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31 October 2016

## URGENT

Jaya Balendra  
Four Corners Producer  
ABC Ultimo Centre  
700 Harris Street  
Ultimo NSW 2001

Dear Jaya

We have seen a video extract of your program which is proposed to air this evening. It appears on the Four Corners facebook page with the title "This is the range of pigments salmon companies use".

The presenter, Caro Meldrum-Hanna, states that a range of pigments can be used to *"...to dye the flesh of the fish with astaxanthin, without this artificial additive the salmon that you're eating would look very different"* (**Statement**).

In our opinion, this Statement is false and misleading and was made inconsistent with the ABC's Editorial Policies and general ethical journalistic principles for the following reasons:

1. The flesh of the fish is not "dyed". As you are well aware, the colour of the flesh of the fish is not changed by soaking it or otherwise placing it in any particular liquid or solution impregnated or otherwise containing any dye.
2. As you are also aware, astaxanthin is used in our fish feed for fish consumption and ultimately, fish health and growth. Astaxanthin is not a dye used to "dye" the flesh of the fish.
3. As previously advised in our letter to you of 20 October 2016, we again note the following in relation to the use of astaxanthin:

*"...astaxanthin is a minor additive in our fish feed formulation for fish consumption and has been approved by the relevant regulatory authorities as safe for both fish and humans at the minor levels contained in our fish feed formulation.*

*Tassal's labelling complies with Food Standards Australia and New Zealand (FSANZ) requirements. It is not a FSANZ food labelling requirement to include ingredients relating to animal and fish feed. Any ingredients that are added or in contact with our product post harvesting are detailed in the ingredients section on all our packaging.*

*Astaxanthin is an important nutrient for salmon as well as providing colour to both wild and farmed salmon. In salmon, astaxanthin is important for fish health, growth and*

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*survival, it is an anti-oxidant that protects essential fats from degrading and also works to support the salmon's immune system.*

*"... our food label (packaging) provides a link to the Tassal web site where interested consumers can find this level of detail on our website about astaxanthin in our feed: [www.tassal.com.au/sustainability/our-salmon](http://www.tassal.com.au/sustainability/our-salmon)."*

The FSANZ has advised Tassal that, as astaxanthin is an additive to the feed given to farmed fish, there is no labelling requirement in the Food Standards Code that would apply.

Accordingly, the Statement should be immediately removed your video extract of your program, presently appearing on the Four Corners facebook page, and further, the Statement should not be made on your program proposed to be aired this evening.

We reserve all our rights and remedies.

Kind Regards,



Mark A. Ryan  
Managing Director & CEO

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