



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	79/05
2. Advertiser	Origin Energy
3. Product	Housegoods/services
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Discrimination or vilification Other – section 2.1
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 12 April 2005
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The young man is shown to walk past a group of older men at a football match. He accidentally bumps into one of them causing the man to spill his beer. The man stops and offers to buy the gentlemen a round of drinks. He then reaches into his pocket but cannot find any money. The next scene shows the young man suspended from a coat-hook by his underpants. He reaches into his pocket and pulls out a \$50.00 note to his dismay. A voiceover states: “It’s the \$50.00 you forgot you had”. The voiceover then explains the deal between Origin Energy and the AFL clubs.

THE COMPLAINT

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

“This is a pure and simple case of bullying at its worst, and by showing this ... is showing a lack of understanding of bullying in our schools, workplaces and everyday life.”

“The State and Federal governments are spending thousands of dollars in education campaigns ... and ... airing this commercial during a timeslot and entertainment aimed at young boys and young men disturbs me greatly.”

THE ADVERTISER’S RESPONSE

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

“... we strongly believe that there is nothing in our television commercial that is in breach of the Code. It does not portray discrimination or vilification (there is no dialogue between our lead character and the other supporters, let alone on the grounds outlined). Nor does the commercial portray any violence or contravene issues of health or safety.”

“The advertising is designed to be humorous ...”

“Origin Energy and the AFL do not condone bullying or anti-social behaviour in any way and would certainly not have approved the advertising material if we felt that it did this.”

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board (“Board”) considered whether this advertisement breaches section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the “Code”).

The Board was of the view 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 the portrayal of people.

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