

<b>COMPLAINT NUMBER</b>	19/266
<b>COMPLAINANT</b>	J Wills & D Cross
<b>ADVERTISER</b>	NZ Police
<b>ADVERTISEMENT</b>	NZ Police Television
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	30 July 2019
<b>OUTCOME</b>	No Grounds to Proceed

**Advertisement:** The television advertisement for the New Zealand Police firearms amnesty and buy-back scheme showed images of firearms with a voiceover saying "...we need your help to remove prohibited firearms and parts from New Zealand. Community collection events are happening now so help keep New Zealand safe..."

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

**Complainant, J Wills, said:** Public service advert regarding buyback process. Advert implied that all who owned or had a firearms license are criminals and we need to remove firearms to make our communities safer. I take huge offence to the implication that I am a criminal and that I am making my communities unsafe.

I would like to see this advert removed immediately and an apology from NZ Police for imply that I am a criminal

**Complainant, D Cross, said:** I find the advert regarding buy back of firearms a total insult to the law abiding licensed firearms owners in New Zealand. It is nothing short of outright lies and misleading the public, by stating that it will make New Zealand a safer place. The only way you can make New Zealand a safer place is by removing all criminals from society. This is nothing short of media propaganda supported by the Police and Government. By stating that it will make NZ a safer place is like saying that all Kiwi's are stupid and will believe anything that media puts in front of them.

**The relevant provisions were Advertising Standards Code - Principle 1, Principle 2, Rule 1(c), Rule 2(e)**

**The Chair** noted the Complainants' concerns the advertisement implied people who own firearms are criminals and the buy-back scheme will make New Zealand a safer place.

The Chair did not agree with the Complainants' takeout of the advertisement, that it implies all people who own firearms are not law abiding. The Chair said the advertisement conveys the message that the removal of prohibited firearms will "help keep New Zealand safe". The changes to New Zealand gun laws were passed in response to the March 15 terror attack in Christchurch, which resulted in the killing of 51 people. As a result of the changes "there will no longer be a category of firearm known as a military style semi-automatic firearm (or MSSA) and the old "E" endorsement will be obsolete.

The newly banned items will be called prohibited firearms, prohibited magazines, and prohibited parts. New offences involving prohibited items carry tougher penalties.

An amnesty is in place until 20 December 2019.”<sup>1</sup>

The Chair said the advertisement did not reach the threshold to cause serious or widespread offence, based on prevailing community standards and was not misleading.

The Chair said the advertisement had been prepared with a due sense of social responsibility and was not in breach of Principle 1, Principle 2, Rule 1(c) or Rule 2(e) of the Advertising Standards Code.

The Chair ruled 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.

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<sup>1</sup> Excerpt from the New Zealand Police website: Advice: Firearms and Safety