

COMPLAINT NUMBER	20/289
ADVERTISER	Tag IT Technologies
ADVERTISEMENT	Halo Systems, Radio
DATE OF MEETING	20 July 2020
OUTCOME	No Grounds to Proceed

Advertisement: The Halo Systems radio advertisement promotes their milk monitoring system. The advertisement says it can help so farmers don't get "in the *fart noise* by looking after your S H I T [word spelled out one letter at time]. The advertisement ends by saying "Halo, your farm's proven guardian angel. No Shit."

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

Complaint: Using offensive language in the add. Use of swear word S.h.i.t

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's concern the advertisement used offensive language.

The Chair confirmed the word 'shit' is currently ranked thirtieth out of thirty-one words on the Broadcasting Standards Authority's "2018 Most Unacceptable Words in Broadcasting" which assists the Chair in assessing the likely offence of certain language. While the Chair said swearing in advertisements was not ideal, the position of the word 'shit' on the BSA list indicated that the word 'shit' was generally considered less offensive than it once was. She also noted the radio advertisement was broadcast on Newstalk ZB, which has a predominantly adult audience.

Rule 1(c) of the Advertising Standards Code required the Chair to consider whether the use of the use of the word 'shit' in the context of an advertisement about an effluent management system for cows was likely to cause serious or widespread offence in light of generally prevailing community standards. The Chair said that despite the genuine concerns the Complainant had about the advertisement, it did not reach the threshold to cause serious or widespread offence.

The Chair ruled the advertisement had been prepared with a due sense of social responsibility and was not in breach of Principal 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 via email or letter within 14 calendar days of receipt of this decision.