

COMPLAINT NUMBER	21/268
ADVERTISER	Warner Bros
ADVERTISEMENT	“Godzilla vs Kong” movie Out of Home
DATE OF MEETING	24 May 2021
OUTCOME	No Grounds to Proceed

Advertisement: The billboard advertisement for the movie “Godzilla vs Kong” showed an image of King Kong facing off against Godzilla.

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

Complaint: The advertisement breached the standard in that it caused my 2.5 year old significant fear and distress. We drove passed the advert and the image was imposed on her without us putting her in a situation where we would expect her to be exposed to such images. Because we were not aware of the advert before we she saw it, we could not provide prior context for her. She has been afraid at night time ever since saying that the scary monkey is outside and that it is fighting with the dinosaur. She is even too scared to reach over the side of the bed to get her water cup because the scary monkey might "come get her".

The image attached is not the exact advert. As the billboard is a digital one i dont have the resource to wait on the side of the road for it to appear and to take a photo of it. I cannot remember the exact day but if my memory serves me well it was the date stated.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this complaint. i hope we can protect out tamariki from unnecessary and un-consented distress.

The relevant provisions were Advertising Standards Code - Principle 1, Rule 1(g);

Principle 1: Social Responsibility: Advertisements must be prepared and placed with a due sense of social responsibility to consumers and to society.

Rule 1(g) Fear and distress: Advertisements must not cause fear or distress without justification.

The Chair noted the Complainant’s concerns the advertisement caused fear and distress for their two-year old child.

The Chair referred to a precedent decision, 17/330, regarding an out of home advertisement for the Roadshow Films promotion of the movie IT which featured on the back of a bus, and showed a ghostly arm holding a balloon out to a child in a yellow raincoat. It was ruled Not Upheld by the Complaints Board.

Turning to the complaint before her, the Chair said the billboard advertisement for the movie “Godzilla vs Kong” featured well known fantasy characters, Godzilla and King Kong, who would be instantly recognisable to most viewers.

The Chair noted the movie had been given an M rating (Mature) not recommended for children under the age of 15.

While the Chair acknowledged the Complainant's concern about young children being exposed to the image shown in the billboard advertisement, she said the image had not reached a level of fear or distress for most consumers to breach the Advertising Standards Code, taking into account context, medium, audience and product.

The Chair said the advertisement was not in breach of Principle 1 or Rule 1(g) 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.