



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	80/06
2. Advertiser	Dept of Health & Ageing (Quit)
3. Product	Community Awareness
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Other - Causes alarm and distress
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 14 March 2006
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement depicts a young man buying cigarettes from a store. Outside the store he starts smoking, and notices an attractive young woman sitting on a bench nearby, who looks at him, then turns away. The man then notices a graphic image on the cigarette pack showing a diseased mouth, gums & teeth caused by smoking. A male voiceover warns of the health damage smoking causes and gives details of the Quitline.

THE COMPLAINT

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

...a stomach turning picture of a horribly disfigured and sore looking mouth.

We all found the content of this advertisement distressing...

Grossly disturbing imagery

Blanket advertising that has such disgusting photos is a little hard to take.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

In developing this campaign, due care has been taken to present the facts in a responsible and appropriate manner, having regard for the target audiences.....the target audience includes non-smoking youth, the general community (including smokers' families) and smokers vulnerable to relapse.

Research found that graphic warnings are more effective than text-only messages in conveying information about the health effects of smoking.

An image of mouth cancer was specifically selected for the health warnings. Research findings indicate that youth, particularly girls, respond to images of external health effects such as mouth cancer, eye disease, and gangrene.

While the image is hard-hitting and confronting, it is not gratuitous.....

Smokers often report in research that images like this help them quit...

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 this advertisement is part of a government campaign designed to reduce the incidence of smoking in Australia and that the advertisement cannot be broadcast during young children’s programming.

The Board considered that, while the images portrayed were disturbing and horrible, the advertisement’s effectiveness depended on this and that it is consistent with public health and safety goals for such advertisements to be broadcast.

The Board did not consider that the advertisement breached the Code on any ground.