



BROADCASTING STANDARDS AUTHORITY
TE MANA WHANONGA KAIPĀHO

**New Zealanders'
Knowledge of
Broadcasting
Standards**

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New Zealanders' Knowledge of Broadcasting Standards

Report Prepared For:

Broadcasting Standards Authority

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Opinion Statement

Nielsen certifies that the information contained in this report has been compiled in accordance with sound market research methods and principles, as well as proprietary methodologies developed by, or for, Nielsen. Nielsen believes that this report represents a fair, accurate and comprehensive analysis of the information collected, with all sampled information subject to normal statistical variance.



Executive Insights

Knowledge of complaints process

The great majority of New Zealanders (89%) know that they can make a formal complaint about content on television or radio programmes. Younger New Zealanders (aged 15 to 24 years old) have lower levels of knowledge, with 29% assuming, rather than knowing, that a formal complaint can be made.

Whilst knowledge of the existence of a complaints process is high, there is a degree of confusion about how to go about making a formal complaint. The Broadcasting Standards Authority (BSA) is far more likely than the broadcaster to be identified spontaneously as the organisation that New Zealanders would contact to make a formal complaint (56% mention they would contact the BSA in some form).

Approximately 16% of the total population have an understanding of the two stages in the complaints process (they would contact the broadcaster first and then the BSA, or derivative thereof, if they were unhappy with the response from the broadcaster).

It is encouraging that there is strong association between the BSA and the complaints process; however, communications to clarify the complaints process among New Zealanders may be necessary if the BSA wishes to reduce the level of complaints that are directed to them in the first instance.

While there is a lack of clarity around the actual process, in the main people assume they should contact the broadcaster or the BSA and, therefore, will be able to find out the correct process once they investigate.

Perhaps of greater concern however, is the finding that many of those who consider laying a complaint do not carry through with this because they feel it will not make a difference or will be a waste of time. Further research may be required to understand the reasons for this perception.

Knowledge of standards

New Zealanders are most aware of standards around offensive or obscene language (45%) and around sexual or lewd content (35%).

Balance and fairness issues, and similar issues that perhaps require more judgment rather than being immediately obvious, are considerably less likely to come to mind spontaneously than more overt issues (e.g. language).

While there is reasonable knowledge of standards around the protection of children, there is only limited awareness of standards around the promotion of programmes coming up later in the day.

Knowledge of classification codes and warning labels

New Zealanders have a high level of awareness of the classification codes used on free-to-air television and pay-to-view television, and also have a good understanding for what the codes mean.

However, there is some confusion over the time that Adults Only content commences on free-to-air television. Whilst parents with children under 13 are

more likely to know the correct time (8:30pm), it is a concern that around a quarter of parents believed Adults Only content screened from a later time.

A further concern is the discovery that two in ten parents would not do anything differently for a PGR classified programme compared with a G classified programme. There is also a risk parents will assume a programme is suitable based on viewing only part of the programme and not being present for scenes that resulted in the PGR classification. These findings support the call by Mobius Research and Strategy Limited, from their research in 2009, for further education around the PGR classification due to an underlying belief among many parents that a PGR classified programme is suitable for children whether they are supervised or not.

**Awareness of
BSA**

Despite a low proportion of the population making complaints about content on television and radio, there is a very high level of awareness of the BSA (95%, increased from 82% in 1998).

Television and radio communications have played a significant role in generating awareness among New Zealanders.

Needs Assessment

Background

The BSA is an independent crown entity set up by the Broadcasting Act 1989.

The overall vision of the BSA is that *fair broadcasting is fostered for all New Zealanders*. A major part of ensuring that fair broadcasting takes place is the ability for the public to voice their concern about content on television or radio programmes.

In order for the public to do this, they need a degree of knowledge about the broadcasting standards in New Zealand, and the process for making a complaint. It is therefore important that the BSA understands the level of knowledge among the general public, and identifies where further education is required.

Research Objectives

This research has been commissioned to evaluate:

- New Zealanders knowledge of the complaints process
 - New Zealanders knowledge of broadcasting standards
 - New Zealanders knowledge of the classification codes and warning labels on free-to-air television and pay-to-view television (in particular awareness of the Adults Only time slot and interpretation of the PGR classification)
 - Awareness levels of the BSA itself.
-

Research Design

Methodology This research was carried out online via Nielsen's YourVoice panel.

YourVoice is a panel of over 60,000 New Zealanders who have agreed to participate in surveys from time to time; the sole purpose of the panel is for research (there is no commercial activity). Recruitment occurs both online and offline to ensure representation of the New Zealand population.

This survey commenced on 17 February 2010 and finished on 27 February 2010. The survey took approximately 12 minutes for respondents to complete.

Sample A sample of 1000 New Zealanders completed this survey.

Quotas were set to ensure the sample was in proportion to the known make-up of New Zealand's population in terms of gender, age and region. The data was also weighted to remove slight imbalances in the sample completing the survey. The table below illustrates the number of respondents for each gender, age group, and region at an unweighted level and then post weighting.

	Unweighted		Weighted	
	No.	%	No.	%
Male	488	49	481	48
Female	512	51	519	52
15 to 24 years old	110	11	117	12
25 to 39 years old	313	31	324	32
40 to 54 years old	265	27	264	26
55 years and older	312	31	296	30
Northern	178	18	202	20
Auckland	323	32	321	32
Central	241	24	230	23
Southern	258	26	247	25

Base: All Respondents (n=1000)

3149 panellists were randomly selected to receive an invite to the survey. Nearly four in ten (37%, or 1180) clicked through to the survey. Of these, approximately 4% (46 panellists) dropped out of the survey at some point, and 11% (134 panellists) were screened out of the survey due to specific quotas being full.

The tables on the following page profile the sample on various other demographics:

	Unweighted		Weighted	
	No.	%	No.	%
Young couple with no children	91	9	93	9
Household with youngest child under 5	149	15	153	15
Household with youngest child 6-11 years old	107	11	108	11
Household with youngest child 12-17 years old	93	9	95	9
Household with youngest child 18 years or older	79	8	80	8
Older couple with no children or none at home	266	27	256	26
Single or one person household	118	12	116	12
Flating situation (not a family home)	77	8	80	8
Other	20	2	19	2
Household with children under 18 at home	349	35	356	36
Household with no children/none at home	651	65	644	64
Pay to view television in household	507	51*	503	50
Only free to air television in household	472	47	475	48
No television or never watch television	21	2	21	2

Base: All Respondents (n=1000)

* Sky TV penetration in permanent private dwellings is 47% of all households (AGB Nielsen Media Research)

	Unweighted		Weighted	
	No.	%	No.	%
New Zealand or European	855	86	853	85
Maori	23	2	23	2
Pacific Islander	11	1	11	1
Asian	45	5	47	5
Another ethnicity	57	6	56	6
Preferred not to state ethnicity	9	1	9	1
Income under \$40,000	215	22	213	21
\$40,001 to \$60,000	154	15	153	15
\$60,001 to \$80,000	170	17	171	17
More than \$80,000	277	28	277	28
Prefer not to say	149	15	149	15
Don't know	35	4	36	4

Base: All Respondents (n=1000)

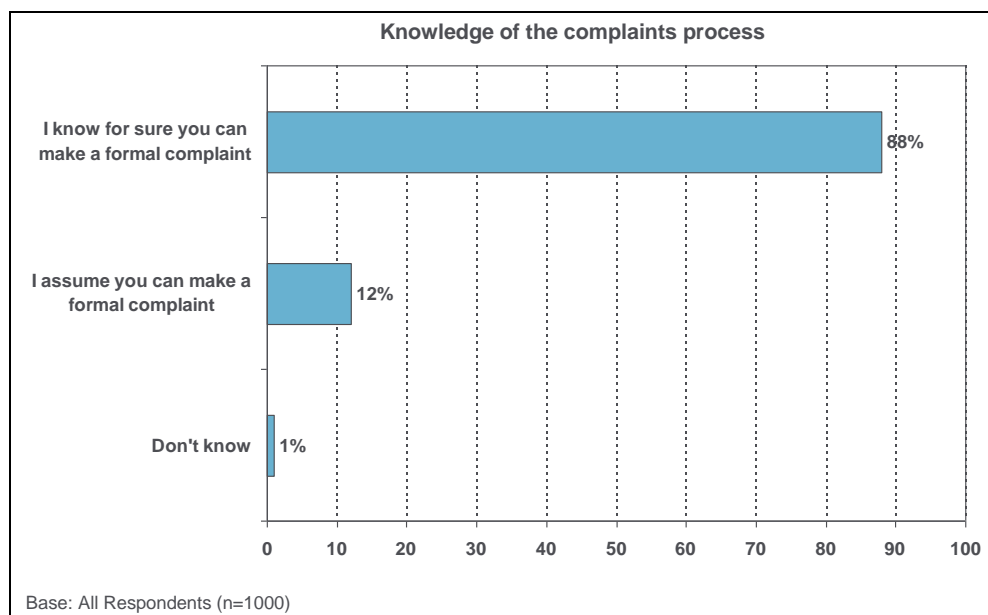
Margin of error

All sample surveys are subject to sampling error. Based on a total sample size of 1000 respondents, the results shown in this survey are subject to a maximum error of plus or minus 3.1% at the 95% confidence level. That is, there is a 95% chance that the true population value of a recorded figure of 50% actually lies between 53.1% and 46.9%. As the sample figure moves further away from 50%, so the error margin will decrease.

Knowledge of the complaints process

Most New Zealanders know they can make a formal complaint

Nearly nine in ten New Zealanders (88%) stated that they *know for sure you can make a formal complaint* about the content of a programme on radio or television.



Whilst no respondents indicated that they knew, or assumed, you *could not* make a formal complaint, one percent of those surveyed did not know whether they could make a formal complaint, and 12% simply assumed that they could make a formal complaint. This gap in actual knowledge, albeit small, does not appear to have changed since 1998 when research conducted by Nielsen identified a similar level of knowledge (85% of New Zealanders were aware they could make formal complaints).

New Zealanders aged between 15 and 24 are significantly more likely to have only assumed that they could make a formal complaint (29% cf. 12% average).

There is a degree of confusion about how to make a formal complaint

Although the majority of New Zealanders know they can make a formal complaint about the content of programmes on radio or television, it is important to establish whether they actually know how to go about making a complaint.

We gave respondents the opportunity to describe, in as much detail as they could, how they would go about making a formal complaint. As the table on the following page illustrates, almost everyone (just 4% wouldn't know what to do) indicated a course of action which, if not totally correct, would lead them to finding out about the correct process (e.g. checking internet or websites of broadcasters).

BSA is far more likely to be identified spontaneously as the organisation that respondents would contact to make a formal complaint rather than the broadcaster. Nearly three in ten New Zealanders (29%) spontaneously mentioned they would contact or complain to the BSA without indicating how they would go about doing so, and a similar number specified how they would actually contact the BSA (i.e. write, email, send a fax or phone).

It is encouraging that there is this strong association between the BSA and the complaints process. However, BSA needs to decide whether it is important to invest in communications to stress the necessity of complaining to the broadcaster first, or whether it is happy to field this initial contact and then direct complainants to the broadcaster.

The correct process for making a complaint (writing to the broadcaster, and if unhappy with the response contacting the BSA) is virtually unknown at an unprompted level (4% mention this two-stage process). It is worth noting that 16% would contact the broadcaster in some form, but don't state there is an option to contact BSA if they are unhappy with the response.

Top of mind response – how New Zealanders would go about making a complaint	%
Contact BSA (Net)	56*
Contact/complain to BSA/Broadcasting Standards Authority/Association	29
Write/email/fax to complain to BSA/Broadcasting Standards Authority/Association	26
Phone to complain to BSA/Broadcasting Standards Authority/Association	3
Contact broadcaster (Net)	16*
Write/email/fax to complain to broadcaster/TV/radio channel/station concerned (incl. Sky)	8
Contact/complain to broadcaster/TV/radio channel/station concerned (incl. Sky)	7
Phone to complain to broadcaster/TV/radio channel/station concerned (incl. Sky)	2
Contact both the broadcaster and the BSA	3
Contact the broadcaster first/if not happy contact BSA	3
Write/email/fax the broadcaster first/if not happy contact BSA	1
Other methods of complaining	
Would check details/information on internet/website (incl. NZ on Air,BSA,TVNZ,TV3)	20
Write/email/fax the appropriate body/ombudsman	4
Complaint can be made online/through website	2
Fill out a complaints form	1
Contact the appropriate body/ombudsman	1
Phone the appropriate body/ombudsman	1
Other aspects of the process	
Provide relevant programme/programme details/why offensive	24
Ads/information advertised regularly on TV/Radio (incl. addresses/website/phone no.)	17
Provide details - time/date/channel	16
Complaint is reviewed and answered/sent receipt of complaint (incl. notice of further investigation/outcomes)	10
Provide your details (i.e. name/address)	2
Provide relevant ad/ad details/why offensive	1
Need to make complaint within 20 days	1
Other	6
Don't know/don't know any other details	4

Base: All Respondents (n=1000)

* Due to rounding Net results may not appear to add correctly

Although the correct channel for making a complaint was not top of New Zealanders minds, there were certain aspects of the process that New Zealanders were able to recall without any prompting:

- Around a quarter (24%) knew that relevant details of the programme would be required and an explanation of why it was considered offensive
- 16% knew the time, date, and channel of the programme would need to be provided.

Conversely, two key aspects of the process were not widely known at an unprompted level:

- Only 4% knew they could contact the BSA if they were unhappy with the broadcasters response
- Only 1% knew a complaint had to be made within 20 days.

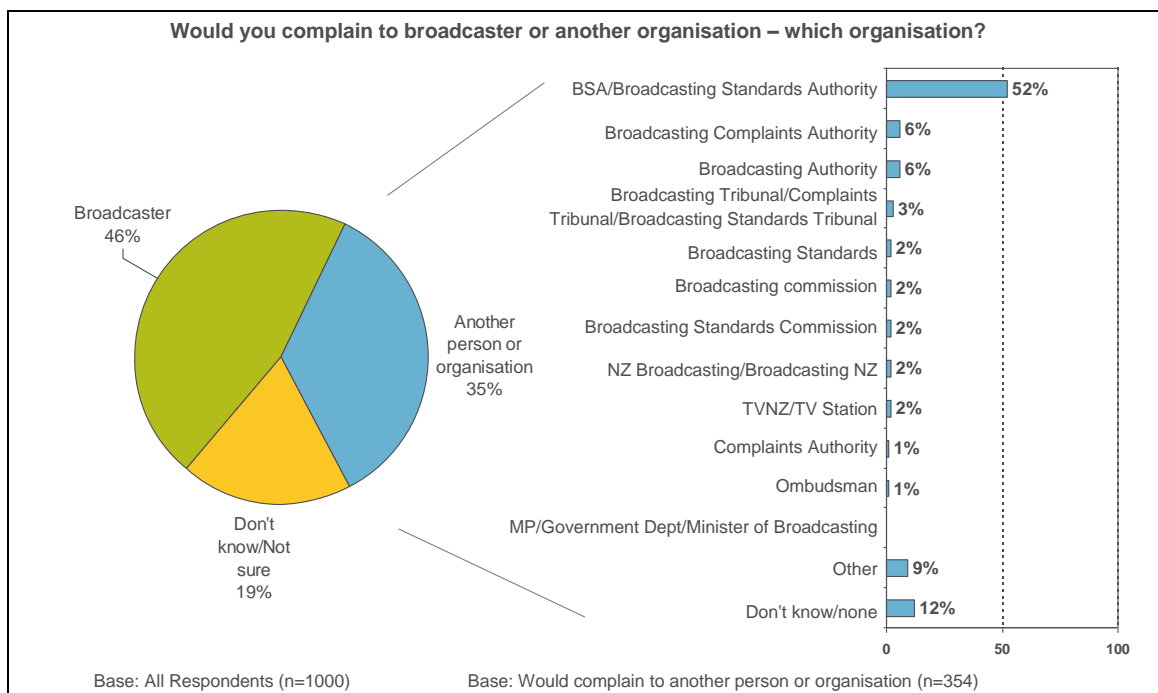
Just over a third would complain to the BSA first

Respondents were asked directly whether they would complain, first, to the broadcaster or another organisation.

In this context, a different picture emerged to that when respondents were asked to describe the process in their own words. In particular, more were likely to assume that the broadcaster should be approached first.

Around a third (35%) incorrectly believed they would firstly need to complain to an organisation other than the broadcaster.

The chart below shows that, of those who would complain to an organisation other than the broadcaster, seven in ten mentioned the BSA or a variation of this (e.g. Broadcasting Complaints Authority, Broadcasting Standards Commission) as the organisation they would complain to.



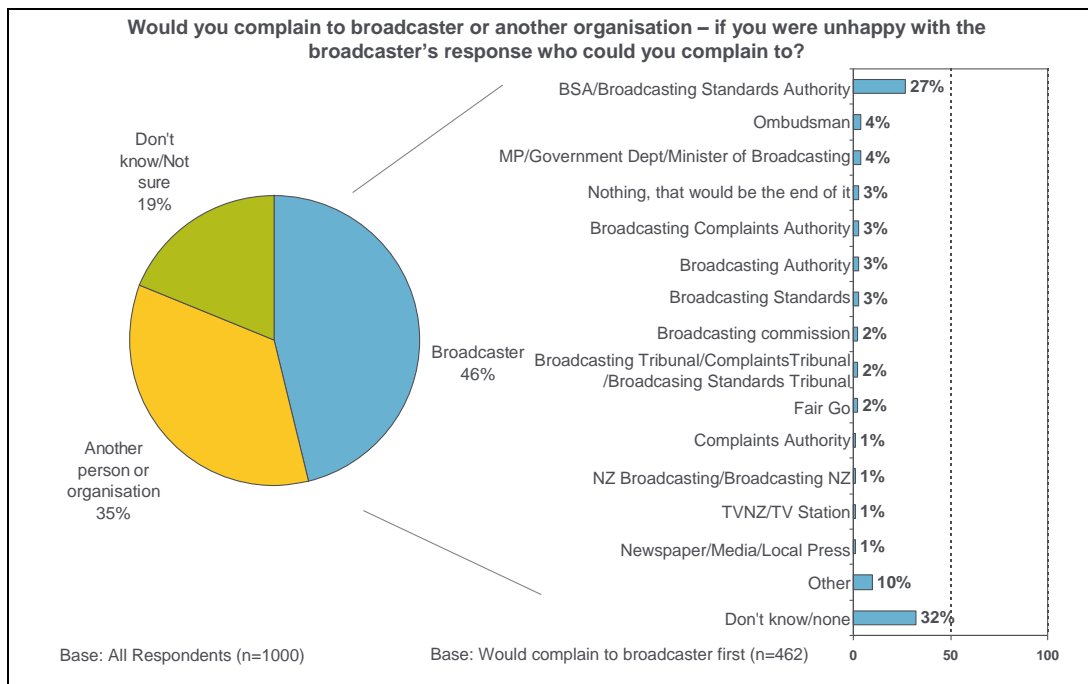
Around half would complain to the broadcaster directly

When asked whether you need to complain to the broadcaster first or another organisation, just under half (46%) correctly identified that they would need to contact the broadcaster involved when making a formal complaint.

When these respondents were asked who they could complain to next if unhappy with the broadcaster's response, around four in ten indicated they would contact the BSA (27% BSA, nearly 10% a variation of the BSA e.g. Broadcasting Complaints Authority, Broadcasting Authority, or Broadcasting Standards Commission).

From this we are able to establish that 16% of the total population have an understanding of the two stages of the complaints process (they would contact the broadcaster first and then the BSA, or derivative thereof, if they were unhappy with the response from the broadcaster).

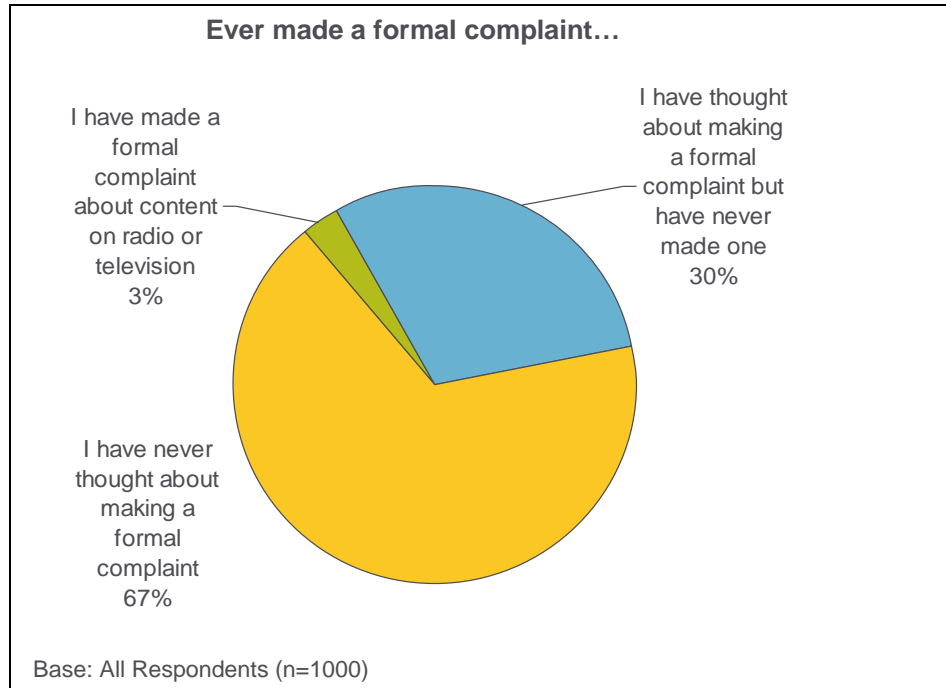
The chart below also identifies that three in ten New Zealanders would not actually know who to contact if they were unhappy with the broadcaster's response; however, this is not necessarily a major concern as the response from the broadcaster requires this step to be identified.



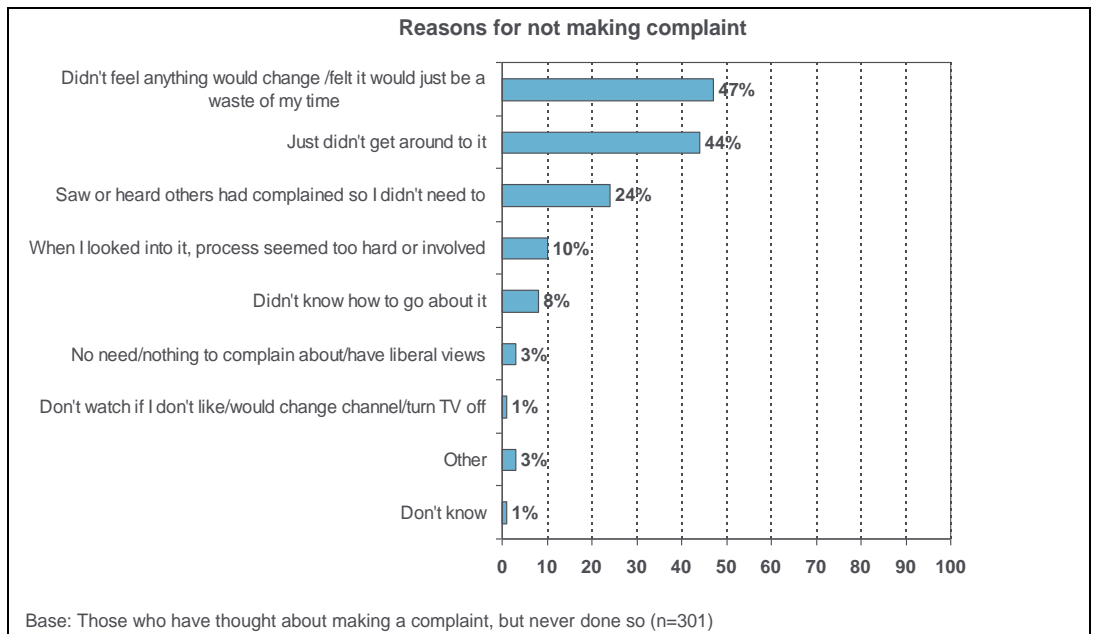
Younger New Zealanders (15 to 24 years old) are significantly more likely to be unsure about who to complain to (34% cf. 19% average).

Three in ten New Zealanders think about making a complaint

Although very few New Zealanders actually make a formal complaint, and the majority (67%) don't even think about it, three in ten say that they have actually thought about making one, but just never did.



Of those who have thought about making a complaint, the main barrier identified to actually carrying through on their intention was the perception that nothing would come about from the complaint and/or it would be a waste of time. As always, time constraints or inertia (i.e. not getting around to it) also play a significant role.



The process itself does not appear to be a major barrier, with one in every ten prospective complainants likely to consider the process too hard and a similar proportion indicating they did not know how to go about it.

Males are significantly more likely than females to perceive that nothing would change as a result of making a complaint, or that it would be a waste of time (54% cf. 41%).

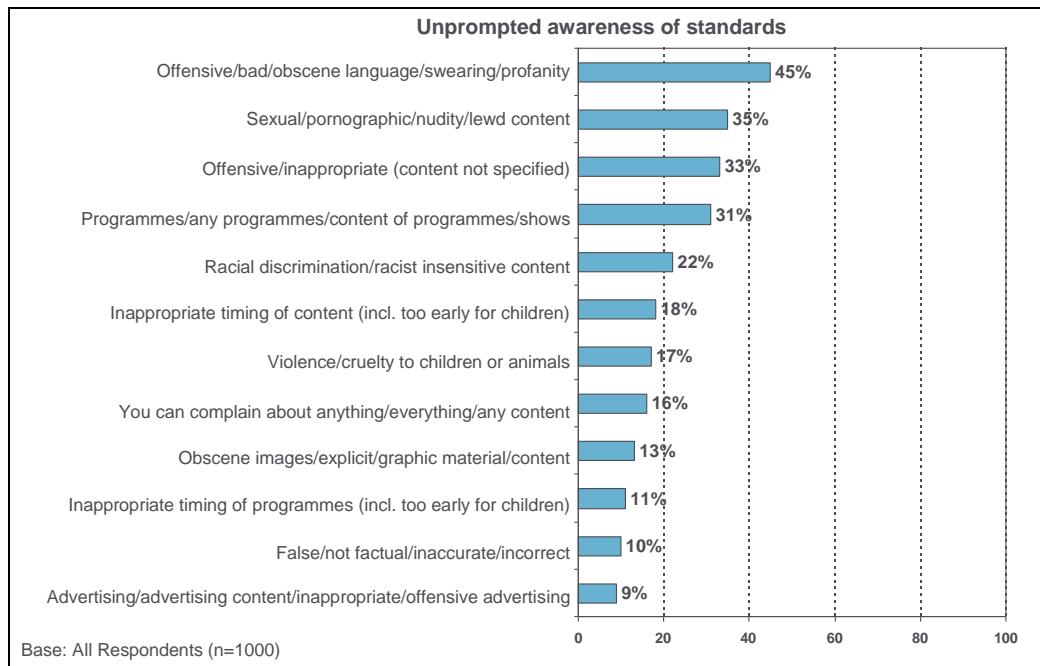
The finding that many of those who have thought about making a complaint have not done so because they believe nothing will change as a result is perhaps concerning and may warrant further investigation.

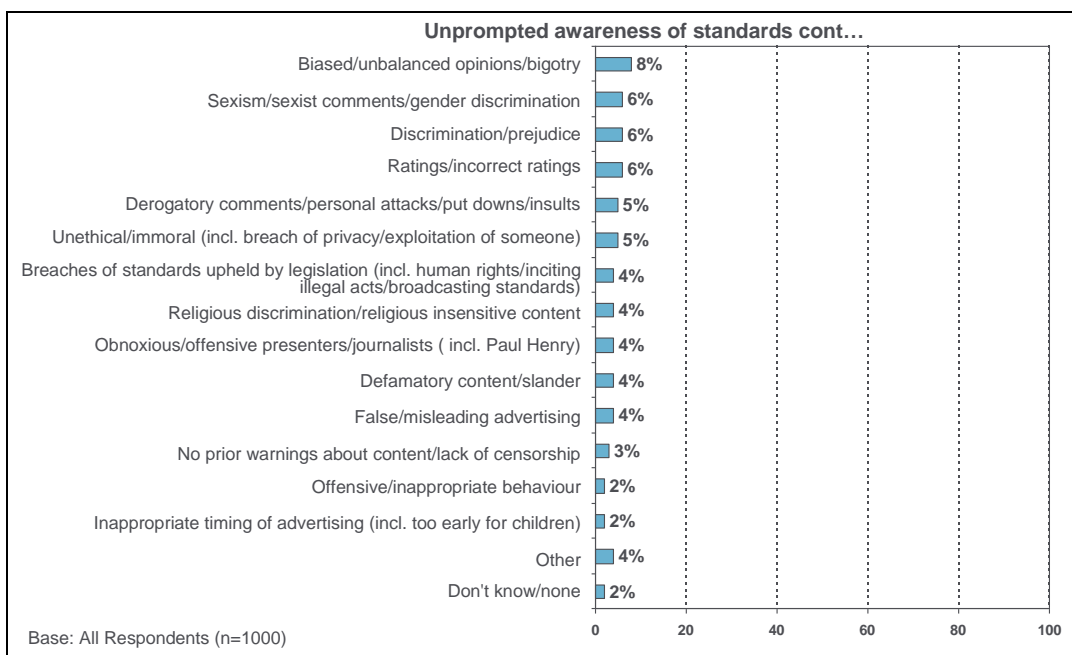
Knowledge of broadcasting standards

Bad language and sexual content are the standards top of New Zealanders minds

To determine New Zealanders' knowledge of broadcasting standards, respondents were asked what they thought they could complain about on television or radio.

As the charts over the following pages reveal, at an unprompted level, offensive or obscene language is the most common answer (45%) followed by sexual or lewd content (35%).



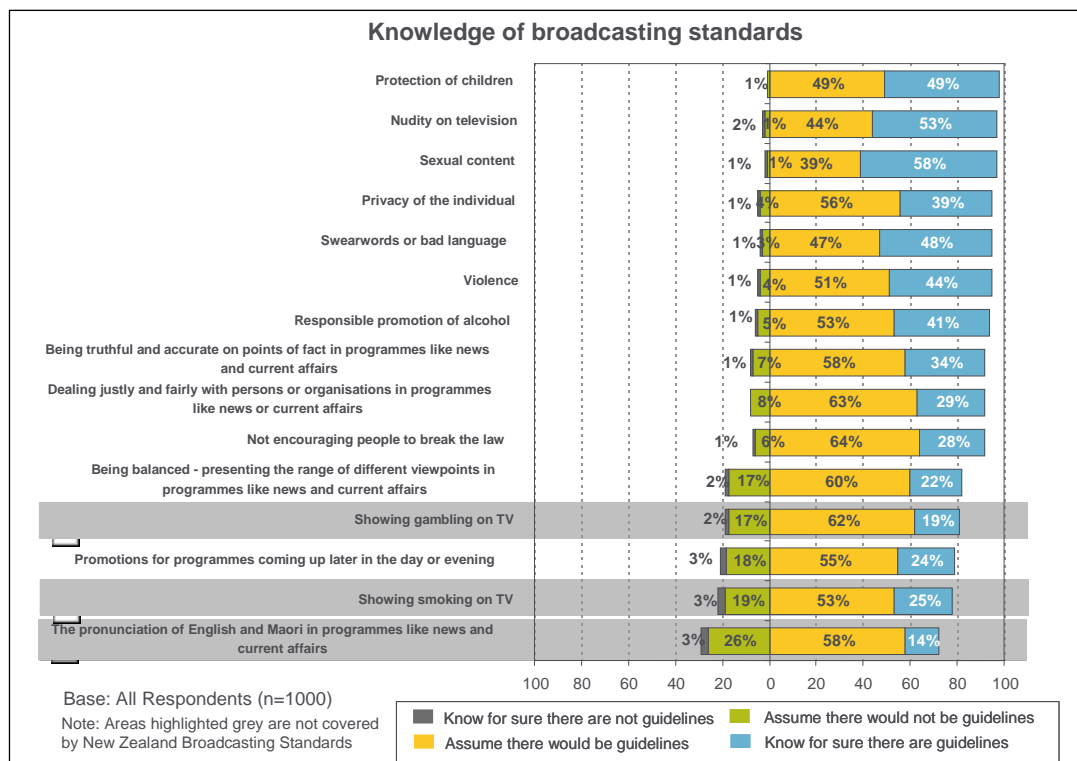


It is interesting that offensive language is the most commonly-cited standard, given research by Nielsen into the acceptability of words in broadcasting (January, 2010) identified a softening of attitudes towards the use of swear words in broadcasting, albeit in certain scenarios.

Females are significantly more likely to mention offensive language as something they could complain about on television or radio (50% cf. 39% for males). Interestingly, only offensive language and inappropriate timing of programmes received higher response from females, all other areas were mentioned similarly by both genders.

Balance and fairness issues, and similar issues that perhaps require more judgment rather than being immediately obvious are considerably less likely to come to mind spontaneously than more overt issues (e.g language).

Prompted awareness of the broadcasting standards tells a similar story to that on the previous pages; with over half stating they *know for sure there are standards* relating to sexual content and nudity on television.



For standards such as not encouraging people to break the law and dealing justly and fairly with persons or organisations in programmes like news or current affairs, New Zealanders were more likely to only assume that there would be standards covering these areas.

While there is reasonable knowledge of standards around the protection of children, there is only limited awareness of standards around the promotion of programmes coming up later in the day.

The only difference in knowledge levels is that females are significantly more likely to only assume that there are guidelines for the areas mentioned.

There are, however, signs to suggest the actual level of knowledge (of the standards) is lower than shown above. Around two in ten respondents stated they *knew for sure there were guidelines* relating to showing gambling on television, showing smoking on television, and the pronunciation of English and Maori in programmes like news and current affairs when in fact there are no official guidelines.

Again it was females' tendency to assume there are guidelines that resulted in them incorrectly assuming there are guidelines for showing gambling and smoking on television and guidelines for the pronunciation of English and Maori. Older New Zealanders (aged 55 and over) are most likely to say they *know for sure that there are guidelines* around showing smoking on television and the pronunciation of English and Maori.

Knowledge of classification codes and warning labels

There are high levels of awareness for the classification codes

At least eight in ten New Zealanders are aware of the three classification codes used on free-to-air television to give advice on content of programmes. The 'G' code recorded the lowest level of awareness among the three codes; only those with children under 5 showed an increased level of awareness for this code (93% cf. 86% for all New Zealanders).

As illustrated in the table below, there is generally widespread knowledge of what the three free-to-air codes mean. There was a small degree of confusion with some believing 'G' meant guidance was required for children.

Free-to-air classification symbols	% aware	% know correct meaning
AO – Adults Only	90	98
G – Approved for general viewing	86	90
PGR – Parental guidance recommended	95	93

Base: All Respondents (n=1000)

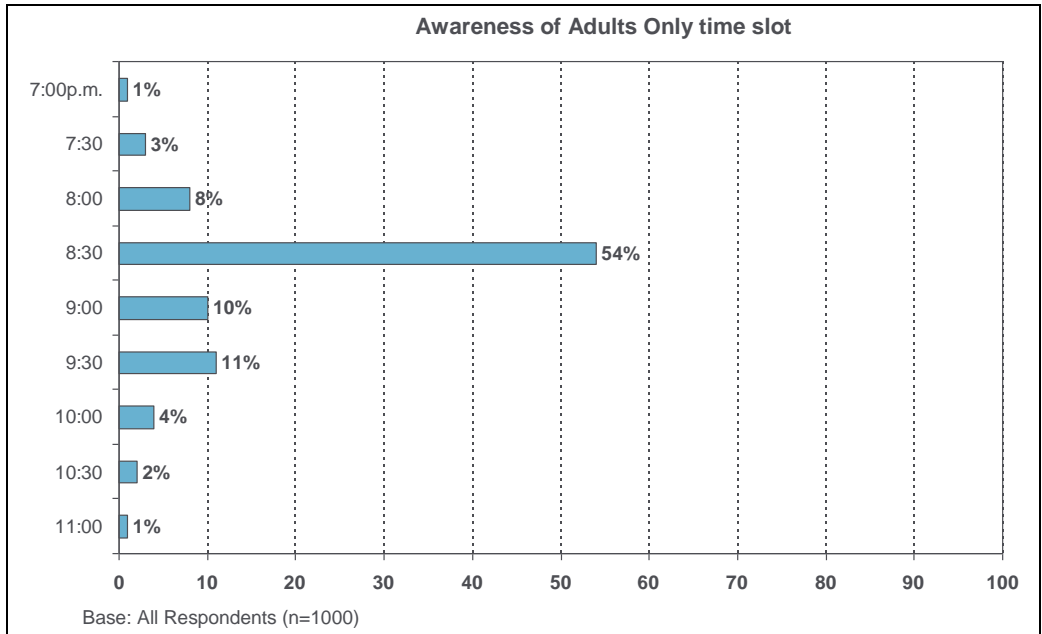
Of those who have pay-to-view television, at least eight in ten are aware of the classification codes used on this service. There is also widespread knowledge of these codes.

Pay TV classification symbols	% aware	% know correct meaning
G – Approved for general viewing	82	89
PG – Parental guidance recommended	87	93
M – Suitable for mature audiences 16 years and over	80	87
16 – People under 16 years should not view	82	92
18 – People under 18 years should not view	83	91

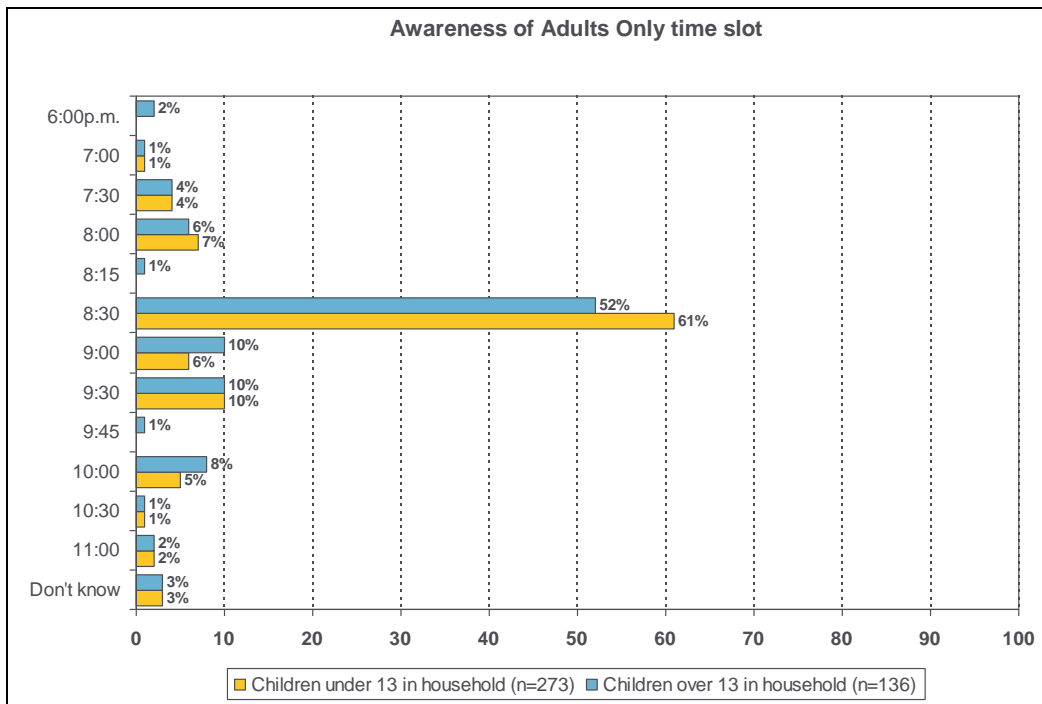
Base: Those who have pay to view television (n=507)

Only half know the time AO screening starts on free-to-air television

As the chart below shows, just over half (54%) were able to specify the correct time that Adults Only programmes can start screening in the evening.



The chart below indicates that those with children under 13 are more likely to be aware of the correct time slot.



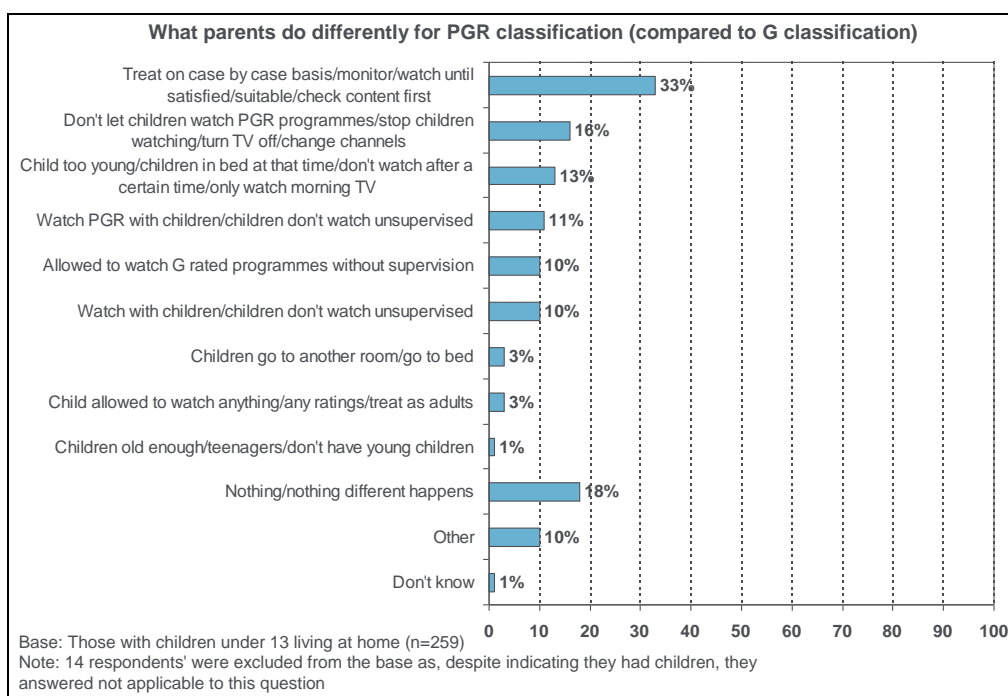
Whilst this result is promising, around a quarter of parents, with children under 13 (24%), actually believe the time Adults Only programmes start screening is 9pm or later. This level of confusion exists evenly across those with children under 5 years old, between 5 and 9 years old, and 10 to 12 years old, highlighting the potential for a number of young children to be exposed to Adults Only material.

Two in ten parents would not do anything different for a PGR programme

While there is a high level of knowledge of the classification codes on free-to-air television, this research also sought to obtain an indication of parents' behaviour for PGR classified programmes.

Findings from qualitative research undertaken in 2009 by Mobius Research and Strategy Limited highlighted that parents were possibly assuming any programme classified PGR was suitable for children, whether they were supervised or not.

The following chart indicates that around two in ten parents (18%) would not do anything differently for a PGR classified programme, and 2% of parents, with children under 13, would let their child watch any programme on television.



A third of parents would treat PGR programmes on a case by case situation and determine whether it is suitable for their children. This supports the findings in the qualitative research, where trial and error was found to be the primary way parents determined suitability of programmes. It also highlights the risk, however, of parents assuming a programme will be suitable based on viewing part of the programme and not being present for ensuing parts that may contain the content that determined the PGR rating.

**Pay-to-View
New
Zealanders are
less aware of
Pay TV
warning labels**

Another finding from the qualitative research undertaken in 2009 was that awareness of the warning labels used on pay-to-view television was lower in comparison to the classification codes used on free-to-air television.

The table below supports this finding; around half of those with pay-to-view television are aware of the 'V', 'L', 'VL', and 'S' warning labels, but only around two in ten (17%) are aware of the 'C' label. Awareness of the classification symbols was notably higher (at least eight in ten aware)

Pay TV warning labels	% aware	% know correct meaning
C – Content may offend	17	64
V – Contains violence	53	98
L – Language may offend	43	97
VL – Violence and language may offend	43	80
S – Sexual content may offend	48	98

Base: Those who have pay to view television (n=507)

Females have comparatively lower awareness of the pay-to-view television warning labels than their male counterparts. New Zealanders over the age of 55, who have pay-to-view television, are significantly more likely to be unaware of any of the labels (57% cf. 44% average).

Awareness of BSA

Nearly all New Zealanders are aware of the BSA

Whilst there are aspects of the complaints process that remain unknown to many New Zealanders, it is clear that the BSA is an organisation that around half (56%) can recall spontaneously when thinking about the complaints process (refer to earlier section on knowledge of the complaints process).

After prompting, there is almost universal awareness of the BSA (95%). There has been substantial growth over the last 10-12 years, when compared to research conducted by Nielsen in 1998 (82%).

Females are more likely than their male counterparts to be aware of the BSA, and those over the age of 40 are more likely to be aware than those aged 15 to 24.

The main sources for seeing or hearing about the BSA are television and radio. In fact both these sources of information have increased since the research carried out in 1998 (74% cf. 98% and 42% cf. 66%, respectively).

