

COMPLAINT NUMBER	21/449
ADVERTISER	Woolworths New Zealand Limited.
ADVERTISEMENT	Countdown Television
DATE OF MEETING	21 September 2021
OUTCOME	No Grounds to Proceed

Advertisement: The Countdown television advertisement shows scenes of farms, farm produce and Countdown supermarkets. The soundtrack is the first verse of the song, "Morning Has Broken": "Morning has broken like the first morning, Blackbird has spoken like the first bird, Praise for the singing, praise for the morning, Praise for them springing fresh from the world". The advertisement ends with the text "Every Day's a Fresh Day - Fresh Every Day - We can help with that" and the Countdown logo.

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

Complaint: The advert by Countdown with the Christian Hymn Morning has Broken. This music is a Hymn that expresses God's creation and should be used in such an offensive manner to promote a supermarket. This is a beautiful hymn about God's creation and should not be used in such a derogatory way.

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 was concerned the use of the song Morning Has Broken in a Countdown advertisement was offensive.

Rule 1(c) of the Advertising Standards Code required the Chair to consider whether the use of the song Morning Has Broken, in this context, was likely to cause serious or widespread offence in light of generally prevailing community standards. The Chair said that despite the Complainant's objection to the advertisement, the choice of music for this advertisement did not reach the threshold to cause serious or widespread offence for most consumers, for several reasons. New Zealand is a largely secular society and the hymn, which is about giving thanks for each day, has been introduced into popular culture by Cat Stevens. The advertisement only references the first verse of the hymn and it was not being used by the Advertiser in a way that most people would object to.

The Chair said the advertisement had been prepared with the due sense of social responsibility required and said 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 with notification of the intent to appeal lodged within 14 calendar days of receipt of the written decision. The substantive appeal application must be lodged with the ASA within 21 calendar days of receipt of the written decision.