



Media Release
For Immediate Release

AANA TO UPDATE GENDER STEREOTYPE GUIDANCE

17 May 2018 - The AANA today welcomed the World Federation of Advertisers (WFA's) Guide to Progressive Gender Portrayals in Advertising, which is consistent with the established requirements in Australia.

As a WFA member, the AANA supports the collective voice of industry through the international Unstereotype Alliance to take positive steps to remove outdated stereotypes from advertising. The AANA Code of Ethics already prohibits advertising which discriminates on the basis of gender, including sexism where conformity to negative gender stereotypes is portrayed. The AANA Code applies to all advertisers in Australia on a platform-neutral basis. The AANA intends to provide more details in its Code of Ethics Practice Note, which will be applied by Ad Standards Community Panel and assist advertisers in their understanding of how the Code applies to the use of gender stereotypes.

“Gender stereotypes in advertising can limit and reinforce misperceptions about roles in society. The Code of Ethics helps ensure advertisers do not use discriminatory portrayals that reinforce negative gender stereotypes.

“Advertising contributes to cultural attitudes and there is a social imperative to positively effect change in the way people are portrayed. The AANA’s new guidance aims to reinforce responsible advertising that does not diminish or limit the role of women and men in society,” the AANA’s CEO John Broome said.

The AANA said that the Code does not prohibit all forms of gender stereotypes, such as a woman doing the washing or a man doing DIY tasks. However, advertisers should avoid depictions that show people in an adverse light due to their gender, for example, a woman with the sole responsibility for cleaning; an advertisement that suggests a specific activity is inappropriate for boys because it is stereotypically associated with girls, or vice versa; or a man trying and failing to undertake household tasks.

Complaints about discrimination on the basis of gender, including gender stereotyping, have been, and can continue to be, made under the Code of Ethics. Anyone concerned about the breaches of the Code can make a complaint to Ad Standards. Complaints are determined by an independent community panel, which is comprised of members of the Australian public.

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About the AANA: For 90 years the AANA has represented Australia’s largest and well-known brands across all major sectors, including FMCG, automotive, banking, finance and insurance, travel, health and beauty, media and communications. The AANA works to protect the interests of those businesses that contribute to an estimated advertising spend of more than \$15 billion a year. On behalf of our members, the AANA’s mandate is to maintain and evolve the advertising codes which underpin the system of self-regulation in Australia, safeguard the rights of its members to commercial free speech and protect consumers by ensuring marketing communication is conducted responsibly.