

Case Report

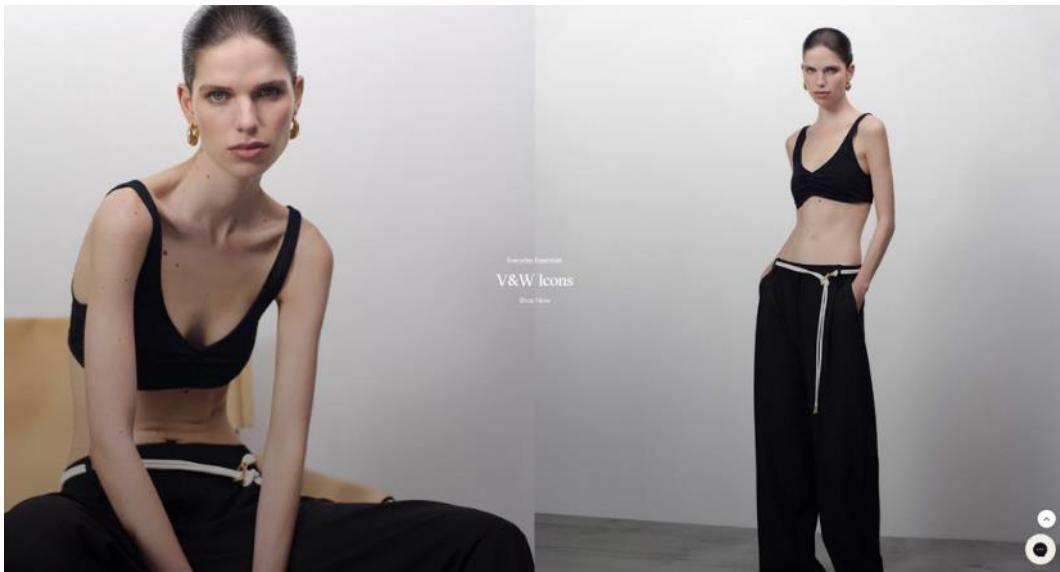
Case number: 0293-25
Advertiser: Viktoria & Woods
Medium: Online
Decision date: 10-Dec-2025
Decision: Breach
Action: Ad removed

ISSUES CONSIDERED BY THE COMMUNITY PANEL

- AANA Code of Ethics - 2.6 Health and Safety - breach

AD DESCRIPTION

This online ad features a model dressed in black pants and a black bra or bikini top.



SUMMARY

Complaint

A complaint was received on the grounds that the model is extremely underweight and promotes unhealthy body image to audience. This example represents 'super skinny' icon that leads to the development of eating disorders in young people who buy these clothes.

Advertiser response

The advertiser responded by noting its commitment to the spirit and guidelines of industry practice notes and the advertising codes. It noted that the AANA Code does not prescribe a 'healthy weight' model, as this could also be exclusionary.

The model shown is 179cm tall and of a naturally slim and healthy athletic build, which is common in high fashion. The ad showcases the design, fit, and style of the apparel. It does not imply that a specific, 'super skinny' body shape is required to wear the product. Our clothing is available in a full range of standard sizes from 4AU to 14AU, with sizes being available both smaller and larger than the one worn by the model - thus actively catering to a wider audience.

A copy of the advertiser's full response is included as Appendix A.

Decisions

The Panel found that the ad was in breach of section 2.6 of the AANA Code as the ad depicted material contrary to Prevailing Community Standards on health and safety.

ASSESSMENT AND DECISIONS

Section 2.6 (AANA Code of Ethics): Advertising shall not depict material contrary to Prevailing Community Standards on health and safety.

The Practice Note states:

Section 2.6 requires that advertising must not depict content that would encourage or condone unhealthy or unsafe behaviour having regard to Prevailing Community Standards.

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.

Panel assessment

The Panel considered that the same model is used for both images in the ad, but that the image on the left appears to have the model posed in a hunched manner that accentuates features like collarbones and thin arms, and has the effect of reducing the relative size of her torso to her head and limbs.

A minority of the Panel considered that this pose was unfortunate, and emphasised thinness, but did not view this as encouraging or condoning unrealistically thin body types.

The majority of the Panel, however, considered that this pose portrays an unrealistically thin image. The majority of the Panel considered that, in using this particular photo, the advertiser appears to be condoning such gaunt appearances. The Panel considered that, in the context of community standards that have evolved to accept and encourage healthy body types of varying shapes and sizes, using images that appear to show unhealthily thin models would likely be viewed as contrary to prevailing community standards on health and safety.

Panel decision

The Panel concluded that the ad breached section 2.36 of the AANA Code of Ethics.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The Panel found that the ad did not breach any other section of the advertising codes.

ACTION

Thank you for your correspondence regarding the complaint (Case Ref: 0293-25) concerning an image on our website.

Regarding the specific image in question, we would like to confirm the following details regarding its placement and duration:

- **Limited Duration:** The image was live on our website for a limited period between 10 November and 16 November.
- **Removal:** The image was removed prior to the receipt of this complaint and is no longer accessible on our website or social media channels.
- **Future Use:** We have no plans to use this image in any future marketing or advertising communications.

We trust this information clarifies the situation and confirms that the advertisement is no longer in circulation

APPENDIX A: ADVERTISER RESPONSE IN FULL

We refer to the Notification of Complaint 0293-25 dated 24/11/2025 addressed to Viktoria & Woods.

The complaint alleges that one of our advertisements, featuring a young woman in a black bra and black pants, uses a model who appears "extremely underweight" and "super skinny," thereby promoting an unhealthy body image and potentially leading to the development of eating disorders (the "Advertisement"). The Notice suggests the Advertisement may have breached relevant industry guidelines, such as section 2.6 of the AANA Code of Ethics (Code) or similar provisions concerning body image and health.

While Viktoria & Woods is grateful this issue was brought to its attention, it respectfully disagrees that the Advertisement is contrary to the Prevailing Community Standards on health and safety in relation to body weight and that it breaches any applicable provisions of the Code. We explain our position below.

Commitment to Body Image Guidelines

We acknowledge and adhere to the spirit and guidelines set forth in industry practice notes, such as those related to section 2.6 of the AANA Code of Ethics titled "Body Image." This guidance states that advertising must not portray an unrealistic ideal body image by depicting body shapes or features that are unrealistic or unattainable through healthy practices. Further, if such portrayal is not justifiable in the context of the advertised products, it could be contrary to prevailing community standards relating to health and safety.

Crucially, the guidance does not prescribe a "healthy weight" for models, recognising that such a standard would be exclusionary. Instead, it focuses on ensuring models are not depicted in a manner that:

- Promotes unhealthy practices.
- Presents an unrealistic body image as aspirational.
- Is likely to cause pressure to conform to a body shape that is unrealistic or unattainable through healthy practices.
- Involves digital alteration that changes body shapes or proportions to an unrealistic or unhealthy extent.

Our Position on the Advertisement

Viktoria & Woods is committed to diversity and inclusion across all its marketing campaigns. Our collections are designed to be worn by a wide range of women, and we actively cater to our customer base through a variety of sizes and styles.

Model Selection and Health: The model featured in the Advertisement was sourced through a reputable, recognised modelling agency. These agencies are contractually obligated to ensure their models maintain a healthy weight and lifestyle. The model is 179cm and of a naturally slim and healthy athletic build, which is common in high fashion.

Product Context: The advertisement is intended to showcase the design, fit, and style of the apparel. It does not imply that a specific, "super skinny" body shape is required to wear the product. Our clothing is available in a full range of standard sizes from 4AU to 14AU, with sizes being available both smaller and larger than the one worn by the model - thus actively catering to a wider audience.

No Promotion of Unhealthy Practices:

The Advertisement's overall theme, visuals, or language do not imply that:

- A particular body type is required to use the product.
- People with different body types cannot use the product.
- People should alter their body to fit into the product.

The posing is natural and intended solely to display the garment. There is no suggestion of an "aspirational" body image designed to pressure conformity to the model's specific physique.

Digital Enhancement:

While the image has undergone standard post-production retouching (colour correction, lighting, background cleanup), Viktoria & Woods confirms that no digital enhancements were made to alter the model's body shape or proportions to an extent that would be perceived as unrealistic or unhealthy. The photograph accurately represents the model's natural physique.

Conclusion

Viktoria & Woods maintains that the featured model possesses a naturally slender, athletic, and healthy physique, which is consistent with models used across the fashion industry. The Advertisement does not violate the prevailing community standards on health or body image by promoting unrealistic or unattainable body shapes or unhealthy practices.

For these reasons, we believe that the Advertisement is not: (a) contrary to the Prevailing Community Standards on health and safety in relation to body image; and (b) in breach of section 2.6 of the Code.

It is, therefore, respectfully submitted that the Complaint should be dismissed.