

<b>COMPLAINT NUMBER</b>	21/227
<b>ADVERTISER</b>	TVNZ
<b>ADVERTISEMENT</b>	Ru Paul's Drag Race Down Under, Billboard
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	10 May 2021
<b>OUTCOME</b>	No Grounds to Proceed

**Advertisement:** The TVNZ billboard advertisement promotes the new programme *RuPaul Drag Race Down Under*. The billboard shows a picture of RuPaul dressed in drag, with a red bralet top. The Advertisement text says, "Your new Queen has arrived."

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

**Complaint 1:** I would like to make a complaint about a large QMS billboard at the Cobham Drive/Calabar Road round about by Wellington Airport at the entrance to Miramar Peninsula.

The image is of a transgender woman wearing a very revealing dress which shows a lot of her breasts. I believe this breaches decency of advertising - Rule 1c of the advertising code.

I have two young boys and feel uncomfortable driving them past this billboard every day, and I know they feel uncomfortable seeing it. There are 10 primary schools on the Miramar Peninsula and thousands of children, I just don't think this image is appropriate to display at this size, in this area.

The image is for a TVNZ show and other images on their website show the same woman wearing other clothing that is much less revealing of her breasts and would be more appropriate on this billboard.

See attached image of billboard below. Thank you for taking the time to review this.

**Complaint 2:** I would like to make a complaint on behalf of my family. There is a large QMS billboard at the Cobham Drive/Calabar Road round about by Wellington Airport at the entrance to Miramar Peninsula. It is a TVNZ advert for the TV show Ru Paul Drag Race Down Under. The image is of a transgender woman wearing a very revealing dress which shows a lot of her breasts and is sexualised. I believe this breaches decency of advertising - Rule 1c of the advertising code. My family and I feel uncomfortable driving past this every day. There are 10 primary schools on the Miramar Peninsula and thousands of children, I just don't think this sexualised image is appropriate to display at this size, in this area. The image is for a TVNZ show and other images on their website show the same woman wearing other clothing that is much less revealing of her breasts and would be more appropriate on this billboard. The rating of this TV show on the TVNZ website says: "16LSC WARNING: Contains sexual content and coarse language." therefore I request that this image be removed from the billboard site as isn't appropriate for general audiences (including children). As a side note, the slogan is also offensive to our Queen, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Please see attached image of billboard . Thank you for your time.

**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 Complainants were concerned the image on the advertisement was inappropriate for its location and potential audience.

The Chair carefully reviewed the advertisement and noted the image was of RuPaul the successful American drag queen. A Guardian interview with Deca Aitkenhead in 2018 quoted RuPaul as saying, "We are wearing clothes that are hyperfeminine, that represent our culture's synthetic idea of femininity."

Rule 1(c) of the Advertising Standards Code required the Chair to consider whether the image was indecent or whether the use of the image, in this context, was likely to cause serious or widespread offence, in light of generally prevailing community standards.

The Chair said the level of breast exposure shown in the advertisement was not dissimilar to that portrayed in much billboard lingerie advertising and the image was not indecent. The Chair said that despite the Complainants' objection to the advertisement, it did not reach the threshold to cause serious or widespread offence for most consumers.

The Chair also noted one Complainant was concerned the reference to 'queen' was offensive to Queen Elizabeth II. The Chair said the word 'queen' was not exclusively used in a royal context and its use to describe RuPaul in this advertisement was not offensive.

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 complaints to proceed.

**Chair's Ruling:** Complaints **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 calendar days of receipt of this decision.