

COMPLAINT NUMBER	21/360
ADVERTISER	ANZ NZ Ltd
ADVERTISEMENT	ANZ NZ Ltd Television
DATE OF MEETING	19 July 2021
OUTCOME	No Grounds to Proceed

Advertisement: The ANZ television advertisement featured a family which is encouraging one of its members, Sameer, to become an expert cricketer. The family is also shown tracking its home loan, which is with ANZ. At the end of the advertisement Sameer has become a member of the New Zealand cricket team. His father is shown wearing the New Zealand cricket jersey, which has the ANZ logo.

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

Complaint: This is with regards to the ANZ advertisement aired on TVNZ frequently on a daily basis.

We feel that it breaches broadcasting standards under fairness.

The ad showcases an Indian family who have a Home Loan with ANZ thus drawing upon and exclusively on people/audience of Indian cultural and ethnic backgrounds. As I am sure you are aware that New Zealand is a multicultural society, therefore presenting such kind of advertisements or/and showing such images on national TV that are meant to represent a single demography is unfair and extremely biased. Moreover, instead of connecting with the diverse audience (the rest of the country) or at least the majority, we feel that this ad is a false representation of New Zealand Aotearoa as well as racist.

ANZ is a bank for anyone and for people of all ethnic backgrounds. Home loans are for anyone who wishes to apply (as appropriate and if eligible). However, by showcasing ONE SINGLE ethnicity such advertisements implicitly imply that it is solely for/by/of that particular ethnicity in a very explicit manner as portrayed.

Another part of this advertisement contains a stereotypical message which implies that the only sport that people of Indian cultural background enjoy is cricket, which is untrue and again unfair to draw this sort of image to the public and this group of people. This is stereotypical.

We have seen heaps of ads on TVNZ over the years however this by far has such racist connotation and explicit stereotypical implications.

As a broadcasting platform, you have a responsibility to ensure stereotypes, unfair representation and racist connotations are not perpetuated on national TV. Such images and rhetoric can have serious ramifications in the diverse communities within the society, from school kids bullying one another, to unfair representation of communities and New Zealand as a whole, to singling out certain ethnic groups from others etc.

We do not demand anything other than for you to kindly consider and think through the privilege you hold as a broadcasting platform to accommodate and draw on the true diversity of the New Zealand society, be it gender, ethnic culture, age etc.

The relevant provisions were Advertising Standards Code - Principle 1 and 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 was unfair because it only showed one ethnicity, an Indian family, and implied that the only sport Indians play is cricket.

Rule 1(c) of the Advertising Standards Code required the Chair to consider whether featuring the Sharma family in this context was likely to cause serious or widespread offence, in light of generally prevailing community standards. The Chair said that despite the Complainant's objection to the advertisement, it did not reach the threshold to cause serious or widespread offence for most consumers.

The Chair referred to a precedent decision, 20/403, regarding a television advertisement for Brother NZ, which was also ruled No Grounds to Proceed. In that decision the Complainant was concerned the advertisement did not reflect the different ethnicities in New Zealand in 2020 and appeared to "exclude people of colour". The Chair noted there is no requirement for advertisers to feature a range of ethnicities living in New Zealand society in advertisements. The Chair confirmed the way the Advertiser promoted its New Zealand-based call centre to its customers was not likely to cause serious or widespread offence to most consumers.

The Chair said the precedent decision was relevant to the present complaint. The Chair said while there is no requirement for advertisers to feature a range of ethnicities living in New Zealand society, an Advertiser is also free to include people of one particular ethnicity, particularly where the advertisement is featuring the story of a family.

The Chair said while it is commonly known that cricket is popular in the Indian community, the advertisement did not imply that cricket is the "only" game they enjoy. The Chair noted that ANZ is a sponsor for the New Zealand cricket team and Sameer Sharma was selected to play for the team.

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