

COMPLAINT NUMBER	17/035
COMPLAINANT	T Carmody
ADVERTISER	Village Roadshow Ltd
ADVERTISEMENT	Village Roadshow Ltd, Television
DATE OF MEETING	28 February 2017
OUTCOME	Not Upheld

SUMMARY

The television advertisement promoting a film called “Red Dog True Blue” includes short clips from the film. The film is set on a cattle station in Western Australia. One of the excerpts shows a man saying “Where’s my bloody shaving cream?” In the following shot is a dog, which appears to have shaving cream on its face.

The Complainant said they were appalled an advertisement which contained the swear word “bloody” would be played during a children’s television programme.

The Advertiser said the advertisement received a “G” Commercial Approval Bureau (CAB) rating and the word “bloody” was used purely as “an intensifier (to intensify the comedy where the dog steals the shaving cream)”. The Advertiser said the advertisement is no longer running.

The Media said the film was classified PG by the film censor. The Media said unless footage dictates otherwise PG rated movies are normally given General ratings by CAB. The Media said the word “bloody” is a fairly common Australian expression and, in the context of this advertisement, is not said in an intimidating way.

A majority of the Complaints Board agreed the word “bloody” was used in a non-threatening way, in a humorous context, and did not reach the threshold required to cause serious or widespread offence. Therefore the advertisement did not breach Basic Principle 4 or Rule 5 of the Code of Ethics.

A minority of the Complaints Board said the placement of the advertisement, in the morning, during children’s programming, was inappropriate and a breach of the Code of Ethics.

In accordance with the majority, the Complaints Board ruled to Not Uphold the complaint.

[No further action required]

Please note this headnote does not form part of the Decision.

COMPLAINTS BOARD DECISION

The Chair directed the Complaints Board to consider the advertisement with reference to Basic Principle 4 and Rule 5 of the Code of Ethics. This required the Complaints Board to

consider whether the advertisement had been prepared with a due sense of social responsibility to consumers and to society and whether it contained anything which is likely to cause serious or widespread offence..

The Complaints Board ruled the complaint was Not Upheld.

The Complaint

The Complainant said they were appalled an advertisement which contained the swear word “bloody” was played during a children’s television programme.

The Advertiser’s Response

The Advertiser said the advertisement received a “G” CAB rating and the word “bloody” was used purely as “an intensifier (to intensify the comedy where the dog steals the shaving cream)”. The Advertiser said the advertisement is no longer running.

The Media’s Response

The Media said the film was classified PG by the film censor. The Media said unless footage dictates otherwise PG rated movies are normally given General ratings by CAB. The Media said the word “bloody” is a fairly common Australian expression and, in the context of this advertisement, is not said in an intimidating way.

Precedents

To assist in coming to its decision the Complaints Board reviewed a precedent decision, Complaint 11/624, which was ruled “No Grounds to Proceed”. This complaint concerned a television advertisement for Weight Watchers. In its decision, the Chair agreed that the use of the phrase “cheeky bugger” was “light-hearted humorous intent and did not reach the threshold to cause serious or widespread offence”.

The Complaints Board Discussion

Having considered all the information provided, the Complaints Board turned to consider whether the advertisement had breached Basic Principle 4 or Rule 5 of the Code of Ethics.

Was the use of the word “bloody” likely to cause serious or widespread offence?

A majority of the Complaints Board agreed the word “bloody” was used in a non-threatening way, in a humorous context, and did not reach the threshold required to cause serious or widespread offence.

A minority of the Complaints Board said the placement of the advertisement, in the morning, during children’s programming, was inappropriate. The minority said young viewers during this time slot were likely to be unsupervised. The word “bloody” is number 29 on the list of “Unacceptable Words on Television and Radio”, published by the Broadcasting Standards Authority.

Therefore, in accordance with the majority, the Complaints Board agreed the advertisement was had been prepared with the requisite sense of social responsibility. The Complaints Board ruled the advertisement was not in breach of Basic Principle 4 or Rule 5 of the Code of Ethics.

The Complaints Board ruled the Complaint was Not Upheld.

Decision: Complaint Not Upheld

DESCRIPTION OF ADVERTISEMENT

The television advertisement promoting a film called "Red Dog True Blue" includes short excerpts from the film. The film is set on a cattle station in Western Australia. One of the excerpts shows a man saying "Where's my bloody shaving cream?" In the following shot is a dog, which appears to have shaving cream on its face.

COMPLAINT FROM T CARMODY

The reasons that I found this programme breached the standards:

While watching this programme this morning with my grandsons aged 3 and 6 you played a trailer for a programme called Red Dog.

The phrase was "where's my bloody"

I find it appalling that you would broadcast a swear word during a children's television programme.

I'm also appalled and disappointed that a children's programme. Namely the above mentioned Red Dog would even include swearing.

Those of us who care about our young people should be protecting them from bad language and upholding higher standards.

CODE OF ETHICS

Basic Principle 4: All advertisements should be prepared with a due sense of social responsibility to consumers and to society.

Rule 5: Offensiveness - Advertisements should not contain anything which in the light of generally prevailing community standards is likely to cause serious or widespread offence taking into account the context, medium, audience and product (including services).

CODE FOR ADVERTISING TO CHILDREN

Principle 1: Advertisements should be prepared with and observe a high standard of social responsibility.

RESPONSE FROM ADVERTISER: VILLAGE ROADSHOW

RED DOG: True Blue is an iconic Australian movie that released in NZ cinemas on January 1. The movie explores the early events leading up to the discovery of Red Dog and the Red Dog legend. The movie has received a "PG" classification rating from the Classification Board in NZ with a consumer advice warning of "Coarse Language".

The complaint relates to the TVC with key number RDT 19575 15 NZ and in particular the use of the word "bloody" within the creative.

This particular TVC is no longer running on air, however it received a "G" CAB rating for use on NZ television. The use of the word "bloody" in the tvc was not malicious/ threatening in any way and it's use was purely an intensifier (to intensify the comedy where the dog steals Bryan Browns shaving crème). Our intention was in no way to offend viewers.

RESPONSE FROM MEDIA: COMMERCIAL APPROVALS BUREAU

The Red Dog True Blue film was classified PG by the film censor. Within the trailer for this iconic Australian movie the word 'bloody' is used by Bryan Brown when the dog steals his shaving cream. A fairly common Australian expression, it is not said in an intimidating way. Unless footage dictates otherwise PG rated movies are normally given General ratings by CAB, and in this instance it was felt the term was totally in keeping with the scene.

We regret that one complainant took offence but do not believe this warrants an upheld decision.