

COMPLAINT NUMBER	18/013
COMPLAINANT	J Van Wijk
ADVERTISER	Foodstuffs NZ
ADVERTISEMENT	Television
DATE OF MEETING	10 January 2018
OUTCOME	No Grounds to Proceed

Advertisement: The television advertisement for Pak n Save promoted their Christmas specials and stated, in part: “Say Merry Fridgemmas with the gift of meat... make this Fridgemmas bigger than ever as Pak n Save.”

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

Complainant, J. Van Wijk, said: “THE USE OF THE WORD FRIDGEMAS IS VERY OFFENSIVE TO ME AS A CHRISTIAN, AND AN INSULT TO THOSE OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.’...

IT IS BASED ON THE WORD CHRISTMAS , WHICH HAS CHRIST AT ITS CENTRE AND THIS WORD SHOULD NOT BE ADULTERATED.
IT IS IN VERY BAD TASTE.”

The relevant provisions were Code of Ethics - Basic Principle 4, Rule 4, Rule 5;

The Chair acknowledged the offence the use of the word “Fridgemmas” had caused the Complainant.

The Chair noted the phrase was not used in a profane context but was a light-hearted portmanteau or blend of the words ‘fridge’ and Christmas in order to promote the supermarket’s holiday specials. Using the name Jesus Christ in a blasphemous manner did not rank highly in the Broadcasting Standards Authority 2013 survey titled “What Not to Swear. The Acceptability of Words in Broadcasting 2013,” which the Complaints Board used as a useful guide to generally prevailing community standards.

The Chair’s was of the view that, while offensive to the Complainant, “Fridgemmas” when considered in context, was relatively mild and, in light of generally prevailing community standards, the use of it in the advertisement did not reach the threshold to be likely to cause serious or widespread offence. Therefore, the Chair said there was no apparent breach of the Advertising Codes.

Accordingly, the Chair ruled that there were no grounds for the complaint to proceed.

Chairman’s Ruling: Complaint **No Grounds to Proceed**