

<b>COMPLAINT NUMBER</b>	19/321
<b>COMPLAINANT</b>	J Sarah
<b>ADVERTISER</b>	Vodafone NZL
<b>ADVERTISEMENT</b>	Vodafone, NZL, Television
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	2 September 2019
<b>OUTCOME</b>	No Grounds to Proceed

**Advertisement:** The television advertisement for Vodafone My Flex Prepay shows a woman sitting in her car with the words “The future according to Nicole” written across the screen. The woman appears to be in traffic and is talking to her partner on speaker phone. He says, “The kids are going nuts, how far away are you?” She says, “Sorry babe, it’s bumper to bumper”. She then turns to the camera and says “Family life chews through the minutes... and describes the My Flex Prepay Plan she has with Vodafone which includes “a chunk of data for me” When she hears a child’s voice say “I need go toilet” she says “Ooh, movement, bye”, and ends the call. The advertisement moves to a wide shot and shows the woman parked at the beach eating a cupcake and watching content on her phone. The advertisement ends with the Vodafone logo.

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

**Complainant, J Sarah, said:** Vodafone’s newest ad shows a woman in her car, pretending to be in traffic and she goes on to discuss the my flexi-prepay deals vodafone have to offer. Shes actually in a car park overlooking the city about to eat a muffin. The ad shows her male-presenting male-identifying ‘partner’ frantic at home dealing with the children, reflecting a staunch heterosexual relationship.

we have the highest rates of suicide, and these ads by vodafone are not helping. Depicting heterosexual relationships as though its the highest quality of normal is actually a breach of human relations. Heterosexuality is not top prize in someones life. Sexuality is fluid, as is gender identity. This ad by vodafone is not actually ok.

Fix this please.

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

**Principle 1: Social Responsibility:** Advertisements must be prepared and placed with a due sense of social responsibility to consumers and to society.

**Rule 1(c): Decency and Offensiveness:** Advertisements must not contain anything that is indecent, or exploitative or degrading, or likely to cause harm, or serious or widespread offence, or give rise to hostility, contempt abuse or ridicule.

**The Chair** noted the Complainant’s concern the advertisement presented heterosexual relationships as the status quo in society.

The Chair said the advertisement promoted a flexible prepay plan for a mobile phone company, using a woman making decisions that suited her on how to spend her time, regardless of what else was happening in her life.

The Chair did not consider the relationship depicted in the advertisement would be seen as a model for any couple, regardless of gender. She acknowledged the Complainant's concern that the advertisement used a heterosexual relationship for its storyline but confirmed that this, in itself, is not a breach of the Advertising Standards Code.

The Chair ruled the advertisement did not meet the threshold to cause serious or widespread offence. The Chair said the advertisement was not in breach of Principle 1 or Rule 1(c) 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](http://www.asa.co.nz). Appeals must be made in writing via email or letter within 14 days of receipt of this decision.