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| <b>COMPLAINT NUMBER</b> | 18/196                          |
| <b>COMPLAINANT</b>      | P Rhodes                        |
| <b>ADVERTISER</b>       | Bank of New Zealand             |
| <b>ADVERTISEMENT</b>    | Bank of New Zealand, Television |
| <b>DATE OF MEETING</b>  | 26 June 2018                    |
| <b>OUTCOME</b>          | No Grounds to Proceed           |

**Advertisement:** The Bank of New Zealand television advertisement showed consumers who may be interested in a home loan, including heterosexual couples, families, older people and a same-sex couple.

**The Chair ruled there were no grounds for the complaint to proceed.**

**Complainant, P Rhodes, said:** BNZ promoting different focuses on types of life activities including focus on starting a family showing 2 men holding hands. While I am not against same sex life styles I feel it is not acceptable at family time of the evening promoting this type of advertising.

**The relevant provisions were Code of Ethics - Basic Principle 4 and Rule 5**

**The Chair** noted the Complainant's concern that the inclusion of a same sex couple in the advertisement was not acceptable during family viewing time on television.

The Chair said the bank advertisement showed a variety of different couples and family groups likely to be looking for a home loan.

The Chair referred to precedent Decision 14/537 for a Contact Energy television advertisement featuring children at play depicting everyday family life using puppets and dolls. Included in their play were scenarios such as pregnancy and breastfeeding. The children pondered why only mothers breastfed and why Uncle Danny couldn't have babies because he was "married to a boy."

The Decision said in part:

"When addressing the offence some Complainants expressed with the portrayal of homosexuality and same sex marriage, the Complaints Board said homosexuality was not grounds for a complaint in itself.

While the Complaints Board acknowledged the topics in the advertisement offended the Complainants it said none of these topics discussed by the children - pregnancy, breastfeeding, or any of the familial configurations - could be considered "sexual" content but were the dynamics of ordinary family life as articulated by, and understood through, the eyes of the children."

The Chair said this Decision was applicable to the complaint before her. The Chair took into account the advertisement promoting banking services had a 'General' rating from the Commercial Approvals Bureau which meant it could screen at any time. The Chair also noted the Complainant had seen the advertisement during One News. She confirmed news programmes are not classified and contain a range of content which is often not suitable for younger viewers.

While the Chair acknowledged the Complainant's concern about the timing of the advertisement during One News, she said there was nothing in the content of the advertisement that was likely to cause either serious or widespread offence in the light of generally prevailing community standards. The Chair confirmed the advertisement had been prepared and placed with the due sense of responsibility to consumers and to society. Therefore, the Chair said there was no apparent breach of the Code of Ethics.

Accordingly, the Chair ruled that there were no grounds for the complaint to proceed.

**Chair's Ruling:** Complaint **No Grounds to Proceed**

#### **APPEAL INFORMATION**

According to the procedures of the Advertising Standards Complaints Board, all decisions are able to be appealed by any party to the complaint. Information on our Appeal process is on our website [www.asa.co.nz](http://www.asa.co.nz). Appeals must be made in writing via email or letter within 14 days of receipt of this decision.