

New Zealand Media Council

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



NEW ZEALAND MEDIA ASSOCIATION INC.

Contents

Media Council Complaints Board Members 2025.....4

A note from the Complaints Board Chair5

2025 Year in Review Complaints Statistics 6

2025 Decisions 7

Media Council Complaints Board Members 2025

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Hon. Raynor Asher Independent Chair, Court of Appeal judge (ret.)

COMPLAINTS BOARD MEMBERS REPRESENTING THE PUBLIC:

Dr Jo Cribb	Independent consultant, Wellington
Dame Marie Shroff	Independent consultant, Wellington
Dr Ben France-Hudson	Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, Otago University, Dunedin
Judi Jones	Former Telecommunications Ombudsman (Australia), Wellington
Alison Thom	Former senior executive in public, iwi, voluntary sectors, Kapiti Coast District

Public alternate members:

Reina Vaai	Lawyer, Auckland
Richard Pamatatau	AUT lecturer, Auckland

COMPLAINTS BOARD MEMBERS REPRESENTING THE NEWS MEDIA:

Representing the Magazine Publishers Association

Rosemary Barraclough	Journalist, Magazine Publishers' Association representative
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Representing editors, nominated by the News Publishers Association

Scott Inglis	North Island Regional Editor, NZME
Guy MacGibbon	Chief Live and Breaking Editor, Stuff

Representing Digital Media and Broadcasters

Tim Watkin	Executive Editor Audio, RNZ
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Representing Journalists, nominated by E Tu

Hank Schouten	Former journalist
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Industry Alternate

Deborah Morris	Senior Reporter, The Post
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For a list of industry members of the NZ Media Council please visit our website mediacouncil.org.nz/membership

A note from the Complaints Board Chair

Kia ora koutou,

The NZ Media Council experienced another busy year in 2025, with strong public engagement reflecting the continuing importance of independent oversight of media standards. Despite an increasing workload, the Council remained committed to resolving complaints fairly, efficiently and transparently.

It is encouraging to see publishers responding positively to the challenges of modern journalism. The detailed Guidelines introduced this year have been well received, and we continue to see editors making genuine efforts to uphold the Media Council Principles, correct errors promptly, and engage constructively with concerns raised by the public.

In a media environment increasingly shaped by strong and competing viewpoints, the role of responsible journalism remains vital. While mistakes are inevitable, a willingness to address them openly and fairly is an important measure of editorial integrity.

While there was an increase in upheld complaints during the year, much of this was influenced by several cases involving multiple complainants. Overall, the proportion of upheld rulings remained broadly consistent with previous years. The figures continue to show that members of the public are willing to challenge media content when they have concerns, and that the Media Council remains an important mechanism for accountability.

Beyond our complaints work, 2025 was a year of significant organisational development. We improved accessibility and member services, launched a refreshed website, strengthened governance and funding arrangements, and continued preparing for future changes in New Zealand's media and regulatory landscape.

I would like to thank the Council members, governance board and staff for their dedication and commitment throughout the year. Their efforts ensure the Media Council remains a trusted and effective forum for promoting high journalistic standards and public confidence in the media.

It was a busy and productive year.



(Hon) Raynor Asher
Chair of the NZMC
Complaints Board

2025 Year in Review

Complaints Statistics



Total complaints received:	283
Complaints determined:	155
Complaints received and not determined (majority incomplete or cancelled):	113
Council rulings:	
Upheld	41
Upheld with dissent	2
Not upheld	31
Not upheld with dissent	5
No grounds to proceed	76

Note: Complaints determined and not determined add up to 268 – this number is lower because some individual complaints were combined.

2025 Decisions

COMPLAINANT	PUBLICATION	DECISION	RULING	DATE
Jan Love, Kylie Anderson, Judy Crestani	Stuff	Not upheld	3708	February
Greg Urquhart	Herald on Sunday	Not upheld with dissent	3707	February
Oliver Sanderson	The Press	Upheld	3705	February
Andrew Tomlinson	NZ Herald	No grounds	3590	February
Ian Wishart	TVNZ	No grounds	3703	February
Geoff Neal	TVNZ	Not upheld	3591	February
Ben Polkinghorne	Herald on Sunday	Not upheld	3702	February
Erin Ellis	RNZ	No grounds	3701	February
Peter Newport	Otago Daily Times	No grounds	3589	February
Farhad Moinfar	Business Desk	Upheld	3706	February
John Bryant	RNZ	No grounds	3588	February
Ilyas Patel	NZ Herald	No grounds	3709	February
Charlotte Gillespie	Otago Daily Times	No grounds	3712	February
Dane Giraud	The Post	No grounds	3704	February
Caleb Day	RNZ	No grounds	3713	February
Ronald Oldengarm	RNZ	No grounds	3710	February
Conrad Petersen	The Post	Upheld	3711	February
Eric Mattlin	RNZ	No grounds	3714	February
Kathryn Dorgan	RNZ	No grounds	3714	February
Simon Insoll	RNZ	No grounds	3714	February
Rob Paterson	Bay of Plenty Times	No grounds	3718	February
Gregory Bouwer	Otago Daily Times	Not upheld with dissent	3717	March
Ian Hunt	The Press	Not upheld	3715	March
Tony Bull	NZ Herald	Not upheld	3719	March
Jose Aquino	Stuff	No grounds	3716	March
Murray Foreman	Southland Times	Upheld	3720	March
Leon Y. Xiao	RNZ	Upheld	3722	March
Sally Faisandier	The Post	No grounds	3721	March
Graeme Colquhoun	NZ Herald	Upheld	3723	April
Eric Mattlin	RNZ	Not upheld	3725	April
Olivia Coote	RNZ	Not upheld	3725	April
Geoff Neal	The Spinoff	Not upheld	3727	April
Jose Aquino	Stuff	No grounds	3728	April
Kenneth Orr	Stuff	No grounds	3729	April
Tom Pearce	The Post	Not upheld	3730	April
Michelle Warshawsky	The Post	No grounds	3731	April
Roxanne Grace	Stuff	No grounds	3729	April
Tony & Debbie Pascoe	Taranaki Daily News	Not upheld	3732	April
Kenneth Orr	The Press	No grounds	3734	April
Jose Aquino	Stuff	Upheld	3735	April
*MJ	Southland Times	No grounds	3736	April
Rananjay Singh	Stuff	No grounds	3737	April

2025 Decisions Cont...

COMPLAINANT	PUBLICATION	DECISION	RULING	DATE
Geoff Neal	NZ Herald	No grounds	3738	April
Shama Lee	NZ Herald	Upheld	3724	June
Liz Kelly	The Post	Upheld with dissent	3733	June
Thomas Nash	Newstalk ZB	Not upheld	3740	June
Stephen Marriott	NZ Herald	No grounds	3741	June
Ian Wishart	RNZ	Upheld	3742	June
Catriona Atkinson	RNZ	Upheld	3742	June
Wayne Smith	NZ Herald	Upheld	3739	June
Roger Brooking	Stuff	Not upheld	3744	June
Colin Stokes	Stuff	No grounds	3745	June
Graeme Budler	Stuff	Not upheld	3746	June
Richard Goodwin	NZ Herald	No grounds	3749	June
Susan Rowley	Southland Times	No grounds	3750	June
Cindy Bellamy	Rotorua Daily Post	No grounds	3751	June
Jenni Yan	RNZ	No grounds	3752	June
Jenni Yan	RNZ	No grounds	3753	June
Bernie O'Neill	The Press	Not upheld	3754	July
Bob McCoskie	Sunday Star Times	Not upheld	3755	July
Jose Aquino	The Post	Not upheld	3755	July
Alison Greig	Sunday Star Times	Not upheld	3755	July
Ellen White	Sunday Star Times	Not upheld	3755	July
Jon Harris	The Post	Not upheld	3755	July
Trevor Garrett	The Post	Not upheld	3755	July
Louise King	The Post	Not upheld	3755	July
Christine Teirney	Rotorua Daily Post	No grounds	3743	July
Mark Eliassen	NZ Herald	Not upheld with dissent	3726	July
Simon Clarke	The Press	Upheld	3756	July
Reg Booth	Waikato Times	Not upheld with dissent	3757	July
Robert Brassey	NZ Herald	Upheld	3759	July
Simon Hartman	The Press	No grounds	3760	July
Kelly Bold	Cambridge News	No grounds	3758	July
Jeremy Nimmo	Stuff	No grounds	3761	July
Ernestina Bonsu-Maró	NZ Herald	Not upheld	3762	July
Rocket Lab	RNZ	Upheld	3763	July
Joshua Kretschmar	Otago Daily Times	No grounds	3764	July
Peter Pickett	Waikato Times	Not upheld with dissent	3757	July
James Arnott	Otago Daily Times	No grounds	3766	July
Cory Matthew	NZ Herald	No grounds	3469	July
Kelly Bold	Waikato Business News	Upheld	3770	July
Karen Arnold	Otago Daily Times	No grounds	3771	July
Dr Morteza Sharifi	Stuff	No grounds	3774	July
Martin Hales	RNZ	No grounds	3775	July

2025 Decisions Cont...

COMPLAINANT	PUBLICATION	DECISION	RULING	DATE
Yujing Elizabeth Li	The Press	No grounds	3776	July
Pauline Davies	Rotorua Daily Post	Upheld	3767	September
Terina Moke	Waikato Times	Not upheld	3768	September
Bianca Parker	RNZ	Upheld	3772	September
Samantha Murphy	RNZ	Upheld	3772	September
Hillary Thompson	RNZ	Upheld	3772	September
Alexa O'Brien	RNZ	Upheld	3772	September
Alexandra Hoenscheid	RNZ	Upheld	3772	September
Kate Popham	RNZ	Upheld	3772	September
Ted Greensmith	RNZ	Upheld	3772	September
Matthew Lynch	RNZ	Upheld	3772	September
Dawen He	RNZ	Upheld	3772	September
Nia Simmonds	RNZ	Upheld	3772	September
Miranda Bellamy	RNZ	Upheld	3772	September
Pedro Su	RNZ	Upheld	3772	September
Finn Cooper	RNZ	Upheld	3772	September
Jamie Norris	RNZ	Upheld	3772	September
Nick Mahon	RNZ	Upheld	3772	September
Jamie Simmonds	RNZ	Upheld	3772	September
Artie Ho	RNZ	Upheld	3772	September
Kenneth Orr	Nelson Mail	No grounds	3773	September
Kelly Bold	Cambridge News	Upheld	3770	September
Carmen Kay	Cambridge News	Upheld	3778	September
Rachel Brown	Stuff	No grounds	3779	September
Clare Andre	RNZ	No ground	3780	September
Embassy of Israel	Stuff	Not upheld	3782	September
Rowan Wernham	RNZ	No grounds	3783	September
Muhammad Zaky	RNZ	Not upheld	3784	September
Brewers Association	RNZ	Upheld	3785	September
Janine Sax	Stuff	No grounds	3788	September
Margaret Stevenson-Wright	Sunday Star Times	No grounds	3789	September
Jonathan Mayo	RNZ	Not upheld	3765	October
Ministry of Education	RNZ	Not upheld	3787	October
Wendy Baker	Otago Daily Times	No grounds	3790	October
Wendy Baker	Southland Times	No grounds	3790	October
David MacLennan	Interest.co.nz	No grounds	3792	October
*MS	The Press	No grounds	3793	October
David MacLennan	RNZ	No grounds	3791	October
David MacLennan	Stuff	No grounds	3791	October
Jerrie-Lee Ngareta Hill	Stuff	No grounds	3794	October
Amrat Dhounsi	NZ Herald	No grounds	3795	October
Rudi du Plooy	Waikato Business News	Not upheld	3796	October

2025 Decisions Cont...

COMPLAINANT	PUBLICATION	DECISION	RULING	DATE
Simon Smelt	Stuff	Not upheld	3799	October
Sam Russell	Stuff	No grounds	3800	October
Frank Cook	The Post	No grounds	3801	October
*HR	Cambridge News	Not upheld	3798	December
*MA	Southland Times	No grounds	3797	December
Jeremy Nimmo	RNZ	No grounds	3802	December
Mark Irving	Stuff	No grounds	3803	December
Barry Bruce	Crux News	Upheld	3804	December
Justin Wright	Crux News	Upheld	3804	December
*X	RNZ	Upheld with dissent	3805	December
Shirley King	NZ Herald	No grounds	3806	December
Rob Harris	The Press	No grounds	3807	December
Nicci Heywood	North Canterbury News	Upheld	3808	December
Rights Aotearoa	Stuff	No grounds	3809	December
Emma Blackett	RNZ	No grounds	3810	December
Louise Stalker	The Press	Not upheld	3811	December
Paul Harrington	Stuff	No grounds	3812	December
Tennille Pedersen	NZ Herald	No grounds	3813	December
John McDonald-Wharry	The Spinoff	No grounds	3814	December
Frank Newman	Northern Advocate	No grounds	3815	December
Justin Wright	Crux News	Upheld	3816	December
Justin Wright	Crux News	Upheld	3816	December
Jeremy Nimmo	Stuff	No grounds	3819	December
David O'Hagan	NZ Herald	No grounds	3820	December
Daniel Richardson	Stuff	No grounds	3821	December
Adham Harash-Ghali	RNZ	No grounds	3822	December
Peter Millar	Gisborne Herald	No grounds	3823	December
Jeffrey Wright	Otago Daily Times	No grounds	3824	December
Ropata Fowlds-Hartley	RNZ	No grounds	3825	December



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