

Complaint: OMSA13/005
Complainant: Nic Maurice
Media: Television New Zealand (TVNZ)
Content: "Wifi detrimental to health, study suggests"
Date of Ruling: 14 January 2014
Outcome: No Grounds to Proceed

Complainant, Nic Maurice said

Breached Standards:

- Standard 1: Little effort was made to ensure accuracy by distinguishing comment from factual content.
- Standard 2: No effort was made to provide opportunity for those with significant viewpoint to contribute to the content. (in this case the scientific and healthcare community)
- Standard 6: Content is irresponsible, in that it is likely to cause panic, and unwarranted alarm.

Remedy:

Errors should be acknowledged and promptly corrected by amending or removing the relevant content: The scientific and healthcare community, and the manufacturers of telecommunications equipment should be provided with the opportunity to contribute viewpoints.

Rights of reply (which may include relevant links to other material) should be offered and published with due prominence where appropriate: There are a wide range of respectable sources on this topic that should be referenced in this article.

The Chairman requested preliminary comment from TVNZ on the matters raised in the complaints prior to making a determination about whether there was an arguable breach of the Code.

TVNZ said in part: Nic Maurice made a formal complaint about the same material on 20 December the investigation of which is now underway. In any case I believe they are out of time to make an OMSA complaint as the material was published 2 December and the OMSA time limit is within 14 Days of the content first being posted on the publisher's website.

Chairman's Ruling:

The Chairman noted the item complained about was posted on www.tvnz.co.nz on 2 December and the complaint was received on 20 December.

Under the OMSA Constitution, Section 6(a) of the complaints procedures requires a complaint to be lodged within 14 days of the content first being posted on the publisher's website.

The Chairman noted that 14 calendar days expired on 16 December so the complaint was out of time.

The Chairman also noted a similar complaint was being dealt with under another jurisdiction.

The Chairman ruled that as the complaint was out of time there was no basis to proceed.

Chairman's Ruling: No Grounds to Proceed

WiFi detrimental to health, study suggests

Published: 10:54AM Monday December 02, 2013 Source: ONE News

Broadband Wireless Router - Source: One News

Many people can't imagine getting by without WiFi, but one group says it's coming at a cost more detrimental than people realise. Safe Wireless Technology New Zealand says research confirms the negative health effects of electromagnetic radiation from WiFi, but that the Government is choosing to ignore it.

The radiation has the potential to cause headaches, nausea and even cancer SWTNZ chairman Greg Kasper told TV ONE's Breakfast.

"If you get too much of this stuff it's really bad for you," he said.

Overseas research has shown that a person who uses a mobile phone for a year increases their chances of getting brain cancer by 70%, according to the SWTNZ.

"There's so much research and there's so much scientific evidence now that does more than just suggest that there is a real problem, and people are getting these problems," Mr Kasper said.

Many governments around the world are putting money into researching the issue further, and Mr Kasper said New Zealand should do the same.

"When you look at what's potentially happening to our kids out there... They're being bombarded by all this stuff - iPads, iPhones, wireless technology, WiFi in schools..."

"We do want the Government to put some money into some independent research."

Minister for Communications and Information Technology did not immediately respond to a request for comment.