



Case Report

1	Case Number	0154/15
2	Advertiser	Restore Australia
3	Product	Community Awareness
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Mail
5	Date of Determination	29/04/2015
6	DETERMINATION	Upheld - Modified or Discontinued

ISSUES RAISED

2.3 - Violence Graphic Depictions

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This advertisement is featured on a flyer entitled, "What is Halal?" and features an image of a cow with its throat cut lying on a floor in a pool of blood. The text reads, "Halal slaughter cruelty. This Australian cow was fully conscious as its throat was slit".

THE COMPLAINT

A sample of comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:

Showing a cow with it's throat slit... Blood all over the ground .. kids don't need to see this ..

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the complainant/s regarding this advertisement include the following:

Because there was so little information in your correspondence concerning the complaint, I simply make the following statement.

We are alarmed at the creeping Islamisation of our society. We do NOT want Australia going down the same path as many countries in Europe. We see an urgent need to make Australian Citizens aware of our concerns – hence the flyer.

Yes, the flyer is graphic. We believe it needs to be graphic to attract attention and get the message across.

We are simply exercising our right to freedom of expression.

We are very concerned about creeping Islamisation – and you should be also.

Attached is a copy of the flyer, with the petition we printed on the back that we will send to Federal Parliament calling for an end to all ritual slaughter.

We also suggest you read these two pages. Are you comfortable paying an Islamic religious fee on most of the food you buy these days?

<http://islam4infidels.com/what-is-halal/>

<http://islam4infidels.com/proof-halal-funds-terrorism/>

Most Australians we have surveyed are not happy about this stealth religious tax on our food. And as you have had only one complaint out of the 80,000 flyers we have already distributed, I think that speaks volumes, don't you?

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board (“Board”) considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the “Code”).

The Board noted the complainants’ concern that the advertisement depicts an image of cow with its throat cut. There is blood around the animal and information regarding Halal and text about animal cruelty.

The Board noted that there is some concern about the political aspect of the promotion and the organisation behind the promotion. The Board noted that issues related to the political nature of this advertisement is not a matter for the Board and that advertisers are allowed to promote a point of view provided that they do so in a manner that does not breach any section of the Code.

The Board viewed the advertisement and noted the advertiser’s response.

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.3 of the Code. Section 2.3 states: "Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not present or portray violence unless it is justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised".

The Board noted the advertisement features a photo of a cow with its throat slit and blood all around the animal. There is text on the page that has a call to action to stop the cruelty and contact information for the organisation Restore Australia.

The Board noted the complainants’ concerns that the advertising material contains imagery which is likely to cause alarm to the community, especially children.

The Board noted it had recently dismissed complaints about an advertisement for Animals Australia in 0039/15 where:

“... the bull’s head is visible and that as its eyes are open the most likely interpretation is that the bull is alive. The Board noted the complainants’ concerns that the bull appears distressed and considered that although the water running from the bull’s eye does give the impression it is crying there is no blood or obvious trauma and the image itself is not graphic. The Board

noted that the text does suggest that exporting animals is a crime but considered overall that the advertisement does not depict actual violence.”

In contrast to the advertisement mentioned above, in the current image there is a significant amount of blood and obvious trauma to the cow as its throat is slit and the head nearly severed from the body of the beast.

The Board considered that the image itself is graphic and that the advertisement does portray and act of violence. The Board noted that the supporting text describes the process of slaughtering and that the words in connection with the image amount to a portrayal that is disturbing and would be alarming to most members of the community especially children. The Board considered that in the in the context of the community awareness message being promoted via a mailbox drop the inclusion of an image of such a graphic nature was not appropriate and in this instance the material did not portray violence in a manner which is justifiable in the context of the message being promoted and that it did breach Section 2.3 of the Code.

Finding that the advertisement did breach section 2.3 of the Code, the Board upheld the complaint.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE TO DETERMINATION

The advertiser advised that the flyer is being modified and the image in its present form will not be used again.