



# MEDIA RELEASE

19 March 2013

## Dumb Ways to Die ads win clean sweep of Sirens Round 5

A campaign for Metro Trains Melbourne called "Dumb Ways to Die", written by John Mescall and Pat Baron from agency McCann in Melbourne has won all categories in round 5 of the 2013 Sirens Awards.

The campaign, which includes ads "Set Fire to your Hair", "Sell Both Your Kidneys" and "Eat a Tube of Superglue", aimed to spread a rail safety message and gained worldwide viral momentum when it was launched in November last year. The ads use black humour with a catchy tune to promote the idea of safe behaviour around trains.

Creative team member and executive director of McCann, John Mescall said: "We knew that people didn't want to hear our message at all. It's rail safety. Not only do young people not care about safety messages, but we know that they actively tune out these kinds of messages.

"So our idea was to embed our rail safety message into a song: a piece of content so desirable, that our audience would not only willingly listen to it, but if we put it on iTunes, maybe actually pay money to own it. I guess the inspiration was to make a radio ad that was nothing like a radio ad, but a lot more like the content on either side of the ads: the music."

Within 24 hours of its release, the song was in the top 10 on the iTunes chart and a video released on YouTube was reportedly viewed 28 million times within two weeks.

John Mescall said: "We tried to make a radio ad that was nothing like a traditional radio ad. It's a song first and foremost with a subtle but unmistakable message embedded into it. The fact that a lot of radio stations around the world have chosen to play the 3 minute version of our ad for free, as part of their music programming, tells us that we may well have pulled it off."

Judge Rem Bruijn, Creative Director, brainheart said: "For me 'Dumb ways to die' is the idea of the year. It integrates beautifully in any medium, but on radio it's a belter. The ad that doesn't sound like an ad. It's a great comedy sketch, a cracking song and an advertising earworm all rolled into one. It's a 'likeable', sharable, sweet-macabre masterclass on the use of dramatic counterpoints, that only gets better with every listen. I could crap on all day about it. It's that good."

Chief executive of Commercial Radio Australia, Joan Warner said it was rare for an ad to win all categories in the Siren Awards, reflecting the effectiveness and impact of the campaign.

"This campaign highlights how well radio combines with other media, particularly the internet, to engage the audience and get a message across. It really exemplifies the strength of good radio advertising."

According to Metro Trains, the "Dumb Ways to Die" campaign contributed to a more than 30% reduction in "near-miss" accidents, in the three months between November and January this year.

The “Dumb Ways to Die” campaign is now in the running to win the best radio ad of the year, which will be announced in May. Writers of the best radio ad for 2013 win airfares, accommodation, plus automatic entry and tickets to this year’s Cannes Advertising Lions Festival held 16- 22 June. For the second year running, the client of the Gold Siren winning ad also wins a trip to Cannes and the Festival.

The national Siren Awards are run by Commercial Radio Australia and are designed to recognise the best radio advertising in the country.

**Media contact: Jenny Stevenson – 0402 214 039**

Listen to Round 5 winning ads on the website: <http://www.sirenawards.com.au/>

**Round 5**

**Overall and campaign winner**

Advertising Agency: McCann Melbourne

Creative Team: John Mescall & Pat Baron

Client: Metro Trains Melbourne

Commercial Title: Dumb Ways to Die (“Set Fire to Your Hair”, “Sell Both Your Kidneys”, “Eat a Tube of Superglue”)

**Single Winner**

As above for the ad “Set Fire to Your Hair”

**Craft Winner**

As above for the ad “Set Fire to Your Hair”

**Single Highly Commended**

As above for “Sell Both Your Kidneys” and “Eat a Tube of Superglue”

**Craft Highly Commended**

As above for “Sell Both Your Kidneys” and “Eat a Tube of Superglue”

**Campaign - Highly Commended**

Advertising Agency: CumminsRoss

Writers: Ed Howely & Toby Cummings

Client: VOK Beverages

Commercial Title: “Stay Strong”

Advertising Agency: Clemenger BBDO Melbourne

Writers: Jim Ingram & Ben Couzens

Client: Victoria Bitter

Commercial Title: “Hard Earned Thirst”

Advertising Agency: DMG Radio Australia

Writers: Nathan Russell

Client: Mr Toys Toysworld

Commercial Title: “Mr T...O Y S”