

COMPLAINT NUMBER	20/343
ADVERTISER	Human Rights Commission
ADVERTISEMENT	Human Rights Commission Television
DATE OF MEETING	17 August 2020
OUTCOME	No Grounds to Proceed

Advertisement: The Human Rights Commission television advertisement is part of the New Zealand Human Rights Commission's "Give Nothing to Racism" campaign. It shows a white person sitting listening to something using headphones. The text "Are you Willing to Listen?" comes across the screen. The advertisement ends with the Human Rights Commission logo and the website address "Voice of racism.co.nz".

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

Complaint: The add is about racism by NZ Human Rights. It depicts people sitting on a stool listening to what I assume to be racist comments and remarks.. I have seen the add at various times and on different channels but made note on the 28th of the times and channel that I saw it. In all the times I have seen this advertisement I have only ever seen white people listening to the recordings. My take on this is that they are inferring that only white people are racist. I feel there should be more balance by having people of other race also listening to the recordings. By not doing so the advertisement itself becomes racist in it's content / format. Racism comes in many forms and to only depict one is, in my opinion, wrong.

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

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.

Principle 2: Truthful Presentation: Advertisements must be truthful, balanced and not misleading.

Rule 2(e) Advocacy advertising: Advocacy advertising must clearly state the identity and position of the advertiser. Opinion in support of the advertiser's position must be clearly distinguishable from factual information. Factual information must be able to be substantiated.

The Chair noted the Complainant's concerns the advertisement infers that only white people are racist.

The Chair said the advertisements in this campaign were advocacy advertising from a statutory entity to discourage racism. The Chair said while the advertisements seen by the

Complainant may have only featured white people there are other advertisements in this campaign which feature people of different ethnicities. The Chair said these other examples can be seen on the Human Rights Commission Facebook page.

The Chair said the advertisements which are the subject of this complaint were not misleading and did not reach the threshold to cause serious or widespread offence.

The Chair ruled the advertisements were not in breach of Principle 1, Principle 2 or Rules 1(c) or 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 calendar days of receipt of this decision.