

COMPLAINT NUMBER	20/090
ADVERTISER	Chow Restaurant
ADVERTISEMENT	Chow, Poster
DATE OF MEETING	16 March 2020
OUTCOME	No Grounds to Proceed

Advertisement: The logo for the Asian food restaurant *Chow* is a line drawing of two bowls on top of each other with chopsticks drawn standing at an angle in the top bowl. The image appears on posters advertising the restaurant with the text “Feeding you until midnight.”

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

Complaint: Chow uses the image of chopsticks standing upright in a bowl in their advertising. Recently, I noticed the image on a poster down the alley besides the St James and again along Kent Terrace, but they also use the attached image on their website. A restaurant that serves Asian-fusion cuisine - including Japanese dishes - should be aware of basic etiquette when it comes to how chopsticks are used in Japan and other East Asian countries. Chopsticks standing upright in a bowl is disrespectful, it resembles the incense standing in a bowl of rice at a Shinto funeral and Japanese people avoid doing this with their chopsticks

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 did not observe the basic etiquette of how chopsticks are used in Japanese culture and is disrespectful.

The Chair noted the information provided by the Complainant that the upright position of chopsticks in a bowl of food is disrespectful. She said the stylised line drawing of the bowls and chopsticks was simple with very little detail. The Chair took into account that there was no food shown in the drawing and the chopsticks were displayed at an angle rather than upright.

Rule 1(c) of the Advertising Standards Code required the Chair to consider whether the use of the illustration in this context was likely to cause serious or widespread offence in light of generally prevailing community standards. The Chair acknowledged the genuine concerns of the Complainant but said the threshold to cause serious or widespread offence had not been reached.

The Chair said the advertisement had been prepared with the due sense of social responsibility required and ruled it 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. Appeals must be made in writing via email or letter within 14 calendar days of receipt of this decision.