



## CONSUMERS ASSOCIATION OF SINGAPORE

170 Ghim Moh Road, #05-01, Ulu Pandan Community Building, Singapore 279621

Hotline: 6100 0315 Fax: 6467 9055

Website: [www.case.org.sg](http://www.case.org.sg)

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Voices Editor

TODAY

[voices@mediacorp.com.sg](mailto:voices@mediacorp.com.sg)

Fax: 6534 4217

By fax and email

We refer to the letter "Time to clamp down on misleading advertisements" by Mr Andrew Tan on 23 April 2014.

It is not true that there is no enforcement against misleading advertisements in Singapore.

The advertising industry here is self-regulated in accordance with the Singapore Code of Advertising Practice (SCAP). The Advertising Standards Authority of Singapore (ASAS) is an advisory council under the Consumers Association of Singapore (CASE) and it works closely with media owners to ensure responsible advertising.

Advertisers who make claims that appear to be contrary to the advertising code must provide relevant supporting evidence to substantiate their claims. If they can't, ASAS will ask the advertisers to revise their advertisements or withdraw them.

If they do not comply, sanctions will be imposed. This can take the form of withholding of advertising space or time, as well as the withdrawal of trading privileges from advertising agencies. Besides these, ASAS can also openly name recalcitrant offenders who repeatedly ignore the SCAP. Those who continue to mislead consumers can also be referred to CASE for action to be taken under the Consumer Protection Fair Trading Act.

ASAS and CASE have taken action against less than 5 advertisers in the past 3 years, as most advertisers will amend the advertisement when it is highlighted that they infringe the SCAP.

Still, enforcement should not however be the only option. Education to create consumer awareness is as important so that consumers will be discerning and informed. This is an area that both the ASAS and CASE will also continue to work on.

Associate Professor Tan Sze Wee  
Chairman  
Advertising Standards Authority of Singapore (ASAS)

Mr Lim Biow Chuan  
President  
Consumers Association of Singapore (CASE)