

COMPLAINT NUMBER	19/194
COMPLAINANT	P Futter
ADVERTISER	Pet Refuge Charitable Trust
ADVERTISEMENT	Pet Refuge Charitable Trust, Television
DATE OF MEETING	27 May 2019
OUTCOME	No Grounds to Proceed

Advertisement: The television advertisement for Pet Refuge begins with the image of a dog and shows a woman with bruising on her face packing bags with her children. As they prepare to leave the house, the woman turns back to see someone holding the dog. She lets her bags drop to the ground. The text states: “Too many women have to choose between their safety and the safety of their pets.” The advertisement shows the Advertiser’s logo and ends with a call to action, “Donate at PetRefuge.org.nz to help us build a shelter.”

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

Complainant, P Futter, said: Tvnz one during 6pm news break on 20 May 2019. Ad by pet refuge that portrayed it was better to put up with domestic violence then risk the chance of pet abuse.

The relevant provisions were Advertising Standards Code - Principle 1, Rule 1(c), Principle 2, Rule 2(e);

The Chair noted the Complainant’s concern the advertisement supports risking domestic abuse to save a pet.

The Chair acknowledged the Complainant’s genuine concern with the possible consumer takeout that people should stay in abusive relationship if there was a risk for their pets. The Chair confirmed the advertisement for Pet Refuge, in association with Women’s Refuge, was intended to raise awareness and encourage donations to help build New Zealand’s first shelter for pets affected by domestic violence. The Chair said it was an advocacy advertisement and agreed the message could be confronting. Advocacy advertising is provided for under Rule 2(e) of the Advertising Standards Code and robust expression of opinion is allowed, as long as the advertiser is clearly identified.

The Chair said the Advertiser’s name, logo and website shown in the advertisement were sufficient to meet the identity requirements of an advocacy advertisement.

The Chair said in her view, the advertisement was highlighting evidence found in 2018 research conducted by Women’s Refuge which concluded that pet safety is one reason people delay leaving their abuser. She noted the aim of the Pet Refuge project was to remove one of the major barriers faced by those trying to escape a violent environment.

Taking into account the intent of the advertisement and the identity of the Advertiser, the Chair said it had been prepared with a due sense of social responsibility and was not in breach of Principle 1, Principle 2, Rule 1(c) or Rule 2 (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.