

COMPLAINT NUMBER	20/198
ADVERTISER	Stanley St Limited
ADVERTISEMENT	Support Local, Shop Local Television
DATE OF MEETING	18 May 2020
OUTCOME	No Grounds to Proceed

Advertisement: The television advertisement created by Stanley St advertising agency and supported by Mediaworks recognised the negative impact on local businesses through COVID-19. The voiceover for the advertisement said “Our local business owners are making huge sacrifices for our survival. Don’t let them sacrifice their businesses too. Let’s make it count New Zealand and Shop Local”

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

Complaint: This advertisement about businesses sacrificing something for covid19 is misleadingly and grossly incorrect. The meaning to sacrifice is to give something up willing. This was not the case with businesses during lockdown, it was forced upon businesses by the government and we were threatened if your business continued to run if not deemed essential. All businesses in this advert were nonessential, and were effectively jeopardised not sacrificed. People did not close their businesses for the good of the country’s health it was not a choice it was forced closure.

The relevant provisions were Advertising Standards Code - Principle 2, Rule 2(b);

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

Rule 2(b) Truthful Presentation: Advertisements must not mislead or be likely to mislead, deceive or confuse consumers, abuse their trust or exploit their lack of knowledge. This includes by implication, inaccuracy, ambiguity, exaggeration, unrealistic claim, omission, false representation or otherwise. Obvious hyperbole identifiable as such is not considered to be misleading.

The Chair noted the Complainant’s concern about the use of the word “sacrifice” in the advertisement.

The Chair referred to the Oxford Dictionary definition of the word “sacrifice” which is “the fact of giving up something important or valuable to you in order to get or do something that seems more important; something that you give up in this way”.

The Chair noted the restrictions placed on New Zealand society, and in particular businesses, during the COVID-19 pandemic were imposed by the Government. While this was done in the interests of the population as a whole, it was not inaccurate for these restrictions to be described as sacrifices.

While she acknowledged the Complainant's concerns, and the hardship experienced by many businesses, the Chair said the advertisement did not reach the threshold to be considered misleading.

The Chair ruled the advertisement had been prepared with a due sense of social responsibility and was not in breach of Principle 2 or Rule 2(b) 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.