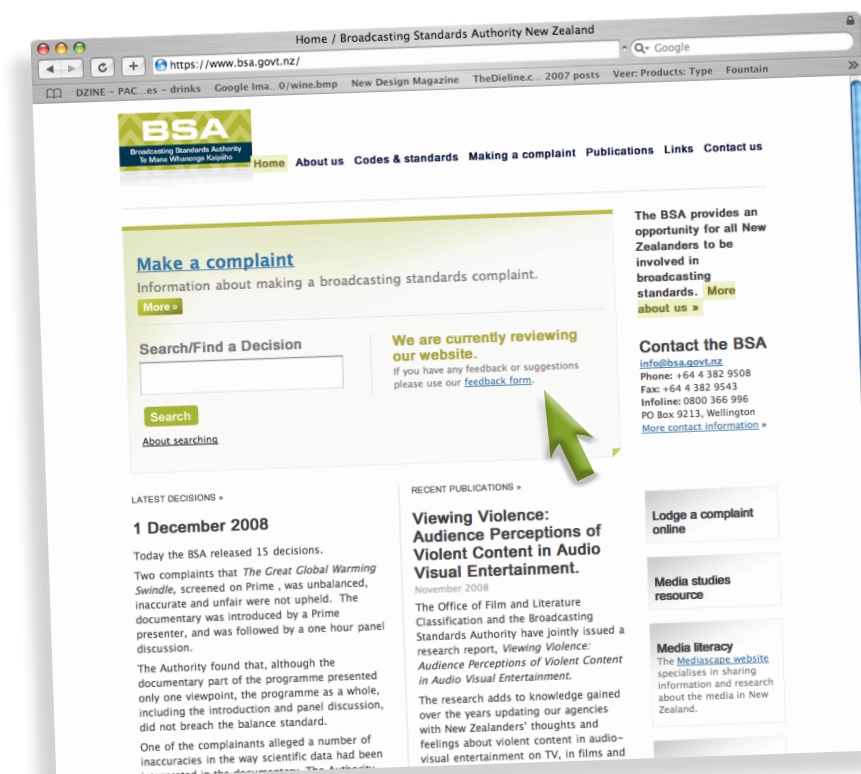


New awareness campaign on the move!



Following on from our previous awareness campaigns, the BSA has launched a series of posters in busses in both Wellington and Auckland. The posters promote understanding of programme classifications, and are specifically aimed at caregivers of children.

Three versions of the poster have been produced; in English, Chinese and Samoan. The campaign runs from December until March 2009. Keep an eye out for them next time you catch a bus!



Website evaluation

Over the next few months we are conducting an evaluation of the BSA website. This is in preparation for redesigning our website in the near future. We would appreciate it if you would take some time to let us know your thoughts. What do you like or don't like about our website? Is it easy to use? What information would you like to see online that isn't currently there? Send your comments to kateb@bsa.govt.nz or, if you would prefer anonymity, use the feedback form on the contacts page of the BSA website <http://bsa.govt.nz/contact.php>

Directory

The current members of the Broadcasting Standards Authority are:
Joanne Morris (Chair), Tapu Misa,
Diane Musgrave and Paul France.

Contact us at:
2nd Floor, Lotteries Commission Building,
54-56 Cambridge Terrace,

PO Box 9213, Wellington, 6141,
New Zealand.
Phone: 64 4 382 9508
Fax: 64 4 382 9543
Email: info@bsa.govt.nz
Website: www.bsa.govt.nz
Editorial enquiries: info@bsa.govt.nz

0800 Number

The Broadcasting Standards Authority's free phone number is

0800 366 996

A recorded message explains the complaints process, and a connection through to the office is provided.

QUARTERLY

NUMBER 40, DECEMBER 2008

New research on violence in entertainment

In early November the Broadcasting Standards Authority and the Office of Film and Literature Classification jointly issued a research report, *Viewing Violence: Audience Perceptions of Violent Content in Audio Visual Entertainment*.

The research adds to other research conducted over the years, updating both agencies with New Zealanders' thoughts and feelings about violent content in audio-visual entertainment on TV, in films and DVDs, and on internet and mobile platforms.

The qualitative study of 117 teen and adult New Zealanders' views, conducted by research agency Colmar Brunton, found that:

- Viewers are generally able to put violence in audio-visual entertainment into content (ie: they are able to distinguish it from real violence and make allowances for that).
- Viewers have strong opinions about how violence should be classified. On the whole there is not a great deal of difference between how people would classify clips for various media and how those clips are currently being classified.
- Viewers feel that violence in news/reality is far worse (ie.more harmful) to view than fictional violence/
- Adults are highly concerned to protect children from the possible harms of viewing violent content but not so concerned about how it might affect them.
- Offensive language within scenes of violence in audio-visual entertainment is not considered harmful on its own but is felt to increase to degree of violence in some cases.



An important finding from the study is the fairly uniform desire of participants for a system of warning to be applied to challenging content delivered on the newer electronic platforms, including the internet.

Research participants discussed a selection of clips in focus groups, online bulletin boards or individual interviews. Of the 117 participants, 44 were teenagers aged 14-17 who participated in bulletin boards and interviews. The clips which formed the basis for discussion were selected from material either classified by the OFLC or deliberated on by the BSA as a result of a complaint about an alleged breach of broadcasting standards.

Information gained from this research will inform the decisions of the BSA when determining complaints alleging breaches of the violence standards in the Free-to-Air Television and Pay Television Codes of Broadcasting Practice.

This was the first time that the two agencies had partnered on a research project. The full report is available on both the BSA and OFCL websites: www.bsa.govt.nz www.censorship.govt.nz



Election Programmes complaints process

As mentioned in the last issue of BSA Quarterly the revised BSA Election Programmes Code came into effect on 1 June of this year.

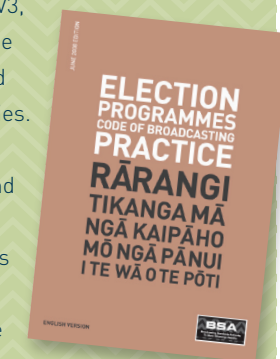
With the recently held general election, we had a chance to test out this Code and the new process where complaints about election programmes come directly to the BSA (rather than to the broadcaster in the first instance). To deal with this new process the BSA introduced a fast track system. We aimed to determine any 'urgent' complaints within three days of receipt.

Although the BSA received over 150 phone and email enquiries about election programmes, they resulted in only three formal complaints.

We were pleased that our process ran smoothly and all formal election complaints were determined and released within two days of being received by the BSA. Thank you to co-operation from all those involved, especially TV3, TVNZ and the National and Labour parties.

The full decisions and the Election Programmes Code can be found on the BSA website

www.bsa.govt.nz



DECISIONS

The BSA issued 39 decisions between July and September 2008

Decisions of interest included the following:

Privacy

In November 2007, TVNZ broadcast an independently produced local reality series called *Skin Doctors* that followed the work of appearance medicine specialists. One episode followed a woman having breast augmentation surgery. The woman’s breasts were shown during the surgery footage, and she was also shown topless and wearing a bra during consultations with her surgeon.

The woman, LM, complained to the Broadcasting Standards Authority that her privacy had been breached. She said she had agreed to be filmed because she thought that it was for a documentary, and on the condition that she would only give consent for the footage to be used after viewing the final item. But LM did not view the final item or give consent for it to be broadcast.

The Authority upheld the complaint, accepting that LM had not consented to appearing in the broadcast. The Authority said the privacy breach was at “the highest end of the scale”, and had caused the complainant both significant distress and personal and professional consequences. In its decision, the Authority acknowledged that TVNZ broadcast the programme on the understanding that the production company had obtained the necessary consent from the woman.

The Authority ordered TVNZ to pay \$5000 to the complainant and \$10,000 towards her legal costs with a further \$3000 to the Crown. **Decision ref. 2007-138**

Balance, accuracy

On 7 March 2008 on Radio New Zealand National, the host of the *Nine to Noon* programme interviewed Pacific correspondent Michael Field, who was asked to give an update on what had been happening in Fiji. Mr Field said that the situation in Fiji was “progressively getting worse”. He made a number of statements including that the head of Fiji Broadcasting was “military-appointed”, that the publisher of the Fiji Sun, Russell Hunter, had recently been deported and his family given eight days to leave Fiji, and that a particular judge’s house had been burned down after she publicly criticized a report by the head of the Fiji Human Rights Commission.

Christopher Pryde, the Solicitor-General of the Republic of the Fiji Islands, complained that the programme was unbalanced and inaccurate.

The Authority found that the balance standard did not apply to the programme. It said that the programme was an “opinion piece” and listeners would have understood that Mr Field was giving his own expert opinion; they would have had no expectation that they would be hearing a range of views.

The Authority upheld the accuracy complaint, finding that Mr Field made four inaccurate statements in the programme: the head of Fiji Broadcasting was not “military-appointed”; Russell Hunter’s family was given more than eight days to leave Fiji; the judge’s house had not been burned down; and there was no evidence that the judge publicly opposed a report by the head of the Fiji Human Rights Commission and was then attacked because of this comment.

The Authority did not impose an order, stating that the publication of the decision would serve as a reminder to commentators that they must ensure the accuracy of factual statements. **Decision ref. 2008-040**

Programme classification, children’s interests

A promo for the comedy programme *Ugly Betty* was broadcast on TV2 at 7.25pm on Sunday 4 May 2008 during *2Tube*, a locally produced weekly review of the internet, combining bloopers, funny web clips, international advertisements, and comedic local home videos. *2Tube* was rated G.

A voice-over in the promo said that Betty was going to meet “the king of dating advice”. The character to Betty, “Men want to get laid, Betty, I want to help them.” The author held up his book, and recited the title: “*Tap That* – how to score with hot [mute]”. The word “bitches” was muted. The author went on to say that “the easiest way to bag a woman is to insult her”, which was closely followed by a shot of another male character, Henry, saying “genius” while reading the book. Betty shot him a disapproving look, and he responded “penis?” in an attempt to cover his first comment.

Aidan Harrison complained that the sexual themes in the promo made it unsuitable for broadcast during *2Tube*.

The Authority upheld the complaint under Standards 7 (programme classification) and 9 (children’s interests). It found that the promo should have been classified PGR rather than G, because the repeated comments of a sexual nature were clearly more suitable for a mature audience. The Authority held that the promo should not have been broadcast during a G-rated programme that children should have been able to view unattended.

The Authority did not impose an order. It stated that the decision would serve as a reminder to broadcasters to take care when advertising PGR programmes during G-rated host programmes. **Decision ref. 2008-066**