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BSA declines to uphold complaints about *Fair Go* medal dealer story

The Broadcasting Standards Authority has declined to uphold complaints made against *Fair Go* by Invercargill medal dealer Owen Gough.

In two programmes on 23 and 30 May 2012, *Fair Go* investigated complaints by four people against Mr Gough, who restored and mounted original war medals, and sold replicas.

The allegations against Mr Gough included that he failed to deliver medals that had been paid for, and had replaced genuine medals with fakes.

Mr Gough complained that *Fair Go* allowed the interviewees and a medals expert to make false and misleading claims about him. He also claimed that it was his business partner, not him, who had dealt with the customers interviewed, and that the stories breached his privacy.

Taking into account the high public interest in the stories, the BSA was satisfied that *Fair Go* had sufficient basis for the story and did not breach any broadcasting standards.

“The broadcasts carried a high level of public interest and had high freedom of expression value. *Fair Go* plays an important function in that it informs consumers of their rights and empowers them by providing a platform to air concerns and complaints. Overall, Mr Gough was made sufficiently aware of the allegations against him, was provided with a fair and reasonable opportunity to comment, and had his perspective adequately included.”

The BSA found that *Fair Go*'s investigation into the business relationship between Mr Gough and his business partner was thorough, and the programme's focus on Mr Gough was fair and justified. It rejected Mr Gough's contention that *Fair Go* ought to have focused solely on the business partner.

Ends

The full report is available at www.bsa.govt.nz

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