

From: [Jane Chester](#)
To: [Health and Community Services Committee](#)
Subject: Submission regarding Outdoor Signage
Date: Tuesday, 18 June 2013 8:54:47 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am extremely concerned about the level of sexualisation in outdoor advertising. I have been so offended by a particular banner in Townsville that I made a complaint to the Advertising Standards Bureau regarding it.

The sign first came to my attention at the beginning of the year. It is a large banner outside a sex shop, with a woman's bottom in a g string, with the words 'Hot Stuff' appearing to have been branded onto one cheek, as if she were a cow. I was really shocked by this as it is on a busy street in a residential and commercial area and is clearly visible when stopped and 3 sets of traffic lights. It is also opposite a church and large service station and within 4km of 5 schools, the closest being only 700m away. Given it's size and location it would be impossible to prevent your child from viewing the signage when traveling to and from school.

I was surprised that there was nothing in place to stop explicit advertisement from being displayed and the only course of action is to complain about a sign that is already in existence. I decided to make a complaint to the Advertising Standards Bureau early this year, and in April I received an email from them advising me that the complaint had been upheld for the reasons below:

'The Board noted that on the woman's left buttock the words, "Hot stuff" appear to have been branded on her skin and considered that whilst the adult store is called Hot Stuff in the Board's view the suggestion is that it is the woman who is being described as "hot stuff" The Board considered that this branding of a woman's body part is a depiction which is degrading and that a close up of a woman's bottom in this context is exploitative as it reduces the woman to just a part of her body '

'Based on the above the Board considered that the advertisement employs sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative and degrading and that it breaches Section 2.2 of the Code '

Unfortunately, they also told me that the matter had come to them and been upheld in November 2012, and that the advertiser had at the time, indicated that the signage would be removed. As the Advertising Standards Bureau had not checked that the signage had been removed, they thought my complaint was pertaining to an amended sign, until they realised it was the original banner that had never been removed.

A few weeks later I received an email from the Advertising Standards Bureau explaining their inability to enforce compliance. I spoke to the CEO of the bureau, Fiona Jolly and she has told us that she has done everything she can and that the owner of the banner is not taking or replying to her calls and that they can do nothing further. I am frustrated and angry that I have invested my time and effort in going through the due process for having a sign removed to find the very body responsible for monitoring advertising standards has no power to enforce compliance. What is the point in having this organisation to oversee standards if advertisers can just ignore them and defy their ruling with no consequences? To have the ASB agree with my belief and the belief of many others, that this signage is totally inappropriate, and to still have to drive past this sign regularly with my 3 little girls, feels like a slap in the face.

I am invested in reaching a resolution to this particular issue and hope that you will strongly consider legislative change, so that concerned parents don't have to go through a lengthy and potentially fruitless process and all signage and advertising can be child appropriate.

Thank you,

Jane Chester


