



NBN Northern NSW

Violence in a PG classified program

Complaint

In February 2000, the ABA received a complaint in relation to an episode of a documentary series, 'The Colour of War', broadcast by NBN Northern NSW. The complainant alleged that the second episode in the series contained footage of executions, including images of violence, which was not suitable for a PG classified program.

Relevant code of practice

The Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice provides:

The parental guidance recommended (PG) classification

2.13 Material classified PG may contain careful presentations of adult themes or concepts but must be mild in impact and remain suitable for children to watch with supervision:

2.13.1 Violence: Visual depiction of violence must be inexplicit, restrained, and justified by the story line or program context. More leeway is permitted when the depiction is stylised rather than realistic, but all violence shown must be mild in impact, taking into account also the language, sounds and special effects used.

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2.13.6 Adult Themes: The treatment of social and domestic conflict and other themes directed to a more adult audience should be carefully handled and mild in impact.

Decision

The ABA determined that the licensee of NBN Northern NSW, NBN Limited, breached subclause 2.13.1 and 2.13.6 of the code by broadcasting an episode of the program 'The Colour of War' titled 'Total War'. The ABA found that in the episode went further than the PG classification allowed. The material featured images of violence that were not inexplicit or restrained nor was it mild in impact as required by the code.

Action taken

The licensee, NBN Limited, advised the ABA that it would take into consideration the ABA's findings and refer the matter to the Nine network who classified the program on their behalf. The ABA notes that this is the first breach of this nature by this licensee. The ABA will not take any further action on this occasion but will closely monitor NBN Limited's future performance against the code.

