



Ad Standards Community Panel
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AdStandards.com.au

Advertising Standards Bureau Limited
ACN 084 452 666

Case Report

1	Case Number	0400/18
2	Advertiser	Wicked Campers
3	Product	Travel
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Transport
5	Date of Determination	12/09/2018
6	DETERMINATION	Upheld - Not Modified or Discontinued

ISSUES RAISED

- 2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Gender
- 2.2 - Objectification Degrading - women
- 2.2 - Objectification Exploitative - women
- 2.3 - Violence Violence
- 2.4 - Sex/sexuality/nudity S/S/N - general

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

Wicked Camper Van with South Australian registration S 388 BSU with the words “if you want to toughen up grow a vagina - those things can really take a pounding” on the rear of the vehicle.

THE COMPLAINT

A sample of comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:

Self explanatory - a disgrace to women!!

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 DETERMINATION

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 wording on the vehicle was not acceptable.

The Panel viewed the advertisement and noted the advertiser had not provided a response.

The Panel noted that this advertisement features the slogan, "Grow some balls? If you want to toughen up grow a vagina – those things can really take a pounding" on the back of a Wicked Campers van.

The Panel considered whether the advertisement complied with Section 2.1 of the Code which requires that 'advertisements shall not portray or depict material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, sexual preference, religion, disability, mental illness or political belief.'

The Panel noted the Practice Note to Section 2.1 provides the following definitions:

Discrimination – unfair or less favourable treatment.

Vilification – humiliates, intimidates, incites hatred, contempt or ridicule."

The Panel considered that this statement identifies both male and females through the use of the words 'balls' and 'vagina', however considered that the overall message did not suggest unfair or less favourable treatment of either gender.

The Panel considered that the statement 'grow some balls' is often used as a way to tell people to toughen up, and that the suggestion that vaginas are tougher than testicles is not a suggestion which would humiliate, intimidate, incite hatred, contempt or ridicule of either gender.

The Panel considered that the advertisement did not portray or depict material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on



account of gender and determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.1 of the Code

The Panel then considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.2 of the Code. Section 2.2 of the Code states: "Advertising or marketing communications should not employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative or degrading of any individual or group of people."

The Panel noted the AANA Practice Note which provides guidance on the meaning of the terms exploitative and degrading:

"Exploitative - (a) taking advantage of the sexual appeal of a person, or group of people, by depicting them as objects or commodities; or (b) focussing on their body parts where this bears no direct relevance to the product or service being advertised. Degrading – lowering in character or quality a person or group of people."

The Panel first considered whether the advertisement contained sexual appeal.

The Panel considered that the most likely inference of the concept of vaginas taking a pounding is as a reference to sex. The Panel considered that this reference to sex meant that the advertisement did contain some level of sexual appeal.

The Panel considered that the reference to vaginas taking a pounding identifies a part of a woman's body and equates it to a sexualised object, and in the Panel's view this amounts to a depiction which is exploitative.

The Panel determined that the advertisement did employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative or degrading of a group of people, and did breach Section 2.2 of the Code.

The Panel considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.3 of the Code. Section 2.3 states: "Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not present or portray violence unless it is justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised".

The Panel considered that the slogan referencing that vaginas 'can take a pounding' was a reference to sex with violent connotations.

The Panel considered a reference to sexual violence was not appropriate.

The Panel considered that the advertisement portrayed violence in a way which was not justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised, and did breach Section 2.3 of the Code.



The Panel considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.4 of the Code. Section 2.4 of the Code states: “Advertising or Marketing Communications shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience”.

The Panel considered that the slogan referencing that vaginas ‘can take a pounding’ was a reference to sex.

The Panel noted that as a transport advertisement the relevant audience for this advertisement would be broad, and include children. The Panel considered that a strong sexual was not appropriate in this context for the relevant broad audience.

The Panel considered that the advertisement did not treat the issue of sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant broad audience and that the advertisement did breach Section 2.4 of the Code.

Finding that the advertisement did breach Sections 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 of the Code the Panel upheld the complaint.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE TO DETERMINATION

The advertiser has not provided a response to the Panel's determination. Ad Standards will continue to work with the relevant authorities regarding this issue of non-compliance.