



online media standards authority

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MEDIA RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BROADCASTING INDUSTRY TO LAUNCH ONLINE NEWS AND CURRENT AFFAIRS SELF REGULATORY BODY

New Zealand’s major radio and television broadcasters today confirmed the launch of a new industry funded, self-regulatory body, the Online Media Standards Authority “OMSA”, which will oversee online news and current affairs content standards.

Since the Law Commission’s paper, *The News Media meets ‘New Media’* was published in December 2011, NZ television broadcasters TVNZ, SKY/Prime, MediaWorks TV, and Maori Television have worked together with Radio New Zealand, The Radio Network and MediaWorks Radio to provide an industry led, cost effective and consumer friendly solution to regulate online news and current affairs content. OMSA will publish a code of standards and provide a free complaints process overseen by the OMSA Complaints Committee.

The OMSA Complaints Committee will be chaired by retired Court of Appeal Judge, Sir Bruce Robertson and including the Chair; will comprise four public members and three broadcasting industry representatives.

The new body will use a similar format to that used by the Advertising Standards Authority and the NZ Press Council, as they are excellent examples of industry funded, self-regulatory regimes working effectively. OMSA acknowledges the advice and guidance that was provided by both organizations.

OMSA Chair, Clare Bradley, said

“OMSA enjoys the total support of New Zealand broadcasters and the OMSA code and complaints process will apply to the websites operated by all OMSA members. The Authority has its genesis in the report of the Law Commission which identified a regulatory “gap” in the oversight of news and current affairs content solely published on line. We are delighted to be able to provide the solution to the Law Commission’s “gap”.

The OMSA Appointments Panel will shortly commence selection of OMSA Complaints Committee public members, with the new body scheduled to launch in Q2 of this year.

The Authority will be located in Auckland, using teleconferencing facilities to link board members and observers from other centres.

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