



**If an ad
is wrong,
the ASA
is here
to help
put it
right**



From the Chair and Chief Executive

Statement from Kerrie-Lee Magill, ASA Chair

Following appointment as Chair in July 2021, our focus was on engagement with ASA Members and the wide range of companies that make up the advertising industry, firming up strategic priorities and supporting the ASA team.

The advertising landscape is evolving fast, driven by new media developments, advances in technology, changing consumer behaviour and by wider concerns such as COVID-19. The ASA's workload continued to expand in 2021, and the sheer volume of work that the staff of only seven, including Chief Executive, Hilary Souter, manage to get through is remarkable. The Board is very proud of the quality of their work and

their ability to respond nimbly to new challenges.

The Board wishes to thank Hilary and the ASA team, as well as the Chairs and Members of the Complaints and Appeal Boards for their hard work and dedication to responsible advertising.

I would also like to thank my fellow directors for their warm welcome and their valuable contribution and commitment to the ASA.

Finally, thank you to my predecessor the Hon. Heather Roy, the inaugural independent Chair, for her significant contribution to the ASA.

Statement from Hilary Souter, Chief Executive

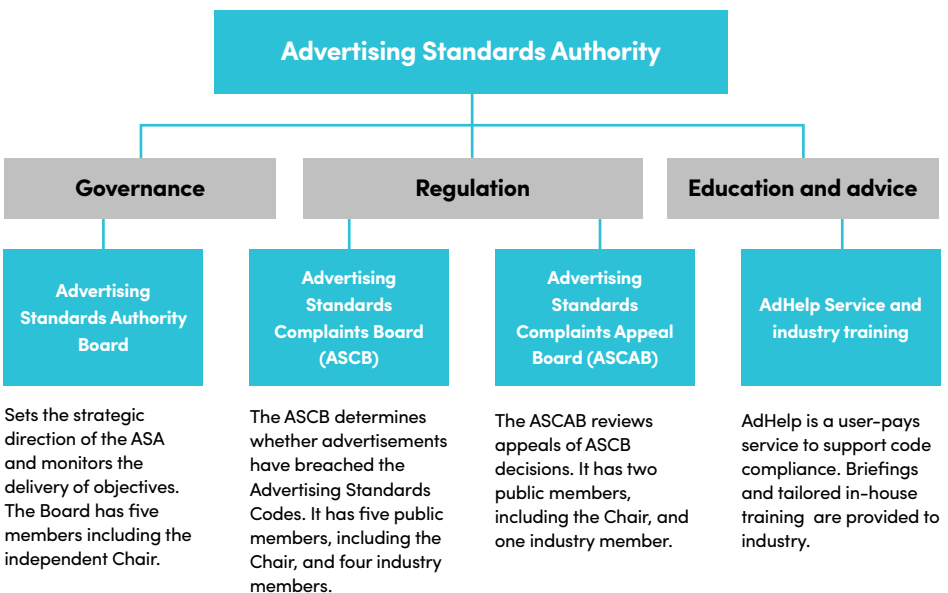
Our work to support responsible advertising continued throughout the year and the uncertainties of a global pandemic. COVID-19 advertising again drove an increase in our workload. I'm incredibly proud of the ASA team, Board Chairs and Members, for what we delivered in often challenging circumstances.

In 2021, our Codes Committee reviewed the Code for Financial Advertising, and we also introduced a new reporting process for influencer ad identification breaches.

Our annual regular code reviews are a significant piece of work for our Codes Committee, and I want to thank them for their dedication and hard work.

The advertising industry is constantly evolving and one of our strengths is the ability to quickly adapt our processes in response. We acknowledge the support of advertisers, agencies and media companies through funding, education and compliance in support of effective industry regulation.

Who we are

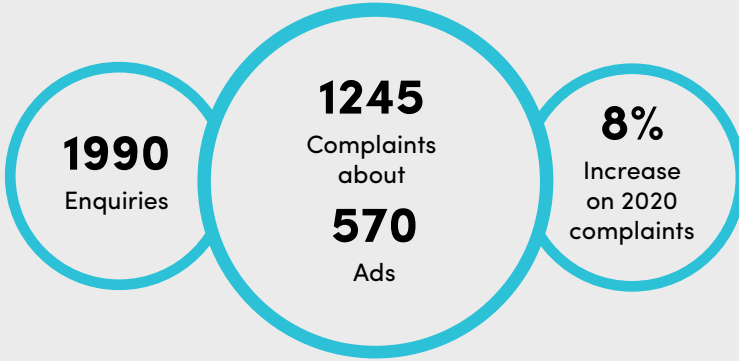


Our Impact

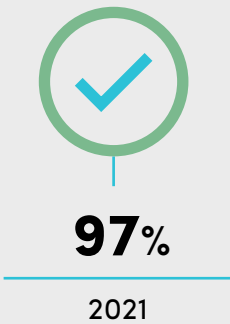
2021 overview

In 2021 we received 1245 complaints about 570 ads, an 8% increase on 2020. Duplicate complaints or complaints subsequent to a decision are collated into one case.

The Chair of the Complaints Board reviewed 570 ads, 284 were deemed to have a case to answer, and 200 of these were requested to be changed or removed.

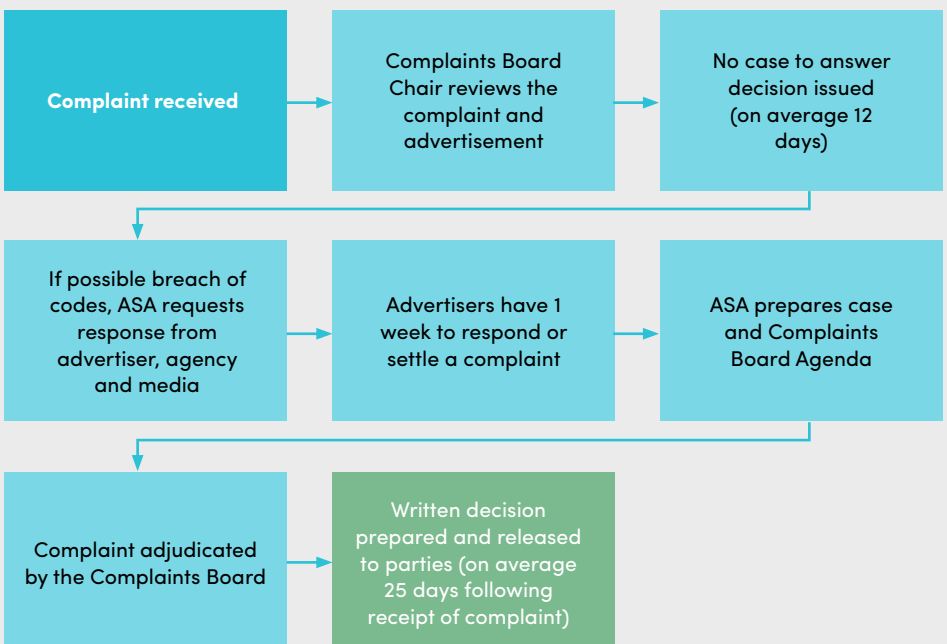


COMPLIANCE WITH DECISIONS



The ASA has an exceptional voluntary compliance rate when decisions are upheld and the advertiser and media either need to remove or amend the advertisement. In the small number of cases of non-compliance, this is generally via advertiser controlled distribution, like volunteer letter box delivery.

COMPLAINT PROCESSING



Our Priorities

Code reviews

Each year we undertake a regular Code review. In 2021, the Alcohol Advertising and Promotion Code came into effect following a review in 2020. In 2021, the Code for Financial Advertising was reviewed, and the new code,

the Financial Advertising Code, was released in November. The Financial Advertising Code will be effective for all ads from June 2022.



Alcohol Advertising and Promotion Code

New code came into effect for all ads from June 2021



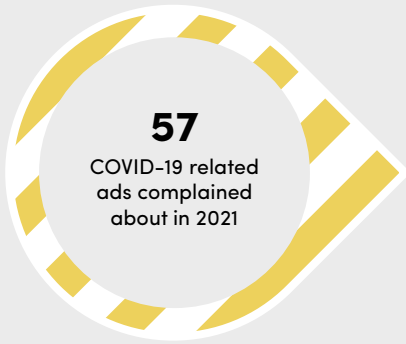
Financial Advertising Code

Code reviewed in 2021 and new code comes into effect for all ads from June 2022

COVID-19

Advocacy advertisements were the most complained about category in 2021, at 22 per cent. From a total of 127 advocacy advertisements complained

about, 36% were COVID-19 related. COVID-19 related themes also featured in 11 ads for commercial brands.



32

Government ads

14

Advocacy group ads

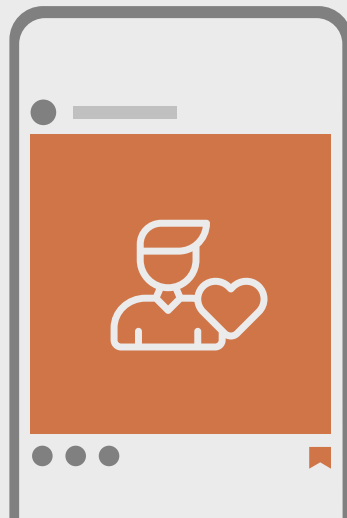
11

Commercial/product ads

Influencer advertising

A new reporting process for influencer ad identification breaches was introduced in August. Most of the complaints regarding influencers were about the lack of sufficient identification on influencer ad content. The new reporting process allowed us to work with influencers quickly to resolve the labelling issues.

A quick guide for influencers was also released.



Most complained about ads

Top three most complained about commercial ads of 2021

1. Asaleo Care, Libra

TV OnDemand, and billboard
22 Complaints: Not Upheld

Complainants were concerned the advertisements for Libra's Period Proof Undies were offensive, and one complainant was concerned they were culturally insensitive. The Board did not agree and ruled the ads did not reach the threshold to cause serious or widespread offence.

2. AWWA

TV OnDemand
8 Complaints: Not Upheld

Complainants were concerned the advertisement for AWWA period underwear was graphic and offensive. The ad had images of blood-stained underwear, bedding and a used sanitary pad. The Board said the ad was targeted to adult females and did not meet the threshold to cause serious or widespread offence.

3. Spark

TV Advertisement
6 Complaints: Settled

The TV ad for Skinny featured a family disguised as robbers discussing how they stole their neighbours internet. The entire family wore stockings over their heads, which Spark said was used to present an exaggerated appearance of a robber. Complainants were concerned the reference to stealing set a bad example, and that the face coverings could encourage small children to put (plastic) bags over their heads, risking suffocation. After receiving complaints, Spark removed the ad.

Top three most complained about non-commercial ads of 2021

1. Voices For Freedom

Unaddressed mail
56 Complaints: Upheld

The Complaints Board upheld complaints about two ads from Voices for Freedom on mask mandates, which implied ASA endorsement. The Board ruled the ads were misleading and not socially responsible. It also acknowledged the public health implications of Covid-19 were a counterweight to the usual liberal assessment of advocacy advertising.

2. Voices For Freedom

Unaddressed mail
45 Complaints: Upheld

The Complaints Board upheld complaints about a Voices for Freedom pamphlet containing information against Covid-19 vaccination for children. The Board ruled the ad was not socially responsible and was likely to mislead consumers. It acknowledged the public health implications of Covid-19 provided a counterweight to the usual liberal assessment of advocacy advertising.

3. Speak Up For Women

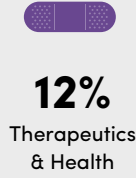
Billboard
34 Complaints: Not Upheld

Complainants were concerned the ad from Speak Up For Women was transphobic hate speech. The billboard said "Woman - women - noun - adult human female. Speakupforwomen.nz." In the context of advocacy advertising the Board said the ad did not meet the threshold to breach the Advertising Standards Code.

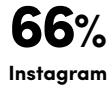
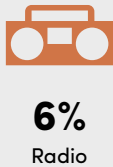
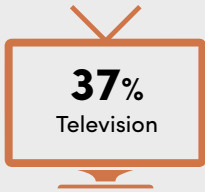
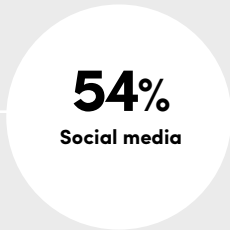
Our Impact

Complaints

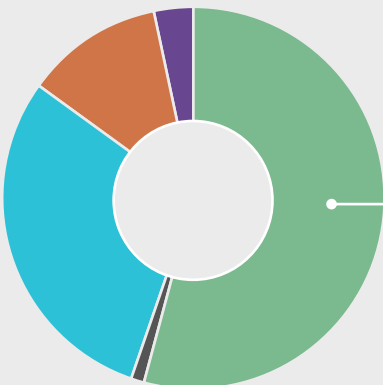
TOP 5 BY CATEGORY



TOP 5 BY MEDIUM



BY ISSUE



54% Misleading

Over half of the complaints - 54% - were about misleading advertisements in 2021. Concerns around social responsibility were 30% of complaints

- Misleading
- Social Responsibility
- Placement
- Children's issues
- Taste and Decency