

<b>COMPLAINT NUMBER</b>	21/325
<b>ADVERTISER</b>	Zero Card
<b>ADVERTISEMENT</b>	Zero Card website
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	28 June 2021
<b>OUTCOME</b>	No Grounds to Proceed

**Advertisement:** The website advertisement for Zerocard.co.nz promotes the product 'Zero Card', a plastic card which uses NFC technology to transfer information about the card holder. The text on the website says: "Make a Memorable first impression and Reduce Waste. Paper business cards have been used for centuries. Unfortunately, they're expensive and harmful to the environment, not to mention ordinary. With a Zero Card, you'll leave lasting impressions and save the planet through the magic of NFC. Start tapping and create new opportunities now!"... Is this card environment friendly? Zero Card is made of high quality PVC, can last up to 10 years and it's recyclable... 27 million paper business cards are printed daily, 90% of them end up in the bin..."

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

**Complaint:** Rule 2 (h) Environmental Claims breached.

The seller is claiming the product (plastic business cards) is a 'green' alternative because it can be recycled, however it requires much higher emissions to produce and dispose of - being made from plastic. Compare that to the same product that's bio degradable, even when disposed of in higher quantities, still comes nowhere near as much as a plastic card. You would need to print and dispose of millions of cards to match the emissions and damage that a single plastic card would do. Also taking into account micro plastics etc, or how plastic isn't disposed or recycled properly. So they are using words to sell the product such as green/eco friendly/ eco business while the product is actually causing more damage to the environment than alternatives. The seller hasn't taken into account the entire lifecycle of the product or that plastics are more damaging to the environment than bio degradable cards.

**The relevant provisions were Advertising Standards Code - Principle 2, Rule 2(b), Rule 2(h);**

**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(h) Environmental Claims:** Environmental claims must be accurate and able to be substantiated by evidence that reflects scientific and technological developments.

**The Chair** noted the Complainant's concern the advertisement made misleading environmental claims.

The Chair said the likely consumer takeout of the advertisement was the Zero Card is an alternative to paper business cards.

The Chair noted the Advertiser promotes the card as friendly to the environment because 27 million paper cards are printed daily and 95% of them get thrown away, you only need one card, it lasts ten years and because it is made of PVC, it can be recycled.

The Chair said the advertisement did not meet the threshold to be likely to mislead or confuse consumers. In the Chair's view the advertisement emphasised the value for consumers of having one e-business card over many individual print copies.

The Chair noted the environmental claims included "reduce waste", "environmentally friendly", "Save the planet through the use of NFC" and that the PVC material the card is made from is "recyclable". The Chair confirmed the statement that referred to "save the planet" was obvious hyperbole and not misleading. The Chair said the other claims did not meet the threshold to breach Rule 2(h).

The Chair said the advertisement was not in breach of Principle 2, Rule 2(b) or Rule 2(h) 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 calendar days of receipt of this decision.