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Boyd, Joanne

From: Riddiford, Joe-Anne
Sent: Tuesday, 9 May 2017 11:46 AM
To: Catherine Montague
Cc: Sophie Austin; International ACCC
Subject: RE: investigation request - organic content [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi Catherine,

The earlier ACCC matter to which you refer was only an initial investigation in response to a very specific consumer complaint.

The matter was not progressed to an in-depth investigation and the correspondence between the ACCC and the trader merely stated that staff did not propose to take further action. The matter was never put to the Commission for consideration.

Further I regret to advise that the staff who conducted the initial investigation have since left the employ of the ACCC.

Because of confidentiality I am unable to share copies of the correspondence between the ACCC and the parties involved.

Kind regards,

Joe-Anne

Joe-Anne Riddiford
Assistant Director | International

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From: Catherine Montague [mailto:Catherine.Montague@comcom.govt.nz]
Sent: Tuesday, 9 May 2017 7:45 AM
To: Riddiford, Joe-Anne
Cc: Sophie Austin
Subject: investigation request - organic content

Hi Joe-Anne,

We have yet another request for assistance with one of our investigations and would be really grateful if you were able to assist, please.

Our investigations team is currently working on an investigation into Natures Organics. Natures Organics has made reference to an investigation they were subject to, carried out by the ACCC in 2009.

Our investigation is focused on two complaints:

1. That Natures Organics are potentially misleading products as 'Sodium Lauryl Sulphate (SLS) free' because all products marketed as 'SLS free' contain Sodium Coco Sulphate (SCS), and from initial research it appears that SLS is a component of SCS.
2. That the brand 'Organic Care' potentially misrepresents products as 'organic'. All the products in their range only feature 1-4 organic ingredients, which, as a percentage of the total ingredients are quite minor (1-10% of the product).

When the team asked Natures Organics for information about the SLS/SCS issue they mentioned as part of their response that "We were asked the same question regarding SLS/SCS by the ACCC (Australian Competition and Consumer Commission) back in 2009 and when submitting to them the same information we have supplied above, they agreed there was no case for us to answer."

We would be really grateful if you could please put us in touch with someone who might be able to help with information about the case including the investigation report and substantive background papers as well as any complaints about Natures Organics (particularly in relation to the organic content of their products). As you will understand, the investigation is in the initial phases and confidential.

Any help would be much appreciated.

Kind regards,

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Catherine

Catherine Montague

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