date of determination | Tuesday, 13 April 2004 |
| 7. DETERMINATION | Dismissed |

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The advertisement depicts a young female office worker unable to reach a high shelf for the Double A paper to refill the photocopier. She climbs on top of the photocopier to try and reach the paper and accidentally hits the copy button. She is wearing a skirt and so the copies being made are of her underwear. A male office worker comes in and seeing the copies being made he drops his bundle of documents.

THE COMPLAINT

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

“This advertisement promotes unsafe occupational health and safety practices in a work place environment.”

“I found this advertisement to be totally voyeuristic and unnecessarily sexually geared.”

“This ad does nothing but add to the problem of sexual harassment in the work place. It adds to the general social opinion that women are available for unauthorised sexual gratification.”

“Such imagery, quite appropriately, is not condoned in the workplace. It should not therefore be condoned on prime time television, which I’m sure only serves to undermine the advances that employers have made in relation to standards of respect and behaviour when dealing with sexual imagery within the workplace.”

“The ad is nothing short of soft-porn in my opinion, degrading to women and cheap.”

THE ADVERTISER’S RESPONSE

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

“We believe that our ad is not offensive or inappropriate when judged against general community standards of acceptable advertising.”

“This is an eye-catching ad that uses farce to make a light-hearted comment about our copy paper brand – that Double A runs smoothly, is dependable and can be relied upon to perform in any situation, no matter how unusual or unexpected.”

“While we acknowledge the complaints against the ad from a small number of people, we believe that these are not representative of general community standards.”

“Neither the male nor the female character in the ad is portrayed as being disadvantaged over the other, as both are equally surprised and stunned by the unplanned and excepted situation they find themselves in.”

“We believe that an ordinary person has the ability to make a sensible judgment about the risks involved in every-day activities such as photocopying and would act accordingly.”

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 health and safety or discrimination (sex)/vilification.

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