

COMPLAINT NUMBER	21/414
ADVERTISER	Diamond Laundry Group
ADVERTISEMENT	Liquid Laundromat, Radio
DATE OF MEETING	9 August 2021
OUTCOME	No Grounds to Proceed

Advertisement: The Liquid Laundromat radio advertisement promotes a special price on washing duvet and mink blankets, stating that "it's time to get sorted for winter". The advertisement opens with a jingle and has upbeat background music. At one point the music pauses as the narrator sniffs and asks, "what's that musty smell?", implying that the blankets and mink requiring washing.

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

Complaint: I believe the Social responsibility rule 1c of advertising standards codes with a broad description which includes not to cause harm is being breached In the liquid laundry advert that frequently airs on the ZM radio net work. I know myself and others like my self who have misophonia, a brain disorder where most people cannot withstand/ have hatred of sound including one off noises such as sniffing which very distastefully features in this radio ad with no warning or chance to switch stations. The harm it had caused me on more than one occasion is mentally and physically damaging, causing harm to my ear & anxiety around doing what I usually enjoy which is listening to the radio which additionally ties Into rule 1g. Please can this sniffing noise be removed on Behalf of millions that suffer from misophonia.

The relevant provisions were Advertising Standards Code - Principle 1, Rule 1(c), 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(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.

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

The Chair noted the Complainant was concerned the advertisement was offensive and caused harm to consumers suffering from misophonia.

The Chair carefully reviewed the advertisement and said from time-to-time scenarios in advertising do resonate with some consumers, for personal reasons and it would be difficult to mitigate this in every case. Whilst the Chair acknowledged the Complainant's concern about the sound effects, she said that it was a very small part of the advertisement and was unlikely to cause distress to the majority of consumers.

Rule 1(c) of the Advertising Standards Code required the Chair to consider whether the use of a sniffing sound effect 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 particular circumstance and objection to the advertisement, it did not reach the threshold to cause serious or widespread offence for most consumers.

The Chair said the advertisement was not in breach of Principle 1 or Rules 1(c) and 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.