

COMPLAINT NUMBER	18/241
COMPLAINANT	C Steunebrink
ADVERTISER	Carnival New Zealand
ADVERTISEMENT	P&O, Television
DATE OF MEETING	31 July 2018
OUTCOME	No Grounds to Proceed

Advertisement: The television advertisement for P&O cruises shows an external shot of a P&O ship as well as images of the interior. The voiceover says “A free room upgrade on your next P&O cruise for just a \$1 deposit. Am I on board with that? The advertisement then shows a ship-wrecked character reclining on the ship’s sun deck saying “Ship yeah!” The advertisement ends with the voiceover saying “P&O Ship Yeah sale is on now!”

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

Complainant, C Steunebrink, said: I wish to complain about the new P & O ad saying "Shipyeah" we really know what they are saying and it is offensive to me and I am sure many others. Maybe the young people of today do not care about insinuations but I do and maybe the producers of this advertisement think they are being smart. So pretty much they are swearing and it is highly offensive to me and to hear it over and over again gives me a headache.

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

The Chair noted the Complainant’s concern the advertisement had used the word ‘ship’ in place of and to infer the swear word “shit” and that was offensive.

The Chair acknowledged the Advertiser was attempting to use humour by inserting an inoffensive word with a similar sound in place of a swear word. She noted the play on words continued later in the advertisement with the ‘on board’ reference which was in keeping with the tongue-in-cheek humour of the cruise ship advertisement. The Chair confirmed that humour and satire were permissible under the Advertising Codes.

The word “shit” was ranked 26th of 31 words on the Unacceptable Words On Television and Radio 2013 list published by the Broadcasting Standards Authority.

The Chair noted that similar advertisements and concerns had been considered by the Complaints Board and the complaints had not been upheld.

Precedent decision 15/153 concerned a radio advertisement for Vent Mechanical's services which included attendance to breakdowns and diagnostic issues and provision of spare parts. This advertisement said in part: “Aw truck it. My trucking truck is trucked! Need to vent? Talk to your Vent Mechanical repairers, they service and repair all makes and models of truck and much more...”

In its decision the Complaints Board said taking into account the use of humour and the

context, medium, audience and product being advertised as well as findings in a previous decision (14/627) the advertisement was unlikely to cause serious or widespread offence to most people and did not offend against generally prevailing community standards.

Precedent decision 16/129 concerned a television advertisement for Handee Ultra and showed various people cleaning up domestic spills with a handy towel and exclaiming “sheet” each time. The advertisement concluded with the message: “This is the good sheet.” In its decision the Complaints Board said the advertisement did not reach the threshold to cause serious or widespread offence as it did not contain any expletives and clearly employed humour. The Complaints Board said the advertisement targeted an adult audience and the Advertiser had taken steps to ensure the advertisement was not played when significant numbers of children were likely to see it.

The Chair noted the Complainant’s concern but said the advertisement was unlikely to cause serious or widespread offence to most people and did not offend against generally prevailing community standards. As such, she said the advertisement was not in breach of Rules 4 or 5 of the Code of Ethics and had been prepared with a due sense of social responsibility to consumers and society.

Therefore, the Chair ruled there were no grounds for the complaint 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.