

## Case Report

1. Case Number :	0211-25
2. Advertiser :	Aje Wholesaling Pty Ltd
3. Product :	Clothing
4. Type of Advertisement/Media :	Online
5. Date of Decision:	17-Sep-2025
6. Decision:	Upheld – Modified or Discontinued

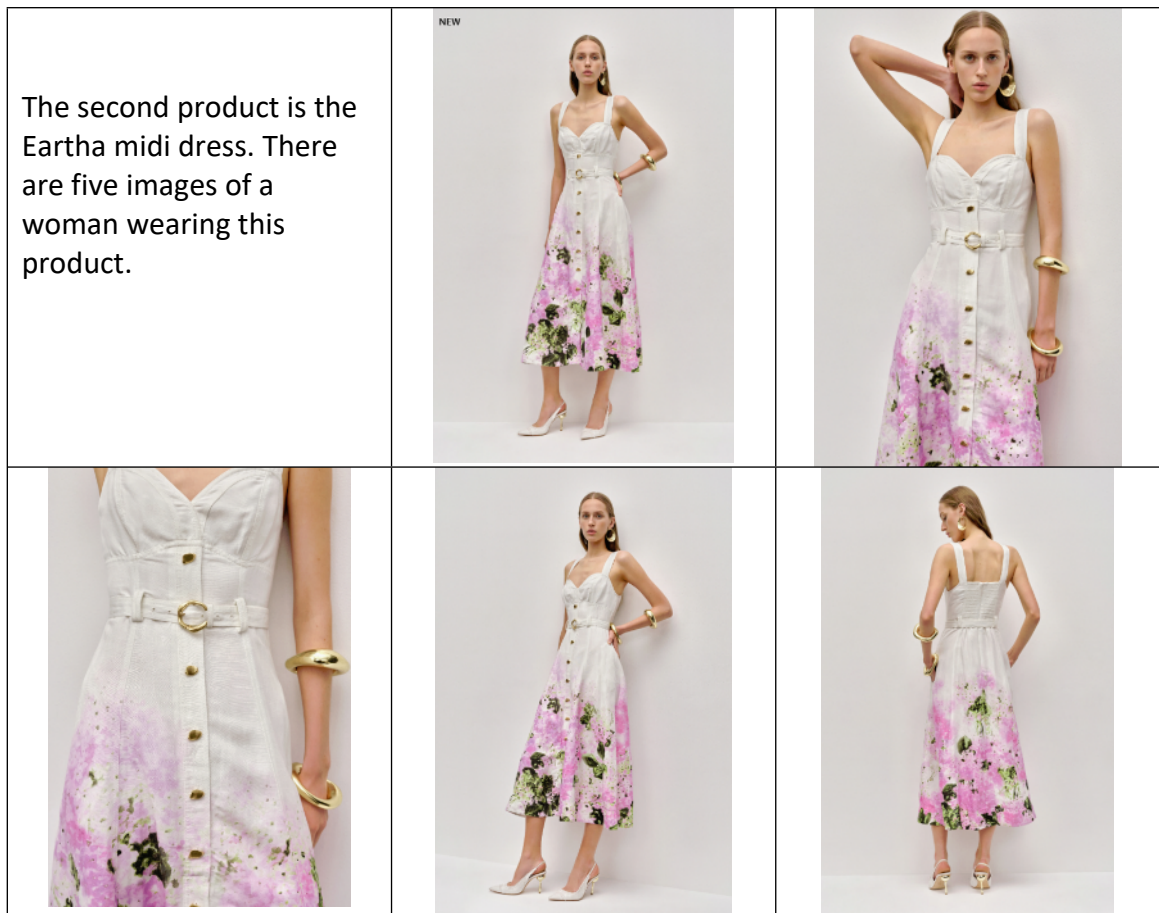
### ISSUES RAISED

AANA Code of Ethics\2.6 Health and Safety

### DESCRIPTION OF ADVERTISEMENT

This online advertisement consists of two product listings on the Aje website.





## THE COMPLAINT

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

*I am lodging a complaint regarding an advertisement I recently viewed, which I believe breaches the AANA Code of Ethics by promoting unhealthy and unrealistic body image standards.*

*The advertisement features models who appear excessively underweight. The clothing is visibly hanging from their frames — including dresses where the cups are clearly empty — which highlights their lack of body mass rather than the garment itself. In addition, several poses deliberately exaggerate their thinness, drawing attention to prominent bones (including spine, ribs, and shoulder blades).*

*This depiction is harmful as it promotes extreme thinness as aspirational, which may negatively impact community health, particularly among young people. The presentation of models in such a state is not a truthful or responsible portrayal of body image and risks encouraging disordered eating or body dissatisfaction.*

*I believe this advertisement breaches the following provisions of the AANA Code of Ethics:*

- *Section 2.1 (Community Standards): The ad does not treat people with dignity and respect and presents body types in a way that contravenes prevailing community standards on health and body image.*
- *Section 2.6 (Health and Safety): The depiction of excessively thin models undermines health and safety by normalising unhealthy body shapes and promoting harmful ideals.*

*Given the strong emphasis on responsible portrayal of body image in Australian advertising, I request this advertisement be reviewed under the Code.*

## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

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

### *Model Selection and Industry Standards*

*AJE Studio partners with IMG Models, one of the world's most reputable and established modeling agencies. IMG maintains the highest professional standards in the fashion industry and is committed to the health and wellbeing of all talent on their roster.*

*AJE Studio's model selection process is based purely on professional availability and suitability for showcasing their garments. There is no specific brief regarding particular physical characteristics beyond standard fashion industry requirements for garment fit and presentation. All models are professional fashion models who work regularly across the industry with major brands and publications.*

### *Health and Wellbeing Protocols*

*AJE Studio takes model health and wellbeing extremely seriously. All shoots conducted by AJE Studio adhere to strict industry health and safety standards, including:*

- Full catered meals and nutritious snacks provided throughout all shoot days*
- Regular breaks and reasonable working hours*
- Professional hair and makeup teams trained in model care*
- Appropriate styling to ensure comfort and dignity*
- Compliance with all relevant workplace health and safety regulations*

*IMG Models, as a leading international agency, maintains comprehensive health monitoring and support systems for all their talent, including regular health check-ins and access to professional support services.*

## *Response to Specific Code Provisions*

### *Section 2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification:*

*The advertisement does not discriminate against or vilify any person or section of the community. Our imagery celebrates diverse expressions of contemporary fashion and treats all individuals with dignity and respect.*

### *Section 2.2 - Exploitative or Degrading:*

*The advertisement does not employ sexual appeal in a manner that is exploitative or degrading. Our fashion imagery focuses on showcasing garments in an artistic and sophisticated manner appropriate to contemporary fashion marketing.*

### *Section 2.6 - Health and Safety:*

*The advertisement does not present material contrary to prevailing community standards on health and safety. The models featured are professional fashion models working within established industry parameters. The styling and photography aim to showcase the garments' design and fit, which may naturally vary depending on the specific silhouette and design intention of each piece.*

### *Section 2.7 Distinguishable as advertising:*

*Given the imagery is on our website and branded social media we consider it to be clearly distinguishable as advertising.*

*We consider the following sections to not be relevant and therefore have not provided a response:*

*Section 2.3 - Violence*

*Section 2.4 - Sex, sexuality and nudity*

*Section 2.5 - Language*

*Contemporary fashion photography encompasses a wide range of aesthetic approaches, and our imagery reflects current artistic and commercial standards within the fashion industry. The apparent fit of garments can be influenced by numerous factors including:*

- Specific garment design and intended silhouette*
- Styling techniques including use of clips, pins, and adjustments*
- Photography angles and lighting*
- Post-production considerations standard in commercial fashion photography*

## *Industry Context*

*Fashion marketing and advertising operate within established industry norms that have evolved over decades of commercial practice. Our imagery is consistent with contemporary fashion advertising across major publications, retail environments, and digital platforms globally.*

*The fashion industry continues to evolve its approach to representation, and AJE Studio is committed to responsible marketing practices while maintaining our brand's artistic vision and commercial objectives.*

#### *Conclusion*

*AJE Studio maintains that our advertising material complies with all relevant sections of the AANA Code of Ethics. Our partnership with IMG Models ensures professional standards and model welfare, while our creative approach reflects legitimate artistic and commercial expression within the fashion industry.*

*We believe the advertisements in question showcase our fashion collections in a manner consistent with contemporary fashion marketing practices and do not breach any provisions of the advertising codes.*

#### **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 an unrealistic ideal body image.

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

#### **Section 2.6: Advertising shall not depict material contrary to Prevailing Community Standards on health and safety.**

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

*"Advertising must not portray an unrealistic ideal body image by portraying body shapes or features that are unrealistic or unattainable through healthy practices. Exposure to unrealistic body ideals can lead to harmful body dissatisfaction and disordered eating and for this reason it is not acceptable in advertising.*

*While the use of people in smaller or larger bodies is itself not necessarily problematic, advertisers must ensure that models do not adopt a pose or are not depicted in a way which produces an unrealistic sense of body image, for example through the style of the advertising, the clothing, lighting, or make-up used."*

The Panel noted the advertiser's response that the advertisement used a professional fashion models working within established industry parameters.

### Thea gown

The Panel considered that the woman's collarbone and scapulae were prominent and highlighted by the cut of the dress, and the woman's pose. The Panel considered that in the images showing the back of the dress, the woman's pose with her hands on her hips and her head tilted forward emphasised her thinness and her scapulae. The Panel noted in the image from the front, the woman's shoulders are back and down, emphasising her collar bone.

The Panel considered that while it could not make a determination on whether the woman depicted is actually unhealthy, the posing of the woman emphasised her slight stature and the impression that she is unhealthily thin. The Panel considered that most members of the community would consider that such a depiction is irresponsible and promotes an unrealistic body image that would be unattainable through healthy practices.

The Panel considered that the listing for the Thea gown did contain material contrary to Prevailing Community Standards on health and safety.

### Eartha midi dress

A minority of the Panel considered that the woman's elbows, wrists and visible collar bone created an overall impression that she was extremely thin. The minority of the Panel considered that the second listing did promote an unrealistic body image that would be unattainable through healthy practices.

The majority of the Panel considered that the woman did not appear gaunt or unhealthy. The Panel considered that the focus of the images were on the product, and the woman was not posed in a manner that emphasised her thinness or made her appear unhealthy. The Panel considered that the second listing did not promote an unrealistic body image that would be unattainable through healthy practices.

### **Section 2.6 conclusion**

The Panel considered that the first product listing in the advertisement did breach Section 2.6 of the Code.

### **Conclusion**

Finding that the advertisement breached Section 2.6 of the Code the Panel upheld the complaint.

## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE TO DECISION**

The images of the Thea Gown will be modified/discontinued.