

14 June 2017

Statement regarding ASAS's decision on Pink Dot advertisement

The Advertising Standards Authority of Singapore (ASAS), an advisory council under the Consumers Association of Singapore (CASE), would like to clarify its decision-making process and its decision on the Pink Dot 2017 advertisement.

The ASAS Council and the decision-making process

ASAS was set up in 1976 to promote ethical advertising in Singapore while reflecting community standards. It is the self-regulatory body of the advertising industry and administers the Singapore Code of Advertising Practice (SCAP), whose premise is that all advertisements should be legal, decent, honest and truthful.

The members of the ASAS Council are appointed by their respective organisations, representing advertisers, advertising agencies, media owners, government agencies, industry associations and other public organisations. When the ASAS Council makes decisions on advertisements that it receives feedback on, members will have one vote, and all decisions will be by a simple majority of the members present. In the event that the votes are divided, the Chairman will have a casting vote. Any member of ASAS who has a vested interest in a dispute must immediately declare that interest and be absent from all deliberations. Information on the ASAS Council's deliberation process has always been publicly accessible on the ASAS website at www.asas.org.sg/feedback.

ASAS relies on public feedback as its primary regulatory mechanism and this also applies to the advertisement in question. Due to confidentiality reasons, however, ASAS is not at liberty to disclose the source of any feedback it receives.

ASAS's decision on Pink Dot 2017 advertisement

The ASAS Council is of the view that a factual advertisement featuring the event date, time and venue is acceptable.

ASAS would like to clarify that the statement it gave to Marketing Interactive on 8 June 2017 stated that the advertisement in question *did not* breach the SCAP General Principle 10.1 on family values. Any article quoting ASAS as stating that the Pink Dot advertisement breached the SCAP Principle on family values is incorrect.

The ASAS Council is of the view that advertisements in public spaces should be prepared with a sense of responsibility to public sentiments. As such, advertisers should avoid statements in advertisements that may contribute to heightened public

sensitivities. This was the basis on which ASAS asked Cathay and Pink Dot to consider removing the tagline "Supporting the freedom to love".

ASAS trusts that this statement clarifies its position on the advertisement.

Prof Tan Sze Wee
Chairman
Advertising Standards Authority of Singapore