

## Media Release

30 June 2016

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### **BSA finds paid radio programme unbalanced and unfair**

The Broadcasting Standards Authority has upheld a complaint about a programme broadcast on Te Arawa FM. The programme formed part of a regular segment paid for by the Pukeroa Oruawhata Trust, which enables the Trust to 'share its views on issues affecting the Trust with its beneficiaries'.

The programme featured an interview with the Trust's deputy chairman, who discussed issues around the Ngāti Whakaue Treaty settlement and the general governance of Ngāti Whakaue.

The BSA upheld a complaint from the former chairman of Ngāti Whakaue Tribal Lands Incorporation alleging that the broadcast was unbalanced and contained unfair statements about him.

The BSA agreed that the programme was unbalanced as it did not present any alternative views to those of the Trust on issues which were controversial and of public importance to Te Arawa FM's audience.

'While we acknowledge it may be more difficult to provide balance in a programme segment that is paid for by a particular group, such programmes are still subject to broadcasting standards. If broadcasters choose to open up their airwaves to paid programme content, they must still be mindful of how they can ensure standards are maintained', the BSA said.

The BSA also found that the programme was unfair to the complainant, who was not given an opportunity to respond to the interviewee's criticism of him. While he was not expressly named, he was referred to in relation to his former and current roles, so it was likely that Te Arawa's listeners would have realised who was being spoken about.

The BSA did not make any order. It considered the decision and publication of it was sufficient to remedy the breach of standards and to provide guidance to

broadcasters around maintaining standards even when a programme slot is paid for by a third party.

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>.

The programme was broadcast on 14 October 2015. The decision was made under the previous Radio Code of Broadcasting Practice. The new Codebook has been in force since 1 April 2016 and is available at <http://bsa.govt.nz/standards/overview>.

#### **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.

The Authority members who determined this complaint were Peter Radich (Chair), Leigh Pearson, Te Rau Kupenga and Paula Rose.

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