

COMPLAINT NUMBER	21/061
ADVERTISER	Rangiora Toyota
ADVERTISEMENT	Rangiora Toyota, Radio
DATE OF MEETING	13 April 2021
OUTCOME	Upheld Advertisement not to be used again in its current form

Summary of the Complaints Board Decision

The Complaints Board upheld a complaint about a radio advertisement for Rangiora Toyota which was disrespectful to the Māori language by mispronouncing “Rangiora” in its jingle. The Complaints Board said the mispronunciation of a Māori place name caused harm to the language and was likely to offend consumers.

Advertisement

The radio advertisement for Rangiora Toyota includes a jingle “Rangiora Toyota”, (pronounced *Rang – ee - ora*) which was sung by a woman and played at the beginning and at the end of the advertisement. The name Rangiora Toyota (using correct te reo Māori pronunciation) was also used twice in the body of the advertisement, by the male presenter.

Summary of the Complaint

The Complainant was concerned the Māori place name “Rangiora” was mispronounced in the radio jingle, and this showed a lack of knowledge and respect for the Māori language.

Issues Raised:

- Social Responsibility
- Harm or Offense

Summary of the Agency Response on behalf of the Advertiser

The Agency/Advertiser defended the complaint. They said the ad has been on air for five years and it would be very difficult to change it. They said the majority of people in Rangiora pronounce the place name that way (as *Rang -ee- ora*). They also said the correct te reo pronunciation in the voiceover was a good compromise.

Summary of the Media Response

NZME said it has a te reo Māori policy for advertisements it creates and runs on its network. At the time of accepting this advertisement, this policy stated that Māori pronunciation of place names should be used in all advertising, except as directed by the advertiser.

In this case, as noted, a correct te reo pronunciation of “Rangiora” was used during the body of the advertisement. The jingle used is an old recording which is synonymous with this brand, and we understand is extremely well known within the community. As such, the client requested the use of this jingle in the advertisement.

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(c) Decency and Offensiveness: Advertisements must not contain anything that is indecent, or exploitative, or degrading, or likely to cause harm, or serious or widespread offence, or give rise to hostility, contempt, abuse or ridicule.

Relevant precedent decisions

In considering this complaint the Complaints Board referred to two precedent decisions, Decision 20/211 and 20/373, both of which were settled by the Advertiser.

The full versions of these decisions can be found on the ASA website:

<https://www.asa.co.nz/decisions/>

Decision 20/211 concerned two complaints about a television advertisement for GJ Gardner Homes which had a voiceover mispronouncing the place name Taranaki. Upon receiving the complaints, the Advertiser removed the advertisement, and the Chair of the Complaints Board ruled the complaints were settled.

Decision 20/373 concerned a television advertisement for Pak 'n Save which had a voiceover mispronouncing the place name Wainoni. The Advertiser confirmed the advertisement would not be used again and expressed gratitude to the Complainant for raising the issue and said they would continue to seek to improve their pronunciation of te reo. The Chair of the Complaints Board settled the complaint.

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.

Consumer Takeout

The Complaints Board noted that advertisement was a radio advertisement for a Toyota dealership in a large rural service town in North Canterbury. They agreed the likely consumer takeout of the advertisement was that the Rangiora Toyota dealership has a range of SUV's and other smaller cars for sale.

Is the advertisement likely to cause harm or widespread offence?

The Complaints Board unanimously agreed the mispronunciation of Rangiora in the jingle in the advertisement was likely to cause harm or widespread offence to both Māori and the wider New Zealand population. This is because te reo Māori is an official language of New Zealand and should be pronounced correctly in a broadcast environment.

The Board agreed that perpetuating the mispronunciation of place names based on historic usage was not a valid reason for it to continue. The Board acknowledged the jingle had been used for some time and there would be a cost to the advertiser to replace it, but this did not mitigate the breach of the Code.

The Board said the different pronunciation of "Rangiora" in the jingle and voiceover further highlighted correct and incorrect pronunciation and potentially caused confusion. Some Board members said the mispronunciation was disrespectful and likely to cause offence. For other Board members, the mispronunciation was harmful to the effort New Zealanders are now making to ensure te reo Māori thrives as a language for future generations.

Is the advertisement socially responsible?

The Complaints Board unanimously agreed the advertisement was not socially responsible. The Board said its role was to reflect generally prevailing community standards and there has been a shift in New Zealand society to increased support for the mana and cultural significance of Māori names and their correct pronunciation.

The Complaints Board said the advertisement was in breach of Principle 1 and Rule 1(c) of the Advertising Standards Code.

Outcome

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

Advertisement to be removed and not played again in its current form.

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. Complaint
 2. Response from Advertiser
 3. Response from Media
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Appendix 1

COMPLAINT

I feel that the Rangiora Toyota jingle breaches Rule 1 (c) Decency and Offensiveness of the Advertising Standards code. The highly incorrect pronunciation of Rangiora within the sung part of the jingle is offensive and shows a lack of knowledge and respect of the Maori language. The spoken part of the advertisement between the sung parts is much better in terms of pronunciation so the sung part of the jingle needs to be rerecorded to a higher standard of pronunciation.

Appendix 2

RESPONSE FROM AGENCY, ON BEHALF OF ADVERTISER

The advertising campaign we have been running with the existing jingle, has been on air for the last five years.

And as like any long term planned campaign it is extremely important that consistency is maintained.

There Jingle is an integral part of there marketing, in the form it is in now, and as far as the pronunciation of Rangiora and how it resonates with the listener.

To change the commercial would be a nightmare!

It's the difficulty of getting the voice that matches the existing sound, and cost to the client for the voice and audio production.

I personally live in Rangiora and can confirm that majority of people who live out there pronounce it the way it is voiced in the jingle.

Also [...] the voice over for the commercial, uses the pronunciation that you have requested so it is a nice compromise.

Appendix 3

RESPONSE FROM MEDIA, NZME

We write on behalf of NZME (the publisher) in response to the above complaint regarding Rangiora Toyota's advertising on NZME Radio.

Firstly, we apologise for the delay in this response.

The ASA has identified Principle 1, Rule 1(c), as potentially being relevant:

PRINCIPLE 1: SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: Advertisements must be prepared and placed with a due sense of social responsibility to consumers and to society.

Rule 1(c) Decency and Offensiveness: Advertisements must not contain anything that is indecent, or exploitative, or degrading, or likely to cause harm, or serious or widespread offence, or give rise to hostility, contempt, abuse or ridicule.

The complainant notes their concern regarding the pronunciation of “Rangiora” in the Rangiora Toyota jingle.

NZME has a te reo Māori policy for advertisements it creates and runs on its network. At the time of accepting this advertisement, this policy stated that Māori pronunciation of place names should be used in all advertising, except as directed by the advertiser. NZME also has in place a comprehensive audio library of te reo pronunciation to assist in this. (We note that NZME has recently completed a review of this policy to remove exceptions such as that noted above, and to otherwise promote and ensure correct te reo pronunciations are used in broadcasting and advertising on our network).

In this case, as noted, a te reo pronunciation of “Rangiora” was used during the body of the advertisement. The jingle used is an old recording which is synonymous with this brand, and we understand is extremely well known within the community. As such, the client requested the use of this jingle in the advertisement.