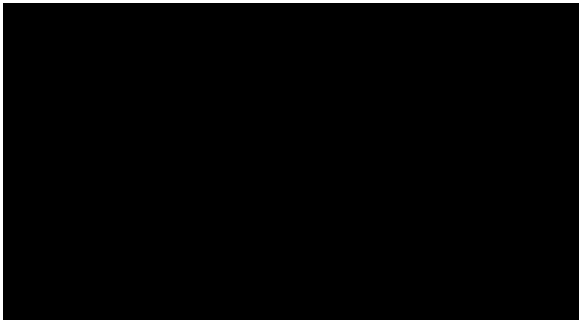


31 May 2023



Official Information Act #22.171 – Response

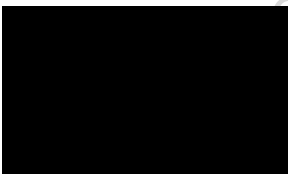
1. We refer to your request received on 3 May 2023 for information about whether the Commerce Commission (the Commission) has received any complaints about Williams Corporation Limited, and if so, you would like to know what the complaints were about and the outcome.
2. We have treated this as a request for information under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

Our response

3. To respond to your request, we searched our database for complaints about Williams Corporation Limited.
4. The Commission has received 10 complaints about Williams Corporation Limited in the period 25 May 2019 to 3 May 2023.
5. We have provided summaries of the 10 complaints and the outcomes in **Appendix A**.
6. Please note:
 - 6.1 The Commission's current database was implemented in 2017. At the time of implementation, complaints records from 1 January 2012 onwards were transferred to our current database.
 - 6.2 Limited complaint records from before 2012 were transferred to the current database. These do not reflect a complete picture of the complaints received by the Commission before 2012.

- 6.3 Other than complaints transferred to the current database, we are not able to access complaint records from our previous database(s).
7. It is important to consider complaint numbers in the following context:
- 7.1 Complaints data on its own cannot paint a complete picture of compliance with the law. The fact that a complaint has been received does not necessarily mean that a trader has done anything wrong or any harm has been caused to any consumer or competitor. Some complaints will not be investigated by the Commission because they are unfounded or outside our jurisdiction, and some complaints that are investigated will not proceed to further action.
- 7.2 The complaints data only reflects what consumers have chosen to report to the Commission or to other organisations that have in turn provided information to the Commission. Some complaints on the same matter are likely to have reached other complaint bodies instead of the Commission.
- 7.3 Larger traders are likely to generate more complaints as a function of their scale; we have not adjusted for this.
- 7.4 Complaint volumes for a trader can be about a single matter or multiple matters. Some matters that attract a high level of publicity can generate a large volume of complaints.
8. Please note the Commission will be publishing this response to your request on its website. Your personal details will be redacted from the published response.
9. Please do not hesitate to contact us at oa@comcom.govt.nz if you have any questions about this response.

Yours sincerely



OIA and Information Coordinator

Appendix A			
Enquiry number	Date received	Complaint	Outcome
ENQ0526857	25/05/2019	Complainant alleges that Trader is misleading the public in Christchurch by advertising (on its website and billboards) that development sites have "SOLD OUT" while the Trader's newsletter indicates that two of the "SOLD OUT" sites in the development are still available.	NFA ¹
ENQ0526970	01/06/2019	Complainant alleges Trader is misleading the public with false advertising to create sales. The development has yet to receive consent from the Christchurch City Council, yet the Trader is advertising that the latest development is "selling fast".	NFA
ENQ0538177	16/04/2020	Complainant alleges misleading advertising by the Trader for its new development in Christchurch. The Trader's advertisement state that there will be six "bed units" in a zone where unhosted 'home-share accommodation' such as Airbnb, is only allowed if certain criteria are met. The complainant alleges that the Trader's advertising material suggests that the properties are appropriate for short term, unhosted rentals, in particular through Airbnb. There is concern about the above because of the negative impact short term rentals have on neighbourhoods.	NFA
ENQ0540801	05/06/2020	Complaint about Trader's advertising. The complainant alleges the advertising is being	NFA

¹ The Commission may decide not to take further action in relation to a complaint for a number of reasons. These reasons include, but are not limited to, circumstances where we consider the complaint is better suited to private action by the complainant, the complaint is subject to the jurisdiction of another agency, or where there is no clear breach of the law. However, each complaint and enquiry provides information that is valuable to the Commission. This contributes to future priorities, potential issues for us to watch closely or emerging issues to refer to our policy agency, MBIE. In this regard, we will monitor complaints on information we receive as we look to future prioritisation.

		used to market CBD developments and speculate on the likelihood Council will take enforcement action against those who seek to buy the units and illegally run them as full-time un-hosted Airbnb businesses.	
ENQ0548302	25/11/2020	Complainant alleges Trader is misleading buyers in Christchurch with its advertising. The online material depicts a graphic of the development having a foot path and a grass berm separating it from the roadway. Complainant stated that the development does not have these features.	NFA
ENQ0554624	18/05/2021	Complainant concerned Trader is a Ponzi Scheme. Complainant stated that the advertising from Trader claims they have \$100m under management compared to the previous year, where they advertised that they had \$17m. This sort of exponential growth does not appear to be aligned with their output.	NFA
ENQ0557206	14/08/2021	Complainant alleges Trader is misleading the public by falsely advertising their properties as being "under the first home buyers cap". This is not the case.	NFA
ENQ0566682	02/07/2022	Complainant queries whether Trader's advertising is misleading. Trader is advertising beach front properties where there is a road, and then a council reserve before the beach.	NFA
ENQ0569242	12/09/2022	Complainant is a first home buyer and bought an off-the-plans unit from the Trader. Complainant alleges Trader used out-of-date plans in its purchase agreement, which they only discovered after purchase. Complainant alleges breach of the Fair Trading Act due to misrepresentation of the plans. Trader continues to refute misrepresentation and contractual claims, refuses to refund deposit and are expecting settlement later in 2022.	NFA

ENQ0573208	19/12/2022	Complainant alleges that Trader is soliciting positive reviews for the business by answering questions unrelated to the business on social media.	NFA
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Released Under Official Information Act 1982