

COMPLAINT NUMBER	17/326
COMPLAINANT	J Walters
ADVERTISER	Reckitt Benckiser (NZ) Limited
ADVERTISEMENT	Reckitt Benckiser (NZ) Limited, Television
DATE OF MEETING	18 September 2017
OUTCOME	No Grounds to Proceed

Advertisement: The television advertisement for Dettol Glen 20 disinfectant spray states that it “kills 99.9% of germs on more than just the rubbish bin.” Using cartoon images, the advertisement shows a range of different applications the spray can be used for including the outline of a foot with flames being sprayed with Dettol to “kill the athletes foot fungus on hard surfaces.”

The Chair ruled there were no grounds for the complaint to proceed.

Complainant, J Walters, said: I noticed an ad for a spray dettol product, In this ad it featured fake flames and they were being sprayed with the dettol product. The product is for smells, like shoes etc. Anyway I felt that this may prompt a child to use a spray can to extinguish flames, and they could pick up any can thinking this may put out a fire.

The relevant provisions were Code of Ethics - Basic Principle 4, Rule 12.

The Chair noted the Complainant’s concern that the image of flames being sprayed with an aerosol can could promote a dangerous practice.

The Chair examined the advertisement which showed several scenarios in cartoon format, demonstrating the disinfectant properties of the Dettol product. In one brief scene, the advertisement shows the outline of a foot with cartoon flames and the spray shown eliminating the flames.

The Chair said that the presence of flames in the advertisement represented the burning sensation of Athletes Foot referenced in the advertisement, rather than being associated with actual fire. This message was reinforced by the voice-over and words on the screen which stated that the product kills the Athletes Foot fungus on hard surfaces.

In addition, the Chair noted the product was targeted at household shoppers, and was unlikely to appeal to a younger audience.

Therefore, the Chair ruled the advertisement had been prepared with a due sense of social responsibility to consumers and there was no apparent breach of Basic Principle 4 or Rule 12 of the Code of Ethics.

Accordingly, the Chair ruled there were no grounds for the complaint to proceed.

Chair's Ruling: Complaint No Grounds to Proceed