

Alcohol Advertising Review Board

Determination Report

Reference number: 787/19
Product: Johnnie Walker
Advertiser: Diageo Australia

The complaint is **upheld**.

15 July 2019

This determination by the Alcohol Advertising Review Board Panel (“the Panel”) concerns an advertisement for Johnnie Walker by Diageo Australia which was the subject of a complaint received on 19 June 2019.

The Advertisement

The advertisement was seen during the Ch7mate broadcast of the Adelaide Crows v Richmond AFL game between 7 and 8pm in Perth, WA, on 13 June 2019.

The advertisement opens on an apartment block at night. Several of the windows are lit up and a man and a woman can be seen through one of the windows. The next scene is inside the apartment. The woman is sitting on a couch while the man sits in front of a canvas. The woman looks at the man. The man is holding a glass of Johnnie Walker with ice. On the table next to him is a bottle of Johnnie Walker. The next scene is of a lecture theatre full of people with laptops in front of them. A man at the front of the room is standing in front of two big screens. Students are typing on their laptops and then one takes their glasses off. It is the man from the apartment. There is a shot of him painting on the canvas, then it goes back to the lecture theatre. The man closes his laptop and is walking through a building. He walks into an art gallery holding canvases. There are numerous shots of him meeting people in art galleries and businesses showing them his art work. A male voiceover says “No one said it would be easy. Walking your own path seldom is. Because you never truly know where it will take you.” In one of the businesses a woman gives the man her business card. We see him walk into a room and his art has been used on a piece of clothing. The voiceover continues “But wherever you are on your journey, always remember, the most important step to take isn’t your last. It’s your next.” The man and his partner walk into a room full of mannequins wearing dresses made of his art. They go to a crowded bar and the bartender pushes two glasses of Johnnie Walker on ice across the bar. There is a bottle of Johnnie Walker Black Label next to the glasses. The couple cheers. The ad then rewinds back to the man walking out of the lecture theatre. The ad ends on a Johnnie Walker Keep Walking logo as the voiceover says “Keep walking. Johnnie Walker.”

The Complaint

The complainant believes the advertisement contravenes the Code. The complainant stated:

“I’m watching Thursday night AFL on free-to-air tv on 13 June - Adelaide Crows and Richmond on Ch7mate in Perth.

I’ve seen two Johnnie Walker ads between 7 and 8pm during the ads breaks of the live footy broadcast.

In addition, there is beer advertising around the stadium digital screens. It seems way too early in the evening to have alcohol ads, especially during a live AFL game that would be watched by lots of younger people. I didn’t get photos of the ads, but I believe it was the same Johnnie Walker ad as at this website. <https://campaignbrief.com/johnnie-walker-launches-first/>”

The Code

The advertisement was reviewed against the Code, and in particular:

Section (2) of the Placement Code:

2. Television (free to air and pay TV)

Alcohol Advertisements shall not be broadcast between 5am and 9pm.

The Advertiser’s Comments

The Advertiser was contacted for comment on 20 June 2019. A response was received on 21 June 2019 and passed on to the Panel for consideration. The Advertiser declined to participate in the Alcohol Advertising Review Board process, noting it was a participant in the Alcohol Beverage Advertising Code Scheme.

Panel’s determination

The complaint was referred to three Panel members for review. The Panel determined:

1. The advertisement contravened section (2) of the Placement Code, on the basis that it was broadcast between 5am and 9pm.

The complaint is **upheld**.

Further action

The Alcohol Advertising Review Board requests the Advertiser cease the placement of alcohol advertisements during times when young people are likely to be exposed, including during sports broadcasts.