

COMPLAINT NUMBER	19/189
COMPLAINANT	K Batchelor
ADVERTISER	ASB Bank Ltd
ADVERTISEMENT	ASB, Television
DATE OF MEETING	27 May 2019
OUTCOME	No Grounds to Proceed

Advertisement: The ASB Bank television advertisement introduces Hana, the newest ASB GetWise graduate. Hana is shown in her bedroom working with the ASB mascot Kashin and then in a local park with a stall to sell sticks to dog owners. The voice-over says “ASB helps kids get clever with cash, keeping them one step ahead”.

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

Complainant, K Batchelor, said: This advertisement tacitly approves a proven harmful activity, i.e. using sticks as a fetch toy for dogs. Many professionals and organisations have long campaigned against this perilous yet still common practice and this ad plainly works against them. This ad is an example of corporate irresponsibility, especially since their spokesperson has apparently responded flippantly to a real and present danger which is pitched to children en masse.

The relevant provisions were Advertising Standards Code - Principle 1, Rule 1 (e) and the Code for Financial Advertising - Principle 1.

The Chair noted the Complainant’s sincere concern the advertisement encourages the use of sticks as fetch toys for dogs, which could be harmful.

The Chair said as the advertisement was for the ASB Bank, the Code for Financial Advertising applied. The Chair also considered Rule 1(e) of the Advertising Standards Code which states: “Advertisements must not, unless justifiable on educational or social grounds, encourage or condone dangerous, illegal or unsafe practices, or portray situations which encourage or condone a disregard for safety.”

The Chair referred to a decision, 18/366 for Flixonase, which showed a number of partly finished jobs including someone in the middle of shaving a golden retriever. The Complainant was concerned this scene would encourage people to do the same. The Chair considered the likely consumer takeout of the advertisement and said it was promoting a Hayfever treatment to relieve symptoms that may result from the scenarios illustrated involving dog hair, dusting and mowing lawns. While acknowledging the Complainant’s concern about the image of the partially shaved dog, The Chair said the advertisement was not likely to encourage this practice. That complaint was ruled to have no grounds to proceed.

Turning to the advertisement before her, the Chair noted the information provided by the Complainant about the risks for dogs in using fetch sticks.

The Chair considered the likely consumer takeout of the ASB advertisement and said it was promoting children being smart with money and showing initiative by selling something that people could get for free. ASB Bank has workshops to teach children about money. The Chair said the advertisement did not meet the threshold to encourage an unsafe practise.

The Chair said the advertisement had been prepared with the required standard of social responsibility and ruled it was not in breach of Principle 1 of the Code for Financial Advertising or Principle 1 and Rule 1(e) of the Advertising Standards Code.

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.