

COMPLAINT NUMBER	22/072
ADVERTISER/S	NZ Automobile Association, NZME, CarExpert Pty Ltd
ADVERTISEMENT/S	AA Motoring, Driven, CarExpert, Digital Marketing
DATE OF MEETING	21 March 2022
OUTCOME	No Jurisdiction

Advertisement:

Advertisement 1: The web page on the AA Motoring website provides a review of the Ford Ranger Wildtrak X 2021. The review includes information about the range, specifications and special features. It then delivers a "verdict" on the vehicle.

Advertisement 2: The web page on the Driven website, "FX4 Max and Wildtrak X: Ford's updated Ranger range tested", compares the Ford Ranger FX4 Max and the Wildtrak X. It states basic specifications for both (price, power, fuel economy), and draws comparisons between the two and to previous models. The page includes images of both models.

Advertisement 3: The page, "About the 2021 Ford Ranger Wildtrak 2.0 (4X4)" on the CarExpert website provides details about the vehicle. The body text provides details including about the engine, price, fuel economy and dimensions. These specifications are set out in a table below the text, as is an extensive list of features.

The Chair ruled the Complaints Board did not have jurisdiction to consider the complaint.

Complaint: This complaint is not only with the AA, but also with Driven on-line magazines <https://www.driven.co.nz/reviews/fx4-max-and-wildtrak-x-ford-s-updated-ranger-range-tested/> - in both publications the reader is given a claimed fuel efficiency of 7.4 L/100 km for the Wildtrak X (I purchase on in May 2021). Ford makes the same claim. When addressing the issue with Ford they advise me as follows: The fuel economy and emissions figures quoted by Ford in their sales literature are the results of independent testing in accordance with international test standards. These fuel economy figures are for comparison purposes only and cannot be expected to be achieved in real world driving situations. My actual results for the past 17.000 km have returned an average consumption of 10.5L/100km which is 40% higher than claimed. I would not be complaining if I returned figures in the region of 8.4L/100 but 10.5 is way over the top. Of greater concern is Ford's official stance and it indicates that published figures are not real world figures but rather a "thumb suck"

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Here is some information from FORD direct where they make mis-representation regarding the expected consumption:

<https://www.courtesyford.co.nz/vehicle/ford/ranger/999673153/>

In the above listing by a FORD dealership – Courtesy Ford in Manawatu, they clearly list the consumption as 7.4L That information would have come from FORD direct

<https://www.carexpert.com.au/ford/ranger/2021-wildtrak-20-4x4-7f530fb9>

The above is an Australian Publication showing a review of the same vehicle. FORD NZ falls under the control of FOARD Australia. That is an endorsement with the FORD logo.

I believe that FORD NZ has changed their figures on the website a little and they now reflect an consumption of 8l/100 with a disclaimer as to how those figures were calculated – clearly not reality. Below the link:

<https://www.ford.co.nz/commercial/ranger/models/4wd-wildtrak-x-double-cab-wellside-2-0L-biturbo/>

Even 8l/100 is not achievable – and this could also be challenged as misrepresentation.

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

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.

The Chair acknowledged the Complainant’s concern the web pages complained about were misleading because the rate of fuel economy for the Ford Ranger Wildtrak 2.0 (4X4) was not possible in real world driving conditions.

The Secretariat contacted the NZ Automobile Association and NZME (owner of the Driven website) and confirmed both reviews were written and published independently of Ford. Based on this information, the Chair said the web pages were editorial content and did not fit the definition of an “advertisement” in the Advertising Standards Code.

The Chair then considered the page on the CarExpert website. She noted CarExpert refers to themselves as a “privately owned major automotive publisher” which provides “quality, informative and impartial car reviews, news and comparisons” and does not publish sponsored content or paid advertorial. She said the page in question provided specifications of the 2021 Wildtrak 2.0 (4X4) and was part of a broader editorial on the Ford Ranger range. She confirmed it was not covered by the Advertising Standards Code.

The Chair ruled the Complaints Board has no jurisdiction to consider the complaint in respect of these three web pages.

Chair’s Ruling: Complaint No Jurisdiction

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 with notification of the intent to appeal lodged within 14 calendar days of receipt of the written decision. The substantive appeal application must be lodged with the ASA within 21 calendar days of receipt of the written decision.