

COMPLAINT NUMBER	21/465
ADVERTISER	RAC
ADVERTISEMENT	RAC, Out of Home
DATE OF MEETING	21 September 2021
OUTCOME	No Grounds to Proceed

Advertisement: The RAC fence banner shows the RAC logo and the image of two images of men standing in front of construction sites. The text on the banner says, "Been unfaithful? We've dug ourselves out of much bigger holes. racgroup.co.nz" against a red background.

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

Complaint: This advert is juvenile and in bad taste. I really don't want to read it every day when I drive by. It glorifies and makes a joke of adultery. Their PR department needs to take a hard look at themselves? It is presumably run by a 12 year old boy who thinks this is amusing.

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 advertisement was in bad taste and glorifies as well as trivialises adultery.

The Chair carefully reviewed the advertisement, noted RAC is a construction company, and the banner is on the fence of a construction site. She said the likely consumer takeout was the wording is an attempt at humour, referring to the problem infidelity is likely to cause in relationships. The Chair noted the term "digging yourself out of a hole" is sometimes used to refer to trouble with a partner in that context. The Chair did not consider that the advertisement was referring to infidelity in a positive light.

Rule 1(c) of the Advertising Standards Code required the Chair to consider whether the reference in the advertisement, which made light of the problems infidelity may cause, while offensive to the Complainant, was not likely to cause serious or widespread offence, in light of generally prevailing community standards.

The Chair said the advertisement had been prepared with the due sense of social responsibility required and ruled the advertisement had not met the threshold to breach 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.