

COMPLAINT NUMBER	18/096
COMPLAINANT	S. Smithson
ADVERTISER	Unilever Australasia
ADVERTISEMENT	Rexona Invisible Sweat, Television
DATE OF MEETING	6 April 2018
OUTCOME	No Grounds to Proceed

Advertisement: The television advertisement for Rexona Invisible Sweat promoted its deodorant products by playing on the concept of ‘invisible’ and showing people participating in activities such as riding an invisible bicycle. The advertisement said, in part: “Rexona. Fight odour, sweat and stains.” The advertisement concludes with a picture of the various sizes of the deodorant product and states “also available for women.”

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

Complainant, S. Smithson, said: The commercial promotes the product correctly as reducing white or yellow stains by use of the product. It shows male models to show this. However, the final closing of the ad I feel inappropriately and excessively sexualises the product. It does this by showing the product in 3 sizes ALL of which appear to be similar in shape to ADULT SEX TOYS. The last addition says the product is also available for women. The text of WOMEN is written in larger text than the rest of the line, thereby accentuating the suggestive nature of the packaging. The advert is not to promote a company selling adult sex products and is likely to have been shown at an earlier time than that noted in my observation.

The relevant provisions were Code of Ethics - Basic Principle 4, Rule 4, Rule 5;

The Chair noted the Complainant’s concerns the advertisement was inappropriate and sexually suggestive as the deodorant containers resembled “adult sex toys”.

The Chair reviewed the advertisement and the closing scene which was of particular concern to the Complainant. While she noted the Complainant’s interpretation, the Chair said the advertisement was showing the actual products and it was unlikely most consumers would equate the shape of the containers with adult sex toys. The Chair’s view is that the advertisement was focused on men, so the text “women” merely advised customers that the product was available for women as well as men. The Chair said the advertisement was not sexually suggestive and focused on demonstrating the deodorant product.

The Chair said, taking into account context, audience and product, the advertisement was unlikely to cause serious or widespread offence and was not in breach of Rule 4 or Rule 5 of the Code of Ethics. The Chair said the advertisement had been prepared with a due sense of social responsibility to consumers and was not in breach of Basic Principle 4 of the Code of Ethics.

Accordingly, the Chair ruled there was no apparent breach of the Advertising Codes and the complaint had no grounds to proceed.

Chair's Ruling: Complaint **No Grounds to Proceed**

APPEAL INFORMATION

According to the procedures of the Advertising Standards Complaints Board, all decisions are able to be appealed by any party to the complaint. Information on our Appeal process is on our website www.asa.co.nz. Appeals must be made in writing via email or letter within 14 days of receipt of this decision.