

COMPLAINT NUMBER	21/215
ADVERTISER	Voices for Freedom
ADVERTISEMENT	Voices for Freedom Unaddressed Mail
DATE OF MEETING	25 May 2021
OUTCOME	Upheld in part Advertisement not to be further distributed

Summary of the Complaints Board Decision

The Complaints Board upheld in part complaints about a leaflet warning about the risks of the COVID-19 vaccine. The Board said six of the eight facts in the leaflet had not been adequately substantiated. The leaflet was published and distributed by Voices for Freedom.

Advertisement

The leaflet included the following text: “Learn the truth about the COVID-19 vaccine... Will You Take the Risk? Discover the Hard Vaccine Facts Before It’s Too Late...”. The leaflet listed “8 important COVID vaccine FACTS You Probably Haven’t Heard!”. The facts were numbered from 8-1, as follows:

8. Vaccine companies are **exempt from ALL liability**.
7. All COVID-19 vaccines are currently **experimental!** Some trials won’t end until 2023.
6. The vaccine **has not been shown to stop you catching SARS-CoV-2 or passing it on** to others.
5. The only reason given to take the vaccine is that it **might** reduce **symptoms**.
4. Animals in prior coronavirus vaccine trials **became very sick** when exposed to the wild virus.
3. It is **unknown** if the vaccine will **cause cancer, sterility or mutate cells**.
2. Medsafe’s Pfizer report highlights concerns about genotoxicity and serious autoimmunity.
1. **Deaths and cases of serious injury** are being **reported around the world** at an alarming rate!

The leaflet included the Voices for Freedom logo and website address www.voicesforfreedom.co.nz/info as well as an email address. There was an image of a QR code and a disclaimer: “The information on this leaflet is educational only and does not constitute medical or legal advice.”

Summary of the Complaints

There were 21 complaints about this advertisement. The Complainants were concerned the advertisement was:

- Unethical, especially in the context of a public health emergency
- Positioning the Government and health authorities as mistrustful
- Undermining public confidence
- Irresponsible, creating vaccination hesitancy and acting as a hindrance to the vaccination programme
- Biased misinformation which is damaging to public health
- Misleading, as it appeared like official health information and was distributed at the same time as Government information

- Presenting opinions as facts/truth – perpetuating myths
- Deliberate manipulation of data
- Lacking in context and supporting information
- Incorrect about the Pfizer/Medsafe approval process
- Fear mongering and exploiting vulnerable audiences, creating anxiety
- Delivered to households which have stipulated “No Circulars”

Issues Raised:

- Social responsibility
- Safety
- Fear and distress
- Health and well-being
- Truthful presentation
- Advocacy advertising

Summary of the Advertiser’s Response

The Advertiser defended the advertisement and said it was an educational publication designed to inform the public. The Advertiser said each of the eight facts listed can be backed up by information available to the public through statements or links which are available on the Advertiser’s website.

Relevant ASA Codes of Practice

The Chair directed the Complaints Board to consider the complaint with reference to the following codes:

ADVERTISING STANDARDS CODE

Principle 1: Social Responsibility: Advertisements must be prepared and placed with a due sense of social responsibility to consumers and to society.

Rule 1(e) Safety: Advertisements must not, unless justifiable on educational or social grounds, encourage or condone dangerous, illegal or unsafe practices, or portray situations which encourage or condone a disregard for safety.

Rule 1(g) Fear and distress: Advertisements must not cause fear or distress without justification.

Rule 1(h) Health and well-being: Advertisements must not undermine the health and well-being of individuals.

Principle 2: Truthful Presentation: Advertisements must be truthful, balanced and not misleading.

Rule 2(b) Truthful Presentation: Advertisements must not mislead or be likely to mislead, deceive or confuse consumers, abuse their trust or exploit their lack of knowledge. This includes by implication, inaccuracy, ambiguity, exaggeration, unrealistic claim, omission, false representation or otherwise. Obvious hyperbole identifiable as such is not considered to be misleading.

Rule 2(e) Advocacy advertising: Advocacy advertising must clearly state the identity and position of the advertiser. Opinion in support of the advertiser's position must be clearly distinguishable from factual information. Factual information must be able to be substantiated.

The Complaints Board said the advertisement before it fell into the category of advocacy advertising and noted the requirements of Rule 2(e) of the Advertising Standards Code. This Rule required the identity of the advertiser to be clear; opinion to be distinguished from factual information and factual information must be able to be substantiated. The Advocacy Principles developed by the Complaints Board in previous decisions considered under Rule 11 of the Code of Ethics remain relevant. They say:

1. That section 14 of the Bill of Rights Act 1990, in granting the right of freedom of expression, allows advertisers to impart information and opinions but that in exercising that right what was factual information and what was opinion, should be clearly distinguishable.
2. That the right of freedom of expression as stated in section 14 is not absolute as there could be an infringement of other people's rights. Care should be taken to ensure that this does not occur.
3. That the Codes fetter the rights granted by section 14 to ensure there is fair play between all parties on controversial issues. Therefore, in advocacy advertising and particularly on political matters the spirit of the Code is more important than technical breaches. People have the right to express their views and this right should not be unduly or unreasonably restricted by Rules.
4. That robust debate in a democratic society is to be encouraged by the media and advertisers and that the Codes should be interpreted liberally to ensure fair play by the contestants.
5. That it is essential in all advocacy advertisements that the identity of the advertiser is clear.

Role of the ASA when considering an advocacy advertisement.

The Complaints Board noted its role is to consider the likely consumer takeout of an advertisement and complaints about advocacy advertising are considered differently to complaints about advertising for products and services.

The Board considers whether the advertisement includes statements of fact or opinion and then decides whether any factual claims have been adequately substantiated by the Advertiser. The Complaints Board noted that a fact is something that is objectively true and can be verified as such whereas an opinion is a personal belief. Others may agree or disagree with an opinion, but they cannot prove or disprove it. Some statements contain both fact and opinion.

The Complaints Board observed that in a free and democratic society, issues should be openly debated without undue hindrance or interference from authorities such as the Complaints Board, and in no way should political parties, politicians, lobby groups or advocates be unnecessarily fettered by a technical or unduly strict interpretation of the rules and regulations.

Under Rule 2(e) Advocacy advertising of the Advertising Standards Code:

- The identity of the advertiser must be clear.
- Opinion must be clearly distinguishable from factual information, and
- Factual information must be able to be substantiated.

If the identity and position of the Advertiser is clear, a more liberal interpretation of the Advertising Standards Code is allowed.

Relevant precedent decisions

In considering this complaint the Complaints Board referred to two precedent decisions, Decision 15/389 which was Not Upheld and 20/440, which was Upheld.

The full versions of these decisions can be requested from the ASA Secretariat or found on the ASA website: <https://www.asa.co.nz/decisions/>

Decision 15/389 concerned a newspaper advertisement for Fluoride Free New Zealand which said: ‘The World Health Organisation lists excess fluoride in its top ten “chemicals of major health concern” and “dental fluorosis has become common in New Zealand”’.

The Complaints Board said the claims made were unlikely to mislead the reader and the information presented was supported by in-text citations. It was clear to readers it was presented from an anti-fluoridation perspective. The complaint was not in breach of the Code of Ethics (the Code that preceded the Advertising Standards Code).

Decision 20/440 concerned a print advertisement from the Advance New Zealand Party and the New Zealand Public Party. The complaint was held to be in breach of the Advertising Standards Code. This is because the reference to seasonal flu in the advertisement had not been substantiated and its use to support statements about Government overreach in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic was not socially responsible.

Preliminary matter

The Chair noted that some Complainants had expressed concern about receiving the leaflet in their letterbox when they had signage requesting “no junk mail” or “addressed mail only”. The Chair confirmed this matter was outside the ASA’s jurisdiction but noted the Advertiser’s response which said in part:

“Finally, we acknowledge that there have been complaints stating that Covid Facts Flyers have been delivered to “no circular” or similarly marked letterboxes. Our instructions are not to place the Covid Facts Flyer in those boxes, and we will continue to stress this point. “

Complaints Board Discussion

The Chair noted that the Complaints Board’s role was to consider whether there had been a breach of the Advertising Standards Code. In deciding whether the Code has been breached the Complaints Board has regard to all relevant matters including:

- Generally prevailing community standards
- Previous decisions
- The consumer takeout of the advertisement, and
- The context, medium, audience and the product or service being advertised, which in this case is:
 - Context: A nationwide roll-out of the COVID-19 vaccine in response to a global pandemic
 - Medium: Unaddressed mail to letterboxes
 - Audience: Adult New Zealanders
 - Product: An advocacy message about the COVID-19 vaccine

Consumer Takeout

The Complaints Board agreed the likely consumer takeout of the advertisement was the Advertiser is concerned there are risks associated with the COVID-19 vaccine that consumers are not aware of. The advertisement’s emphasis was on true facts. The leaflet included eight facts about the vaccine and links to more “Hard Vaccine Facts” and encouraged consumers to “learn the truth”. The Board confirmed that a wide audience may be reached by the leaflet

given the breadth of distribution and that the COVID-19 Vaccine roll-out was relevant to all New Zealanders over 16 years of age.

Has the advocacy advertisement been adequately identified?

The Complaints Board agreed the advertisement had been adequately identified as an advocacy advertisement.

The Complaints Board confirmed the Advertiser's identity was clear. The advertisement included the Voices for Freedom logo, website address www.voicesforfreedom.co.nz/info and an email address. The Advertiser's position on the issue was clear. The Advertiser, Voices for Freedom, had concerns about the risks associated with taking the COVID-19 vaccine. The advertisement presented facts and encouraged consumers to seek more information. The Complaints Board agreed the advertisement met the identity requirements of Rule 2(e) of the Advertising Standards Code and a more liberal interpretation of the Code applied.

Were any of the statements in the leaflet misleading?

The Complaints Board considered each of the eight facts in turn, in the order they appeared in the advertisement. Where factual claims were made, the Board decided whether they had been adequately substantiated in the context of advocacy advertising. While a more liberal interpretation of the requirement for truthful presentation was provided for in advocacy advertising, statements presented as facts needed to be adequately supported.

In assessing the content, the Board noted the advertisement positioned the information as "8 important COVID vaccine **FACTS** you probably haven't heard!" The advertisement also invited consumers to "Learn the truth" and "Discover The Hard Vaccine Facts Before It's Too Late...". The Board agreed this meant that the eight facts required substantiation.

8. Vaccine companies are **exempt from ALL liability**.

The Complaints Board agreed this statement was presented as a fact, but it had not been adequately substantiated. The Board said while the Advertiser had referred to a media article dated 25 January 2021 which said: "The government has granted the Covid-19 vaccine suppliers Pfizer and BioNTech indemnity from any claims that may arise from use of the vaccine..." the Advertiser also said this exemption from liability did not cover "fraud and deceit". The Board said therefore the statement that "Vaccine companies are exempt from ALL liability" was misleading and in breach of Rule 2(b) of the Code.

7. All COVID-19 vaccines are currently **experimental!** Some trials won't end until 2023.

The Complaints Board agreed this was presented as a factual statement. The Board said inclusion of the word "ALL" meant the claim was an absolute claim. The Board said the Advertiser had only provided a link to the provisional consent for the Pfizer vaccine, approved by Medsafe. The Board noted the Advertiser had also provided a link to some information about a study to evaluate the Pfizer vaccine for COVID-19. The estimated completion date for this study is 6 April 2023. The Board said the claim that all COVID – 19 vaccines are currently experimental had not therefore been substantiated, so was misleading and in breach of Rule 2(b) of the Code.

6. The vaccine has **not been shown to stop you catching SARS-CoV-2 or passing it on** to others.

The Complaints Board agreed this was presented as a factual statement. The Board said this statement was an interpretation of the data available, presented in a way that illustrated the Advertiser's position. The Board noted the Advertiser's response refers to research regarding

the likelihood that the vaccine will reduce the risk of infection and transmission of the disease. The Board said this statement had been adequately supported in the context of an advocacy advertisement.

5. The only reason given to take the vaccine is that it **might** reduce **symptoms**.

The Complaints Board agreed this was presented as a factual statement, and it had not been adequately substantiated. The Board noted the Advertiser's response refers to an opinion statement in the British Medical Journal regarding questions about the assessment of vaccine efficacy. It also refers to an excerpt from the New Zealand Ministry of Health website and Facebook page, and included the following quote: "Getting a COVID-19 vaccine is an important step you can take to protect yourself from the effects of the virus. However, we don't yet know if it will stop you from catching and passing on the virus." The Board confirmed that the supporting information for this statement was not sufficient, and the statement was in breach of Rule 2(b) of the Code.

4. Animals in prior coronavirus vaccine trials **became very sick** when exposed to the wild virus.

The Complaints Board agreed this statement was presented as a fact, and it had been adequately substantiated in the context of an advocacy advertisement. The Board referred to a link to a study provided by the Advertiser, which is available at the National Library of Medicine.

3. It is **unknown** if the vaccine will cause **cancer, sterility or mutate cells**.

A majority of the Complaints Board said this statement was presented as a fact, and it had not been adequately substantiated. The majority said the way the statement was worded was misleading because it created an implication that the vaccine might cause cancer, sterility or mutate cells. The claim was therefore misleading and in breach of Rule 2(b) of the Code.

The minority disagreed. The minority said the statement had been adequately substantiated in the context of an advocacy advertisement. The minority noted the Advertiser had provided a link to the New Zealand Data Sheet which said:

"5.3 Preclinical safety data Genotoxicity/Carcinogenicity Neither genotoxicity nor carcinogenicity studies were performed. The components of COMIRNATY (lipids and mRNA) are not expected to have genotoxic potential."

2. Medsafe's Pfizer report **highlights concerns about genotoxicity and serious autoimmunity**.

The Complaints Board agreed this statement was presented as a fact, and it had not been adequately substantiated. The Board said the way the statement was worded suggested Medsafe had concerns about genotoxicity and serious auto immunity and had highlighted that in its report. That had not been adequately substantiated. The Board noted the Advertiser had provided a link to a Medsafe report which refers to obligations regarding further research concerning any "autoimmune" processes and "any potentially genotoxic contaminants" but that was not highlighted in its report. The claim was therefore misleading and in breach of Rule 2(b) of the Code.

1. **Deaths and cases of serious injury** are being reported around the world at an alarming rate!

The Complaints Board agreed this was presented as a factual statement. The Complaints Board said because this statement appeared last in the list of factual claims, it implied that the COVID -19 vaccine had caused deaths and cases of serious injury around the world. This had not been adequately substantiated. The Board noted the Advertiser's response refers to an article in a publication called the Health Defender, which contains hyperlinks to the VAERS database, which is the official US Government "Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System". The Board noted the comment from the Advertiser that "No claim of causation is made either by VAERS or by Voices for Freedom". The Board said in the context of the advertisement, causation was implied. The statement was therefore misleading and in breach of Rule 2(b) of the Code.

The Complaints Board then turned to consider the advertisement under the Principle and Rules relating to social responsibility. The Board dealt with each of the Rules in turn.

Did the advertisement encourage or condone a dangerous, illegal or unsafe practice, without justification?

The Complaints Board agreed the advertisement did not encourage or condone a dangerous, illegal or unsafe practice, without justification. The Board said the threshold to breach Rule 1(e) was high in the context of advocacy advertising. The Board said while facts in the leaflet had not been substantiated, this did not mean the advertisement overall encouraged or condoned an illegal or unsafe practice.

The Board noted messaging about the vaccine programme is available from a range of sources, including the Government, health experts, the media, non-government organisations, and advocacy groups and individuals, most of which encourage consumers to make an informed decision.

Did the advertisement cause fear or distress without justification?

A majority of the Complaints Board said the advertisement did not reach the threshold to cause fear or distress without justification. The majority said while the advocacy advertisement used emotive language, the Advocacy Principles supported a liberal interpretation of the Code, and this saved the overall advertisement from breaching Rule 1(g).

A minority disagreed. The minority said the advertisement did cause fear without justification. The minority said the use of the text "Discover the hard vaccine facts before it's too late...", "Deaths and cases of serious injury are being reported around the world at an alarming rate" and "Will you take the risk?" created a sense of danger that might produce fear in some people. The minority said the level of fear created by this language was enhanced in the current context of a global pandemic and an issue that affects all New Zealanders in a personal way.

Did the advertisement undermine the health and well-being of individuals?

The Complaints Board said the advertisement did not reach the threshold to undermine the health and wellbeing of individuals in the context of an advocacy advertisement. In making this determination the Board applied a liberal interpretation of the Code, supported by the Advocacy Principles. The Board noted there is other advertising supportive of the vaccine programme, including the Government advertising campaign and individuals have the right to choose whether to be vaccinated. The Board ruled the advertisement did not breach Rule 1(h).

Was the advertisement prepared and placed with a due sense of social responsibility to consumers and society?

In making a ruling on whether Principle 1 of the Advertising Standards Code had been breached, the Complaints Board noted the following statement from the Interpretation section of the Code.

“Social responsibility in advertising is embodied in the Principles and Rules of the Code. In interpreting the Code, emphasis must be placed on compliance with both the spirit and intention of the Code. It is possible for advertising to be in breach of one or more of the Principles in the Code without being in breach of a specific Rule.”

The Complaints Board unanimously agreed the wide distribution of a leaflet across New Zealand presenting facts on the COVID-19 vaccine that had not been adequately substantiated was not socially responsible. The Complaints Board ruled the advertisement was in breach of Principle 1 of the Advertising Standards Code.

Summary

The Complaints Board ruled the advertisement was misleading in part and was in breach of Principle 2 and Rule 2(b) of the Advertising Standards Code. The Board ruled the advertisement was also in breach of Rule 2(e) as although the Advertiser was identified, six of the eight facts were not adequately substantiated.

The Complaints Board ruled the advertisement was also in breach of Principle 1 of the Advertising Standards Code.

By, majority, the Complaints Board said the advertisement was not in breach of Rule 1(g) and unanimously agreed it was not in breach of Rule 1(e) or Rule 1(h) of the Advertising Standards Code.

Outcome

The Complaints Board ruled the complaint was **Upheld in part**.

Advertisement not to be further distributed.

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. Appeals must be made in writing via email or letter within 14 calendar days of receipt of this decision.

APPENDICES

1. Complaints
 2. Response from Advertiser
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Appendix 1

COMPLAINT 1:

This flyer is spreading false information regarding the Covid 19 vaccine.

COMPLAINT 2:

I believe that the claim in the advertisement, "Learn the truth about the COVID-19 Vaccine" is misleading because: 1. The list of 8 "facts" are not credible, especially item 1. As of writing, <https://voicesforfreedom.co.nz/info/> lists <https://childrenshealthdefense.org/defender/329-deaths-9516-otherinjuries-reported-following-covid-vaccine-cdc/> as a citation which entirely not credible. 1. Item 7. This is designed to mislead. Medsafe has definitively approved the Pfizer Covid-19 vaccine (<https://www.medsafe.govt.nz/COVID-19/status-of-applications.asp>). Additionally, I find this leaflet to be offensive as it tries to be antivaccination, and links to a site that is full of COVID conspiracy theories. There is also NO indication who are the members of this group.

COMPLAINT 3:

Brochure arrived in my rural mailbox today. Unscientific spurious claims. Scaremongering. Creating climate of uncertainty and conspiracy theories related to covid vaccines. Runs counter to MoH / NZ govt covid protection measures. I am a GP and incensed at such a circular, spreading false notions to the public

COMPLAINT 4:

This leaflet was delivered to my letterbox in Palmerston North on 29/4/21. It makes a number of false claims, intended to undermine public confidence in the Covid-19 vaccine, and goes against the recommendations of the Ministry of Health. The language used is emotive and inflammatory, and violates: Principle 1, Rule 1(e) - suggesting that taking the Covid-19 vaccine is a risk, and by extension should be avoided, is dangerous as it can increase the spread and/or severity of disease. Principle 1, Rule 1(g) - the advertisement aims to instill fear about the vaccine, and exploits vulnerable audiences who might not be scientifically literate. Principle 1, Rule 1(h) - the advertisement clearly undermines the Ministry of Health guidelines about vaccination Principle 2, Rule 2(b) - this advertisement is very likely to mislead, deceive or confuse consumers, abuse their trust or exploit their lack of knowledge. This includes by implication, inaccuracy, ambiguity, exaggeration, unrealistic claim, omission, and false representation. Principle 2, Rule 2(c) - the advertisement refers to Medsafe's report on the Pfizer vaccine in a misleading manner to instill fear in consumers. Principle 2, Rule 2(e) - opinions are presented as facts. A website to access "hard vaccine facts" is included. The 'facts' on the website are self-citing, or citing previously discredited research, puff pieces, and opinions. This organisation has already drawn criticism from scientists as can be seen in the articles link below:

https://www.newsroom.co.nz/the-eightmost-common-myths-about-covidvaccines?fbclid=IwAR3cDzxo5jKU3p7WEYpVOZBNdFOti3IkhhWczPFzXRTQ6ep_Xx S4LdnYOHo
<https://www.newshub.co.nz/home/newzealand/2021/04/coronavirus-every-claim-about-covid-19-made-by-antilockdown-group-voices-for-freedom-debunked-by-scientists.html?fbclid=IwAR2--UHPRpt0hb84ROoUgOLEnFcyo2j3JAsirXnEegwe1n8pji88RKL7-8>

COMPLAINT 5:

I received this in my letterbox yesterday as unaddressed mail. I am concerned about the claims made by this organisation as they are categorically false in some instances and biased in others. For example, their claim that "the vaccine" (without specifying which one in particular) "has not been shown to stop you catching SARS-CoV-2 or passing it on to others" is false. A study from Public Health England has found that a single dose of either the Pfizer or AstraZeneca vaccine halves the likelihood of household transmission (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/one-dose-of-covid-19-vaccine-can-cut-household-transmission-by-up-to-half>). Initial studies have also demonstrated that a single dose of the vaccine significantly reduces the likelihood of the vaccinated person contracting COVID-19. (<https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2021.04.22.21255913v1>). These studies directly refute the statements made by Voices for Freedom. I believe that Voices for Freedom have willingly made several false statements and have started a campaign that will decrease vaccine uptake in New Zealand and put the population at significant risk of further COVID-19 outbreaks. Therefore, I believe that a strong statement must be made by ASA to refute these statements and provide clarity about the false advertising of the "risks" of vaccination by this group.

COMPLAINT 6:

This media is advocating misinformation and is damaging to public health. I believe this should not be allowed. We have received this around the same time as the governments covid vaccine information.

COMPLAINT 7:

Voices for Freedom This is irresponsible, mimics public health information and conspiratorial This creates vaccine hesitancy & is risking a public health emergency and countless lives - this is risking all out lives and livelihoods This is risking lives

COMPLAINT 8:

The attached flyers were dropped into our mailbox which has a large "no junk mail" sticker on it. I am very concerned about random mail droppings of such nature claiming that opinions are "truth" and being obviously littered with misinformation. The flyer has potential to inspire anxiety amongst people. The group distributing this flyer has spend money and made a significant effort to have their flyer look like official health information without offering any advice, alternatives or any other pathway. Such publications should not be allowed to be mail dropped in to peoples homes. I would expect the organisation to ask me for permission before leaving such "advertising" in my letterbox. Could you please stop this group from continued distribution of such bad and misleading information leaflets.

COMPLAINT 9:

I'd like to lay a complaint about a COVID-19 vaccination misinformation flyer I received in my mailbox today (04/05/2021). The flyer is evidently from an organisation called 'Voices for Freedom' and has eight bullet points that it touts as facts about COVID-19 vaccinations in general (see Page2.jpg attached). It also makes a incorrect statement about the specific Pfizer vaccine being provided in New Zealand. The leaflet also provides a URL and QR barcode for the www.voicesforfreedom.co.nz website and encourages readers to use this URL to 'Discover The Hard Vaccine Facts Before It's Too Late'. Every one of these points is vague and unsubstantiated, with no references provided. The clear aim is to mislead the reader into believing that COVID-19 vaccinations are not to be trusted, The scaremongering content of this leaflet would be counterproductive and misleading even if there weren't a global pandemic and vaccination drive underway, and I would like the perpetrators to be made to cease this nonsense if at all within your powers to do so.

COMPLAINT 10:

Misinformation that undermines public health and safety

COMPLAINT 11:

I wish to lodge a complaint with regard to an unsolicited leaflet I have received entitled "Learn the Truth about the Covid-19 Vaccine". The information contained in the leaflet though not factually incorrect lacks context & supporting evidence. It clearly seeks to exploit the fears & anxieties that many in society hold with regard to Covid Vaccination. For example point 6 of the leaflet states: "The vaccine has not been shown to stop you catching SARS-COV-2 or passing it in to others." This point has never been in dispute & as with all other vaccines the Pfizer vaccine aims to protect people from from death & the worst of Covid symptoms whilst real world data currently shows being vaccinated reduces viral load & therefore transmission of the disease. Point 1 of the leaflet states: "Deaths & cases of serious injury are being reported around the world at an alarming rate" This statement does not seek to verify evidence to support this assertion & is disingenuous in the extreme. Juxtaposed against a situation in which millions have lost their lives to Covid & people are currently expiring at an alarming rate in India, I would assert that this statement is unjustified, dangerous & proffers no data to support this position. This statement presents a viewpoint & attempts to present it as fact without supporting evidence. Needless to say the rest of the leaflet carries on in the same vein "cherry picking" information though not strictly false, has been presented in a factual manner without context or supporting evidence. In an extremely anxious & distressing period of human history, leaflets like these are clearly designed to stoke fear with regard to covid vaccination & have the potential to create serious harm & injury to society.

COMPLAINT 12:

The Voices from Freedom Covid-19 anti vaccination flyer arrived in our letterbox on Tuesday here in Christchurch. Our box is labeled with a lark "no junk mail" sticker and the flyer was put in the box nevertheless. The information on the leaflet is obviously misleading (learning the "truth" - when presenting an opinion), the facts listed are all general statements not containing any real facts. The purpose of the flyer is to get people attracted to their website on which the highest ranking content is to donate to the organisation. I do not want to receive such advertising that is professionally disguised to look like official health information. This flyer is well funded and made and has the potential to cause anxiety in some people with regard to a Covid-19 vaccination. The group does not offer any alternatives or other solutions. Such content must not be delivered to households without permission. Would you please stop the group to continue with that practice.

COMPLAINT 13:

This was received in our post box that is marked no junk mail. The advertising claims to direct the reader to the truth about the covid vaccine but really only attempts to perpetuate myths and conspiracy theories around covid 19, the government response and the vaccination process. It seems to attempt to misinform based on half truths and plain lies. In my opinion this information is placing vulnerable people at risk of making decisions that may harm themselves or others in relation to refusing vaccination. I consider this dangerous misinformation and misrepresentation. I would be very grateful if you could look into this and use any powers to stop this organisation with their actions that are likely to cause individuals and our society harm should people believe their advertising.

COMPLAINT 14:

Unsolicited COVID-19 misinformation received in mailbox around 10 am 11 May 2021. Claims are not true or represent a deliberate manipulation of data.

COMPLAINT 15:

Misinformation about COVID-19 being spread via letterbox drop. Our letterbox is a no junk mail box yet this still was placed in our letterbox. Positioning our government and health authorities as mistrustful and as withholding information. Pushes you to visit Ooooh a website for more information on the 'real facts'.

COMPLAINT 16:

I would like to join others in expressing my disdain about the spreading of misinformation in this pamphlet. As far as I know this is already under investigation by your authority.

COMPLAINT 17:

This flyer in the post is promoting false information about the Covid vaccination. A quick Google search suggests it is a widely circulated flyer, which is dangerous to be preying on vulnerable people when NZ is trying to vaccinate the population so we can resume normal life. It is unethical, incorrect and a hinderance to progress.

COMPLAINT 18:

I just received the attached anti-vaccination leaflet in my letterbox today. I am based in Belmont on the North Shore of Auckland. I am just astounded that when we are living through a pandemic that such fearmongering leaflets are being dropped in letterboxes. Shouldn't health information come from a registered health provider? Could you please investigate and prevent this kind of material being distributed?

COMPLAINT 19:

Flyer in mailboxes with unsubstantiated claims. I have not (refuse to) visit their website, but expect there may be misleading information there also. This complaint is about the mass distribution (advertising) of this group's 9 claims about/against COVID-19 and our government's response/handling, and making claims that well proven scientific information is a conspiracy. There are other misleading statements also on that flyer. Also concerning is the insinuation that ivermectin is a cure-all that is being suppressed by the government. And apart from the link to their website, there is no indication of the funding/source or interests of the group publishing this. This is dangerous advertising.

COMPLAINT 20:

A group calling themselves "voices for freedom" are dropping dangerous and false literature in mailboxes. There are an awful lot of uneducated/gullible people out there who could take what these people are saying as fact. I believe this could be as damaging as the "vaccines causing autism" rubbish which came out about 2 decades back and caused terrible problems worldwide. I hope the writers of this nonsense are made to see the trouble they're causing and hopefully educated at the same time.

COMPLAINT 21:

First - I don't have a photograph of the pamphlet, sorry - but this picture from the internet shows a pamphlet that is practically identical to the one I have. The pamphlet makes eight claims, every single one of which is false or wilfully misleading. Info is presented here in the order (and numbering) as seen on the screen snip of the pamphlet. 8 - Manufacturers can be held liable in cases of fraud or deceit, and the public are covered by ACC. 7 - Phase III trials finished in November 2020 and results were published in December of that year. 6 - Medical data from countries where vaccination is ahead of NZ have shown reduced rates of illness and infection. 5 - Vaccines also reduce likelihood of transmission. 4 - These would have been animals from the placebo group. 3 - The vaccine cannot mutate cells because it cannot enter the cell nucleus. 2 - Medsafe have done no such thing. 1 - Caused by the virus, not the vaccine.

Appendix 2

RESPONSE FROM ADVERTISER, VOICES FOR FREEDOM

RE: Voices For Freedom – Complaint 21/215

1. We understand the Advertising Standards Association ("**the ASA**") has received certain complaints annexed here concerning our "8 Important Covid Vaccine Facts Flyer ("**the Covid Facts Flyer**").
2. We further understand that the complaints have been accepted for consideration by the Advertising Standards Complaints Board ("**the Board**") and that the Board will make a decision on the complaint with reference to your Advertising Standards Code ("**the Code**").
3. We have been directed that the following sections of the Code are relevant to this complaint: Principle 1, Principle 2 – namely Rule 1(e), Rule 1(g), Rule 1(h), Rule 2(b) and Rule 2(e).
4. Finally, we understand that the Board does not have enforcement powers to sanction any advertiser/advertising but rather maintains relationships with various media and advertising outlets/distributors. It can approach them to ask for their cooperation in enforcing its rulings.
5. On the other hand, where advertising is carried out through other means, the Board cannot enforce its own rulings, notwithstanding the various relationships maintained.

OVERVIEW

6. The Covid Facts Flyer is an educational publication. Its publication and distribution provide a service to the public, assisting them as it does as part of their informed consent decision-making process by providing information they "probably haven't heard".
7. We estimate that over 1.7 million Covid Facts Flyers have been printed and distributed throughout New Zealand at the time of writing. In this context, the number of complaints (21) received to date (despite media reporting on the ability to complain, which effectively amounted to a nationwide call for further complaints) represents a complaint rate of 0.00012353%.
8. Each of the eight facts set out on the Covid Facts Flyer is backed up by information available to the public and which representative information is available through statements or via links on our website at www.VoicesForFreedom.co.nz.
9. The Covid Facts Flyer does not constitute a breach of the Code for above reasons and for reasons further elaborated upon below.

SUMMARY OF OUR RESPONSE

10. For ease of reference, we set out here a summary of our responses as grouped, according to the various parts of the Code that you have advised are relevant.
 - a. **The Covid Facts Flyer does not encourage or condone dangerous, illegal or unsafe practices, or portray situations which encourage or**

condone a disregard for safety. [Principle 1: Rule 1(e)] The Covid Facts Flyer provides certain factual statements, and each fact is backed up, as referenced in detail below. Individuals are encouraged to make informed personal decisions about potential risks to their health and well-being.

- b. **The Covid Facts Flyer does not cause fear or distress without justification. [Principle 1: Rule 1(g)].** The Covid Facts Flyer is designed to engage readers to think more deeply about the Covid-19 vaccination with a list of facts for consideration that they "probably haven't heard" before. Any feelings as referenced are justified given the importance of ensuring that people are fully informed and educated to make a fully informed decision about an irreversible medical procedure.
- c. **Our Covid Facts Flyer does not undermine the health and wellbeing of individuals. [Principle 1: Rule 1(h)]** On the contrary, the Covid Facts Flyer ensures that individuals are armed with more information required for informed consent. Full knowledge of the pros and cons of the vaccination enables individuals to decide what risks they wish to take and the best health outcome for them. When dealing with a medical procedure intended for the entire adult population (and potentially children), this is particularly important, even more so when the aim is to administer it to healthy people.
- d. **The Covid Facts Flyer does not mislead, nor is it likely to mislead, deceive or confuse consumers, nor abuse their trust or exploit their lack of knowledge. [Principle 2: Rule 2(b)]** It is not an objective of the Covid Facts Flyer to provide a "balanced reporting overview of the pros and cons of the Covid-19 vaccine". As clearly stated on the Flyer, it's about providing information the reader "probably hasn't heard". The Covid Facts Flyer does not have space to print every single URL to references for claims made, and nor would this be a satisfactory solution in any case. Instead, the Flyer features a large QR code that takes the reader to the claims' source. There is also a link provided www.voicesforfreedom.co.nz/info which likewise takes the reader to the reference materials.
- e. **For the convenience of the Board, we have set out below references to the facts set out in the Covid Facts Flyer.** This is not an exhaustive list but a reference to those currently linked.
- f. **We stand by the validity of the references we have provided.** In addition we draw your attention to the blog post¹ www.covidreferenceguide.com/why-helen-petousis-harris-is-wrong one of many blog posts written independently of Voices for Freedom responding to claims to have "debunked" our Covid Fact Flyers.
- g. **Our identity and position has been clearly stated on the Covid Facts Flyer along with our contact details. [Principle 2: Rule 2(e)].** The flyer contains a series of factual statements, and all facts are substantiated as set out in this letter.

PRINCIPLE 1: RULE 1(e)

¹ <https://www.covidreferenceguide.com/why-helen-petousis-harris-is-wrong>

11. Principle 1: Rule 1(e) states that:
- Advertisements must not, unless justifiable on educational or social grounds, encourage or condone dangerous, illegal or unsafe practices, or portray situations which encourage or condone a disregard for safety.***
12. The Covid Facts Flyer does **not** encourage or condone dangerous, illegal or unsafe practices, or portray situations which encourage or condone a disregard for safety.
13. The Covid Facts Flyer instead provides certain factual statements (each fact being backed up as detailed below), encouraging individuals to make informed personal decisions about potential risks to their health and well-being.
14. We recognise that some readers may feel challenged with this new information as it may not reconcile with their presently held view.
15. Regarding the Rule, the practice being encouraged or condoned is the practice of making an informed decision. Not the making of the decision itself. As with all medicines, the individual must weigh risks and benefits. Whether to take a risk is entirely a personal decision.
16. Notwithstanding this, to the extent that it is entertained to interpret the Covid Facts Flyer as encouraging an allegedly "unsafe practice" (say declining to receive a Covid-19 vaccine), then Rule 1(e) would justify that on educational grounds. Indeed, the Covid Facts Flyer states explicitly that "The information contained in this leaflet is educational only and does not constitute medical or legal advice."
17. Moreover, the Covid Facts Flyer provides education regarding the Covid-19 vaccination that people "probably haven't heard" to enable them to make an informed decision.
18. The facts justify the information set out in the Covid Facts Flyer, and the educational element is critical given the serious and irreversible nature of the medical treatment contemplated. Healthy individuals will receive the treatment, and there have been no deaths from Covid-19 in NZ for people under 50 years, despite approximately 2600 cases.
19. Ultimately, as with all medicines, the recipient must weigh up the risks and benefits. ***That risk is entirely a personal decision.***

PRINCIPLE 1: RULE 1(g)

20. Principle 1: Rule 1(g) states that:
- Advertisements must not cause fear or distress without justification.***
21. The Covid Facts Flyer does not cause fear or distress without justification for the reasons set out in this section and elsewhere in this letter.
22. The Covid Facts Flyer is designed to engage readers to think more deeply about the Covid-19 vaccination. It provides education to the public about known and

possible risks associated with the Covid-19 vaccination with a list of facts for consideration that they “probably haven’t heard” before.

23. We recognise that that the information may be challenging for some people. However, were the emotions referenced in the Rule attributed to the Covid Facts Flyer, the importance of ensuring that people are fully informed and educated to make a fully informed decision about an important medical procedure would justify these emotions.
24. To emphasis this point, the Covid Facts Flyer asks for consideration of the risks "before it is too late" (i.e. before the person is vaccinated) because informed consent cannot be given retrospectively. To state the obvious: one cannot be unvaccinated.

PRINCIPLE 1: RULE 1(h)

25. Principle 1: Rule 1(h) states that:

Advertisements must not undermine the health and wellbeing of individuals.

26. Our Covid Facts Flyer does **not** undermine the health and wellbeing of individuals.
27. On the contrary, the Covid Facts Flyer ensures that individuals are fully armed with the information they need for informed consent. Full knowledge of the pros and cons of the vaccination enables individuals to decide what risks they wish to take and the best health outcome for them.
28. This is particularly important when dealing with a medical procedure that is being proposed to be rolled out to the entire adult population (and potentially children, too) and when it is being proposed for healthy people.
29. There has been an enormous quantity of information provided over a sustained period from both the Media and the Government claiming positive reasons for vaccination. Essential information about the risks involved (both the real risk of sickness from Covid-19 and the risk of side effects et al. from the vaccination) has been sparse to non-existent.
30. Our Covid Facts Flyer is designed to address the current imbalance, thus providing the best chance for individuals to demonstrate self-responsibility regarding their well-being.

PRINCIPLE 2: RULE 2 (b)

31. Principle 2: Rule 2(b) states that:

Advertisements must not mislead or be likely to mislead, deceive or confuse consumers, abuse their trust or exploit their lack of knowledge. This includes by implication, inaccuracy, ambiguity, exaggeration, unrealistic claim, omission, false representation or otherwise. Obvious hyperbole identifiable as such is not considered to be misleading.

32. The Covid Facts Flyer does **not** mislead, nor is it likely to mislead, deceive or confuse consumers, nor abuse their trust or exploit their lack of knowledge.

33. It is not an objective of the Covid Facts Flyer to provide a “balanced reporting overview of the pros and cons of the Covid-19 vaccine”. As clearly set out on the flyer it’s about providing information the reader “probably hasn’t heard”.
34. Thus, there is no omission or false representation. There is plenty of information publicly available that is covered in the media or promoted through government agencies. However, that information does not include what is included in the Covid Facts Flyer. The purpose of the Covid Facts Flyer is to provide just that balance.
35. The Covid Facts Flyer states clearly that "we believe in backing up our claims" and contains a simple method to access the information backing up the claims.
36. The Covid Facts Flyer does not have space to print every single URL to references for claims made and nor would this be a satisfactory solution in any case as the links to the information in many cases are long and complex. The only practical way to provide access to them is online.
37. To this end, we made every effort to make it as easy as possible to view those references by including a large QR code on the Covid Facts Flyer, which takes the reader to the source of the claims made. There is also a link provided www.voicesforfreedom.co.nz/info which likewise takes the reader to the reference materials.
38. This is all very reasonable and follows the usual practice in terms of making references easily accessible. Readers can click on the QR code or manually type in the Voices For Freedom URL details to ascertain the sources provided.
39. Thus, it is clear there is no intention to mislead, deceive or confuse the public, abuse their trust or exploit their lack of knowledge.

COVID FACTS FLYER – REFERENCES IN SUPPORT

40. For the convenience of the Board, we set out below references to the facts set out in the Covid Facts Flyer:

Claim 1 - Covid Facts Flyer

41. Claim 1 in the Covid Facts Flyer reads:
- “Deaths and cases of serious injury are being reported around the world at an alarming rate.”***
42. The link provided for this claim is an article to the Health Defender² which contains hyperlinks to:
- a. the VAERS database (which is the official US Government “Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System”);
 - b. the National Vaccine Information Centre (a privately run entity that provides a convenient interface via which to view the VAERS reports);

² <https://childrenshealthdefense.org/defender/329-deaths-9516-other-injuries-reported-following-covid-vaccine-cdc/>

- c. reputable media articles such as the Washington Post; and to
 - d. the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) website, amongst other links.
43. We note that some complainants made derisive comments about the Health Defender. We consider that publication to be a credible source, but that is not of critical importance since the links contained within the article in the Health Defender publication stand on their own merit and are from official sources.
44. The wording used in the Covid Facts Flyer is that deaths and cases of serious injury are being reported, which is precisely what VAERS does: it is a reporting system. No claim of causation is made either by VAERS or by Voices for Freedom. A lack of proof of causation is not proof of a lack of causation, and as such, we consider all reports part of an informed consent process.
45. We will be happy to add to the above information already linked to by providing additional links to the CDC's analysis of the VAERS reports³ and other international reporting systems⁴ if the Board considered that would assist.

Claim 2 – Covid Facts Flyer

46. Claim 2 of the Covid Facts Flyer states:
- “Medsafe’s Pfizer report highlights concerns about genotoxicity and serious autoimmunity.”***
47. The link provided for this claim lands on a blog page on the Voices for Freedom⁵ website. That in turn explains and links to Medsafe’s Pfizer report⁶.
48. In paragraphs 28 and 5, respectively, Medsafe's report says it requires further discussion and data from Pfizer about control of genotoxic contaminants and autoimmunity.

Claim 3 – Covid Facts Flyer

49. Claim 3 of the Covid Facts Flyer states:
- “It is unknown if the vaccine will cause cancer, sterility or mutate cells.”***
50. Carcinogenic and genotoxicity studies have not been performed. The reference provided is a website link to Medsafe’s *Datasheet for Comirnaty*⁷ in section 5.3.
51. Concerns about the development of placenta were raised by Ex-Pfizer Head of Respiratory Research, Dr Michael Yeadon, and lung specialist and former head of the public health department Dr Wolfgang Wodarg who filed an application⁸

³ <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/acip/meetings/downloads/slides-2021-01/06-COVID-Shimabukuro.pdf>

⁴ <http://www.vigiaccess.org/>

⁵ <https://voicesforfreedom.co.nz/medsafes-pfizer-report-raises-serious-alarm-bells/>

⁶ <https://www.medsafe.govt.nz/COVID-19/Comirnaty-Gazette.pdf>

⁷ <https://www.medsafe.govt.nz/profs/Datasheet/c/comirnatyinj.pdf>

⁸ https://2020news.de/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Wodarg_Yeadon_EMA_Petition_Pfizer_Trial_FINAL_01DEC2020_EN_unsigned_with_Exhibits.pdf

(Section XI) with the European Medicine Agency responsible for EU-wide drug approval calling for the immediate suspension of all SARS CoV 2 vaccine studies, and, in particular, the BioNtech/Pfizer study. This link is embedded in the article⁹ referenced on our website.

Claim 4 – Covid Facts Flyer

52. Claim 4 of the Covid Facts Flyer states:

“Animals in prior coronavirus vaccine trials became very sick when exposed to the wild virus.”

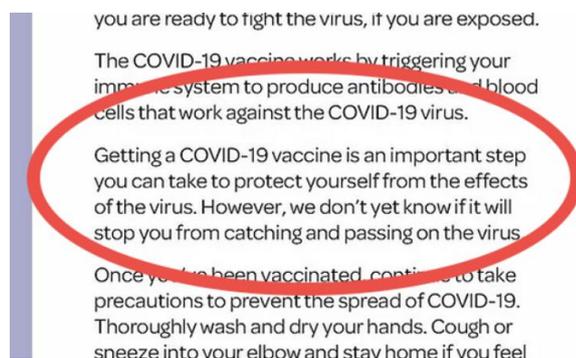
53. We linked a copy of this paper¹⁰ on our website¹¹ to back up this claim. On account of this information, we note that Medsafe’s Risk Management Plan¹² (RMP) actually acknowledges Vaccine-Associated-Enhanced-Disease (“VAED”) as an important potential risk. Voices for Freedom would be happy to add this additional reference from Medsafe to our website if advised by the Board.

Claim 5 – Covid Facts Flyer

54. Claim 5 of the Covid Facts Flyer states:

“The only reason given to take the vaccine is that it might reduce symptoms.”

55. Voices for Freedom provided a link for this claim from the British Medical Journal¹³ to back up this claim. Numerous other places also advise that it is not known whether the vaccine can stop us catching the virus or stop transmission, including from our own New Zealand Ministry of Health website and the Ministry run Facebook page - Unite Against Covid.



Claim 6 – Covid Flyer Facts

56. Claim 6 of the Covid Facts Flyer states:

⁹<https://2020news.de/en/dr-wodarg-and-dr-yeardon-request-a-stop-of-all-corona-vaccination-studies-and-call-for-co-signing-the-petition/>

¹⁰<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/22536382/>

¹¹<https://voicesforfreedom.co.nz/info/>

¹²<https://www.medsafe.govt.nz/COVID-19/Comirnaty-RMP.pdf>

¹³<https://blogs.bmj.com/bmj/2021/01/04/peter-doshi-pfizer-and-modernas-95-effective-vaccines-we-need-more-details-and-the-raw-data/>

“The vaccine has not been shown to stop you catching SARS-CoV-2 or passing it on to others.”

57. In support of this we provided references to Dr Fauci¹⁴, Director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and the Chief Medical Advisor to the US President.
58. The statement has been backed up in many places including by Medsafe who says¹⁵:
- “The Committee discussed the clinical trial information available to date. ... It was also noted that the study design does not provide robust safety data in a number of populations. Nor does it provide adequate information about duration of immunity/need for booster doses, prevention of transmission, prevention of asymptomatic disease or prevention of severe disease. Given the limitations of the data, robust post-market information gathering is of the utmost importance.”***
59. One of the complaints links to two studies: one¹⁶ an undated, non-peer-reviewed pre-print and the other, a recent¹⁷ study, are put forward as evidence of signs that transmission may be reduced after vaccination.
60. The latter study was published well after the Covid Facts Flyer was printed. Regardless, the studies put forward do not invalidate the statement that the vaccine does not stop you from passing it on to others. We continue to rely on information provided after the scrutiny of Medsafe and the Ministry of Health and further confirmations from Unite Against Covid in recent days¹⁸

Claim 7 – Covid Flyer Facts

61. Claim 7 of the Covid Facts Flyer states:
- “All Covid-19 vaccines are currently experimental, and some trials won’t end until 2023.”***
62. Medsafe’s Gazette notice¹⁹ clearly confirms the vaccine only has provisional approval and still has 58 conditions to be met.
63. Our website provided the direct link²⁰ to the trial describing completion in 2023. As quoted above, Medsafe is still gathering post-market information²¹ on account of this.

Claim 8 – Covid Flyer Facts

¹⁴ <https://ijr.com/fauci-why-people-precautions-after-covid-vaccine/>

¹⁵ <https://www.medsafe.govt.nz/profs/adverse/minutesOoS-20-jan-2021.htm>

¹⁶ <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2021.04.22.21255913v1>

¹⁷ <https://khub.net/documents/135939561/390853656/Impact+of+vaccination+on+household+transmission+of+SARS-COV-2+in+England.pdf/35bf4bb1-6ade-d3eb-a39e-9c9b25a8122a?t=1619601878136>

¹⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/UniteAgainstCOVID19>

¹⁹ <https://www.medsafe.govt.nz/COVID-19/Comirnaty-Gazette.pdf>

²⁰ <https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/NCT04368728>

²¹ <https://www.medsafe.govt.nz/profs/adverse/minutesOoS-20-jan-2021.htm>

64. Claim 8 of the Covid Facts Flyer states:
- “Vaccine companies are exempt from ALL liability.”***
65. The link on our site²² references the intention to provide exemption from liability which has since been granted²³.
66. Exemption from liability is standard for vaccinations for any adverse events. It does not cover fraud and deceit, which is common practice in any contract or insurance terms and conditions, and as such, the statement about liability stands on its own.

FACT-CHECKING THE DEBUNKING – FURTHER NOTE

67. Regarding the above 8 facts contained in the Covid Facts Flyer, we note that one complainant referred to the article by Dr Helen Petousis-Harris in Newsroom²⁴ to “debunk dangerous misinformation”.
68. We stand by the validity of the references we have provided above but in addition draw your attention to the blog post²⁵
- www.covidreferenceguide.com/why-helen-petousis-harris-is-wrong.
69. This is but one of many blog posts made independently of Voices for Freedom which have responded to Dr Petousis-Harris.

PRINCIPLE 2: RULE 2(e)

70. Principle 2: Rule 2(e) states that:
- “Advocacy advertising must clearly state the identity and position of the advertiser. Opinion in support of the advertiser’s position must be clearly distinguishable from factual information. Factual information must be able to be substantiated.”***
71. Our identity and position has been clearly stated on the Covid Facts Flyer along with our contact details.
72. There are no “opinions” on the Covid Facts Flyer. A series of factual statements are provided and all facts are substantiated as set out above in this letter.

CONCLUSION

²²<https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/covid-19-coronavirus-government-may-provide-indemnity-to-nz-supplier-of-vaccine/CTQ4VCHV5X47EGOIPASFBO3R4/>

²³<https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/435107/government-grants-vaccine-suppliers-indemnity-against-claims>

²⁴<https://www.newshub.co.nz/home/new-zealand/2021/04/coronavirus-every-claim-about-covid-19-made-by-anti-lockdown-group-voices-for-freedom-debunked-by-scientists.html>

²⁵<https://www.covidreferenceguide.com/why-helen-petousis-harris-is-wrong>

73. The information we provide is never in the news, media or government promotions. The public is not exposed to a balanced conversation, pros and cons, the big picture of risks, potential risks, or any other vaccine limitations.
74. There is no full and transparent information from the authorities or media to ensure a genuine informed consent process. We consider it an indictment on the system that a grassroots movement such as Voices for Freedom has had to take up that charge independently.
75. It is clear from the complaints that receiving this information has been new and challenging for some recipients. We note that complainants say that they believe the information is false, fake, alarmist and conspiratorial. Yet, every statement in the flyers is backed up. In many cases, directly from government sources, including the NZ government.
76. At Voices for Freedom, we welcome rigorous debate and respectful, bold conversations. Only when information about all of the potential risks is widely available can we have an open discussion about the Covid vaccine. Many people are rushing to take it without access to all the information. NZ law requires that individuals are provided with the information they need to make a fully informed choice.²⁶ Without more knowledge, that cannot happen.
77. Finally, we acknowledge that there have been complaints stating that Covid Facts Flyers have been delivered to "no circular" or similarly marked letterboxes. Our instructions are not to place the Covid Facts Flyer in those boxes, and we will continue to stress this point.
78. We are aware of instances where these flyers have been collected (by those seeking to bring ill-will to us) and then deliberately dropped into letterboxes marked in this way. That said, sometimes genuine mistakes are made by those delivering, and in that respect, we apologise for any inconvenience caused.

²⁶ <https://www.hdc.org.nz/your-rights/about-the-code/code-of-health-and-disability-services-consumers-rights/>