

# The year by numbers

Total enquiries

1,260

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Derived from...

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Total complaints

707

Total enquiries triaged  
(informally resolved)

14%

Total advice  
(about ads)

206

Enquiries about ASA  
and complaints process

152

## From the ASA Chair Hon. Heather Roy

**As you will see from the statistics and the top ten complaints in this report, processing complaints at no cost to the public continues to drive a significant amount of the ASA's workload.**

I joined the ASA as the independent Chair in May 2015, following a governance restructure. I am pleased to have the opportunity to be involved first hand with the ASA, as an excellent example of industry self-regulation.

The Governance Board agreed to a range of investments in 2015 to ensure the ASA would be fit for purpose in the coming years. A new database to manage complaints and the updated website were launched this year.

A commitment was also made to reduce the number of ASA codes from 14 to six and this process is well under way with a consolidation of the therapeutic codes and a major review of the Children's advertising codes to be completed in 2016.

Funding and communications were priority areas for the Governance Board and a major project on a future funding model was undertaken with recommendations for additional work in this area in 2016.

As you will see from the statistics and the top ten complaints in this report, processing complaints at no cost to the public continues to drive a significant amount of the ASA's workload.

On behalf of the Governance Board, I would like to publicly acknowledge the significant contribution all the Complaints and Appeal Board members and the ASA staff make to maintaining advertising standards in New Zealand.

## From the Chief Executive Hilary Souter

**As the definition of an advertisement continues to broaden and the platforms for advertising increase, we expect another challenging year ahead in 2016.**

The new governance structure and the appointment of Hon. Heather Roy earlier this year has resulted in a significant step forward in strategic planning and robust processes. Further work will be undertaken in 2016 to communicate the value of industry self-regulation of advertising.

In reflecting on the work of the ASA in 2015, I would like to take this opportunity to recognise the contributions of two long serving public members.

Judi Jones has stepped down as the Chair of the Appeal Board. Judi was appointed as a public member of the Complaints Board in 1994 and in 2000 was appointed to the Appeal Board. In 2014, she became Chair of the Appeal Board. Judi's extensive experience in disputes resolution and her passion for consumer rights were valued by the ASA. We sincerely appreciate her support of our complaints process and wish her well for the future.

Jenny Robson has chaired the Complaints Board since 2009 and a member since 1999. As Chair, Jenny has looked at every complaint and reviewed every decision since 2009, a total of nearly 6000. Jenny has been committed to improving the complaints process, and in her tenure the time to process complaints has moved from 26 days on average to 12 days. Jenny will take on the role of Appeal Board Chair from 1 April 2016.

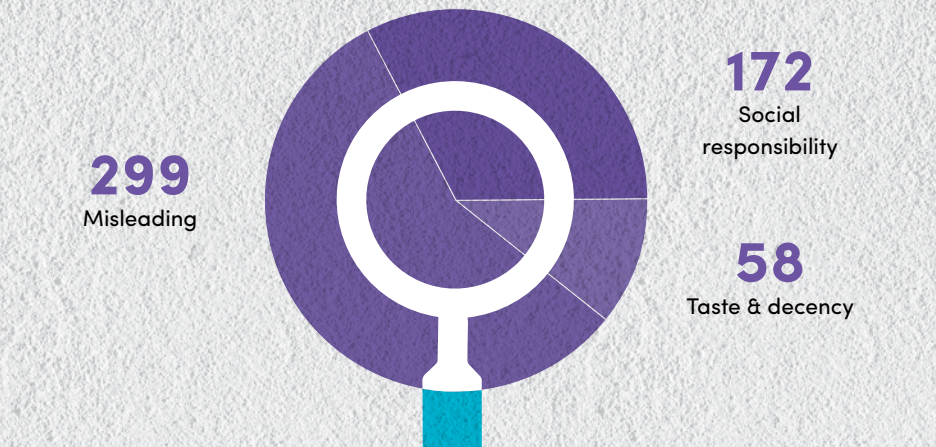
As the definition of an advertisement continues to broaden and the platforms for advertising increase, we expect another challenging year ahead in 2016.



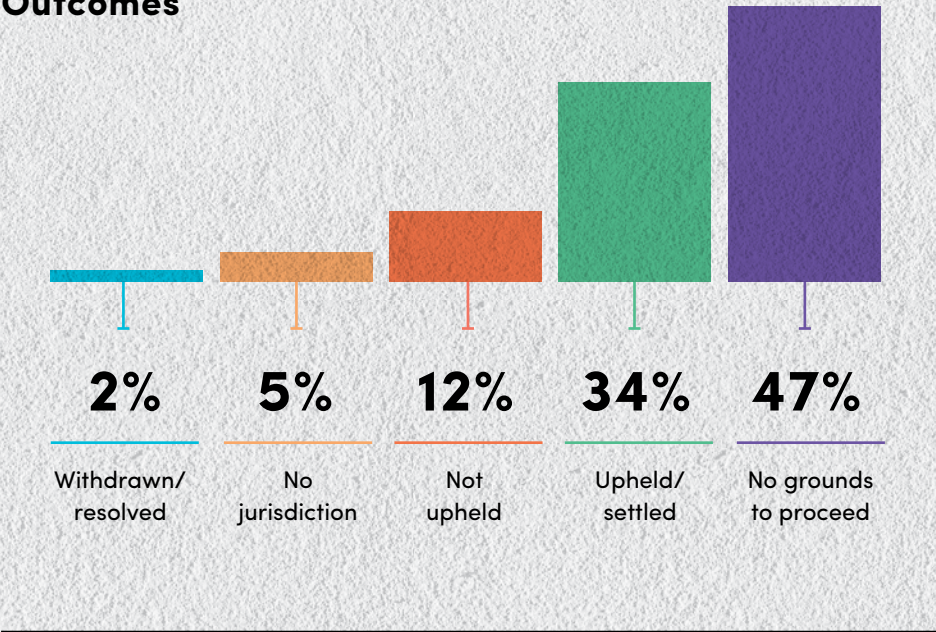




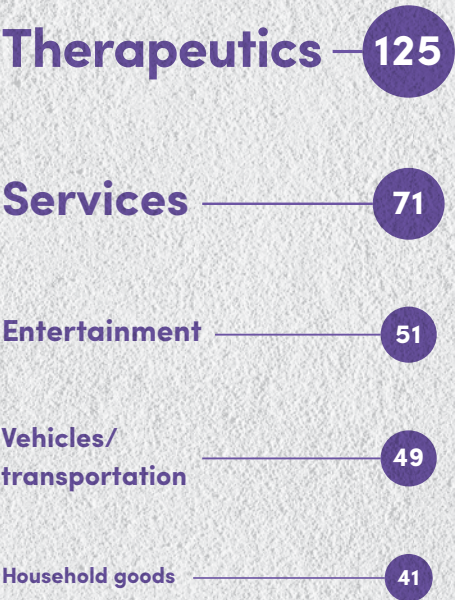
Key  
Issues



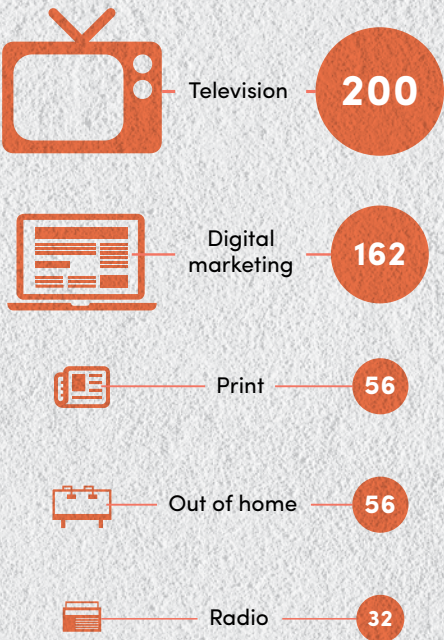
Key  
Outcomes



Most complaints  
by category



Most complaints  
by media





# Top ten complained about ads

## When Love Turns Ugly

26   
Complainants

26 Complainants were offended by the online advertising campaign by I Love Ugly to promote its range of men's jewellery. Complainants said the imagery of a man wearing I Love Ugly rings, with his hands on different parts of a woman's naked torso, including her breasts and crotch was exploitative of, and degrading to, women. The Advertiser removed the images involved in the campaign and apologised to Complainants. In light of the self-regulatory action taken by the Advertiser, the complaints were settled.

## Humour in Scaffolding ad a bit of a Stretch

22   
Complainants

22 Complainants were offended by the sexualisation of a woman's body to promote an unrelated product. The billboard advertisement for Access Solutions scaffolding hire featured a man on a scissor lift pasting up the image of a topless woman. The segment the man was shown stretching up to place in position was of the woman's breast and arm. The accompanying text stated: "Access problems?" The majority of the Board found the advertisement exploitative and it said the accompanying statement "Access problems?" strengthened the objectification to the point it was likely to cause serious or widespread offence in an outdoor environment. The complaints were upheld.

## Low Note for Hilux

13   
Complainants

13 Complainants were offended at an advertisement that featured animated animals mounted on vehicles after being caught or shot. From deer to fish to possum, all the animals extolled the features of the vehicle. Complainants were offended at the placement of the advertisement immediately after a current


affairs programme on the horrors of animal cruelty. The Advertiser withdrew the advertisement and apologised to consumers. The complaints were settled.

## Bikinis, Birds and Bushes

8   
Complainants

8 Complainants were offended by the ad for Schick Hydro Silk Trim Style razor for women. Small bushes were placed in front of each woman which they tried to topiary. Two women were shown unsuccessfully to style their trees with scissors, while the third woman easily and quickly trimmed her tree into a heart shape. Complainants found the advertisement sexist and degrading to women. The Complaints Board said bikini trimming was a personal choice and there was nothing in the advertisement that objectified the women. The simulation of personal grooming was saved by the provision for humour and the complaints were not upheld.


## Gendered Roles and Stereotypes Ironic in "Mum's Night Off" Campaign

6   
Complainants

6 Complainants expressed concerns about the multi-platform promotion of New Zealand Pork's "Mum's Night Off" campaign. The Complaints Board accepted the Advertiser had deliberately used outdated stereotypes of both men and women in an ironic manner to encourage more men to cook. The Complaints Board said most consumers would accept the outdated and sexist portrayals had been used by the Advertiser to challenge gendered roles and sexist attitudes rather than to reinforce these notions. The complaints were not upheld.

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## Say What? Complainants irked by Hyundai's "Get Lost" Campaign

6   
Complainants

6 Complainants said a little girl telling everyone to "Get Lost" was disrespectful to adults and annoying. The Chairman was of the view the girl's actions were a light-hearted promotion for consumers to "Get Lost" and see the country in the vehicle. The Chairman said while not liked by some, the advertisement was not in breach of the Advertising Codes and there were no grounds for the complaints to proceed.

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## Hell No! Friday 13th Pizza Deal Ad Frightful for Kids

5   
Complainants

5 Complainants said the image of a man's head exploding in the advertisement for Hell Pizza on Friday the 13th was disturbingly violent and offensive. Despite being rated PGR, the majority of the Complaints Board said the exploding head was very realistic and the brevity of the ad meant the scene lacked adequate context for the viewer. In its view, the visual of the man's heading blowing off his shoulders was grotesque, violent and likely to cause serious offence to most people. The majority also said it was inappropriate to screen it when children could be amongst the viewing audience. The complaints were upheld.

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## Drivers Miffed at NZTA ad to Highlight the Dangers of Speed

5   
Complainants

5 Complainants said the advertisement that showed how their speed affected others, positioned drivers in a negative light. The Chairman said the safety element

outweighed the Complainants' concerns about who was to blame for the accident, or that the accident would have happened irrespective of the speed the car was travelling. There were no grounds for the complaints to proceed.

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## A Fire, The Lamb, A Bloke and His Chainsaw

4   
Complainants

4 Complainants expressed various concerns about a farmer who chose to save his Stihl chainsaw rather than a lamb, from a burning farmhouse. Complainants said the scenario encouraged cruelty to animals and was distressing to children. The Complaints Board disagreed with all aspects stated by Complainants. It said the advertisement employed clear and identifiable hyperbole which was fantastical and humorous in nature and was therefore unlikely to cause serious or widespread offence to most people. The complaints were not upheld.

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## Lamb Shanks Ad Leaves Bad Taste; But Black Humour Saves

4   
Complainants

4 Complainants were offended by Hell Pizza's promotion of its lamb shanks deal. Complainants said the idea of removing a lamb's leg to eat while it was still alive was unacceptable, cruel, distressing to children and misleading as to the source of lamb shanks. The Chairman noted a previous similar No Grounds Ruling 09/709. While she acknowledged the offence the advertisement caused the Complainants, the Chairman said hyperbole and dark humour saved the cartoon advertisement from reaching the threshold to breach the Advertising Codes. There were no grounds for the complaints to proceed