

## Case Report

1. Case Number :	0119-24
2. Advertiser :	Big Picture People
3. Product :	Entertainment
4. Type of Advertisement/Media :	TV - Free to Air
5. Date of Decision:	15-May-2024
6. Decision:	Dismissed

### ISSUES RAISED

AANA Code of Ethics\2.3 Violence

### DESCRIPTION OF ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement features a group of men watching a horror film in a home theatre. In the movie there is a scene where a woman says "be good to me Bertie" as she picks up a kitchen knife. As she picks it up the group of men notice a woman in the doorway holding the same knife and they get a fright and scream. The woman then turns the lights on and asks "are you guys staying for lunch?".



## THE COMPLAINT

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

*Big Knife and people in the Ad feeling threatened by the way the woman is handling it. Very inappropriate especially after the multiple stabbings and deaths at Westfield Bondi junction and of the bishop during the church service.*

## THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the complainant/s regarding this advertisement include the following:

*Advertiser did not provide a response.*

## THE DECISION

The Ad Standards Community Panel (the Panel) considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the AANA Code of Ethics (the Code).

The Panel noted the complainant's concern that the advertisement depicts threatening behaviour with a knife.

The Panel viewed the advertisement and noted the advertiser's response.

### **Section 2.3: Advertising shall not present or portray violence unless it is justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised**

The Panel noted that the Practice Note for this section of the Code states:

*"Although the depiction of violence in an advertisement may be relevant to the story being told in the advertisement, any violence must also be justifiable in the context of the product being advertised, or else will be in breach of this section of the Code... The results or consequences of violence (e.g. a black eye) and audio representations of violence may also be prohibited."*

### **Does the advertisement contain violence?**

The Panel noted that the Code and the Practice Note do not provide a definition of violence. The Panel noted that they needed to consider whether the general community would consider this ad to portray violence.

The Panel considered that parts of the advertisement are dark and have a sinister feeling, and the depiction of a people holding large knives in a threatening manner was menacing.

The Panel considered that most people would consider this advertisement to contain violent imagery.

### **Is the violence justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised?**

The Panel noted the complainant's concern that the advertisement depicts threatening behaviour with a knife, which is inappropriate after recent events involving knife violence.

The Panel acknowledged that people affected by this or similar crimes could find the advertisement upsetting. The Panel however considered that overall, the advertisement reflected a scene which might take place in a scary movie, and there was no clear link to, or depiction of, a real crime.

The Panel considered that the advertisement was highly stylised to look like a horror movie. The Panel considered that the depiction of people watching a horror movie in a home cinema, was justifiable in the context of promoting home cinemas.

### **Section 2.3 Conclusion**

The Panel found that the advertisement did present or portray violence which was justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised and did not breach Section 2.3 of the Code.

### **Conclusion**

Finding that the advertisement did not breach any other section of the Code, the Panel dismissed the complaint.