



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

The Straits Times Forum

5 December 2019

Misleading advertisements can be removed

We thank Mr Cheng Choon Fei for his letter (Protect buyers from misleading ads and offers, Dec 2).

Advertisements are regulated by the Singapore Code of Advertising Practice (SCAP) administered by the Advertising Standards Authority of Singapore (ASAS).

If an advertisement is found to be in breach of SCAP, ASAS will inform the media owner, media agency (if relevant) and the advertiser to amend or remove it.

This is an industry self-regulatory regime that balances the interests of consumers and businesses. Successful industry self-regulation requires the backstop of law to address the recalcitrant offender. In Singapore, this backstop is the Consumer Protection (Fair Trading) Act (CPFTA).

Consumers are protected against unfair practices such as misleading and/or false claims under CPFTA. Consumers who come across such unfair practices can seek recourse under CPFTA and may approach the Consumers Association of Singapore (Case) - on its hotline 6100-0315 or website at www.case.org.sg - for assistance to resolve their disputes through negotiation and/or mediation.

Case may also invite suppliers to enter into voluntary compliance agreements to stop the unfair practices. Errant suppliers who persist in unfair practices will be referred to the Competition and Consumer Commission of Singapore for investigation.

Notwithstanding the above, consumers are advised to go through the terms and conditions, including any fine print, in advertisements, offers, bookings and contracts before they proceed with the purchase.

These terms and conditions are sometimes necessary to qualify special offers. They should not mislead and if they do, they should be brought to the attention of ASAS. If consumers disagree with any part of the terms and conditions, as in the cases Mr Cheng pointed out, they should not proceed.

Members of the public who come across misleading advertisements can give feedback to ASAS (www.asas.org.sg/).

Ang Peng Hwa (Professor)

Chairman

Advertising Standards Authority of Singapore Council

Lim Biow Chuan

President

Consumers Association of Singapore