

Broadcasting Standards Authority: Review of the Election Programmes Code of Broadcasting Practice

2023 Public Consultation Report

Part 1: Introduction

Code review: background

Te Mana Whanonga Kaipāho | The Broadcasting Standards Authority (BSA) is an independent body that oversees the broadcasting standards regime in Aotearoa New Zealand. One of our core functions under the Broadcasting Act 1989 is to work with broadcasters to develop codes of broadcasting practice that apply to all broadcasters in New Zealand.

Consultation process

The Election Programmes Code of Broadcasting Practice (the Election Programmes Code) was subject to a full review in the lead up to the 2020 General Election, resulting in the issue of the March 2020 edition of the Election Programmes Code. That edition was developed in consultation with broadcasters and other industry and government stakeholders and its core terms are considered to remain fit for purpose.

The 2023 review was accordingly focused solely on updating out-of-date references to our old (general) Broadcasting Standards in New Zealand Codebook which was re-placed with effect from 1 July 2022.

Broadcasters and other key stakeholders were advised of the proposed updates and invited to provide any comments/feedback. The consultation period ran from 17 April to 15 May 2023.

Part 2: Submissions

The BSA only received one submission, from a member of the public/previous complainant. The submission did not address the proposed updates but requested that complaints made under the Code 'be posted digitally on the site once the complaint has been received to allow transparency in real time [along with the response]'.

Having considered this submission, we have determined against making any changes in response noting:

- We already publish our 'response' to complaints in the form of decisions.
- The public benefit of receiving notice of a complaint (as opposed to notice of a decision assessing the complaint's merits) is likely to be limited.
- Complaints numbers alone could generate a misleading impression of the issues with a political party's/candidate's advertisement.

Part 3: Final version

The final version of the Election Programmes Code is available [here](#). The new Code comes into effect on 1 July 2023.

Broadcasting Standards Authority

June 2023