

**Media Release**

20 August 2015

---

## BSA upholds complaint about Eltham waste story

The Broadcasting Standards Authority (BSA) has upheld a complaint that aspects of a *Campbell Live* story about the effects of dumping excess buttermilk in the South Taranaki town of Eltham were misleading and unfair to South Taranaki District Council.

*Campbell Live* reported that the eader (the pit containing the excess buttermilk) was allegedly making local residents ill.

The Authority in its decision said this was a 'legitimate and important story' which carried very high public interest. There were 'very serious concerns about the actions of the Council and about the situation of the residents in Eltham', said the Authority. However, it held that aspects of the story were 'overblown'.

The Authority found some of the reporter's statements 'overstated the level of danger and the exact nature of the health hazards caused by the eader, beyond what had been proven and beyond the information that was available to the broadcaster'.

The Authority found the misleading impression created by the story was unfair to the Council, as it suggested the Council's actions 'had created a much more serious and harmful situation than the evidence demonstrated'. In these circumstances the Council's actions appeared 'inadequate to sufficiently address the residents' concerns', said the Authority.

However the Authority was satisfied that the remainder of the story accurately and fairly reflected the issues with the eader and the Council's actions.

The Authority did not impose any penalty on the broadcaster, finding publication of the decision was a sufficient remedy, particularly given the high public interest in the story.

ENDS

**For more information contact Nicole Hickman on 027 313 0179.**

### FURTHER INFORMATION

The full decision is available at <http://bsa.govt.nz/decisions/latest>.

### ABOUT THE BROADCASTING STANDARDS AUTHORITY

The Broadcasting Standards Authority is an independent body that oversees the broadcasting standards regime in New Zealand. We do this by determining complaints that broadcasts have breached standards, by doing research and also by providing information about broadcasting standards.

We are essentially an appeal body, which is why complaints generally go to the broadcaster first (with the exception of privacy issues and election advertisements).

The Authority Board has four current members – Peter Radich (chair), Leigh Pearson, Te Rau Kupenga and Paula Rose.

The Authority members who determined this complaint were Peter Radich, Mary Anne Shanahan, Leigh Pearson and Te Rau Kupenga.

**For more information see our website: [www.bsa.govt.nz](http://www.bsa.govt.nz).**