



**Litmus Testing:  
2011/2012**

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**June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012**



## Litmus Testing: 2011/2012

Report Prepared For:

### Broadcasting Standards Authority

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### *Opinion Statement*

***Nielsen certifies that the information contained in this report has been compiled in accordance with sound market research methods and principles, as well as proprietary methodologies developed by, or for, Nielsen. Nielsen believes that this report represents a fair, accurate and comprehensive analysis of the information collected, with all sampled information subject to normal statistical variance.***

## Executive Insights

### Executive Insights

In order to determine whether the Board's decisions are an accurate reflection of the general public's current attitudes and to assess response to the revised communication format, the BSA commissioned Nielsen to conduct a new round of litmus testing. Four focus groups were conducted in Auckland, three of which were with members of the public aged 18-75 and a fourth with recent complainants. The Good Taste and Decency standard was the focus of discussion.

Results must be interpreted in the following context:

1. Participants were shown clips rather than the whole programme, and as such, the context of the clips was limited by the boundaries delineating the beginning and end. BSA decisions have to take into account a number of contextual factors including the programme as a whole.
2. Because of the artificial context of the assessments, participants may have been more critical than they would normally. Understanding of the task improved as the group progressed. To mitigate this, clips were rotated for each group, so that no clip was shown first twice.
3. Time constraints restricted discussion around the tension between the harm elicited by viewing of content and the harm in restricting access to it which is a critical component of BSA determinations. Future research could explore this tension in greater detail.
4. As lay-people, participants experienced difficulty in separating out the different standards. Care was taken to direct participants to consider whether the content was expected in the context of the programme and whether it reflected community norms.

### Evaluation of Board decisions relative to public opinion

Initial concern often focused on issues that might be better related to the children's interest standard.

- The most common concern across the groups and the five clips was that a child might **accidentally be confronted** by adult material screening prior to, or around, the watershed timing of 8:30pm.
- Focus was on the right of parents to protect their children and perceptions were that children viewing the programmes were likely to be disturbed and require an adult to explain the content. This placed parents in the position of **having to explain information** they did not feel ready or inclined to discuss and hence represented the **removal of choice**.
- Notably, this was particularly the case when the content had **sexual overtones**, regardless of whether sexual content was implied or explicit, suggesting people perceive children to be more savvy than acknowledged by the Board.
- There was less concern over moderate use of swearing (e.g. *shit*) since it was something that most people were exposed to everyday. More extreme swearing was unacceptable (especially *unt*).

However, participants were not inclined to complain about something if it was in an **appropriate** timeslot:

- They did not feel they had the right to prevent others from viewing something just because they personally found it distasteful.
- Perceptions were that an older viewer could simply switch the channel if they didn't like what they were seeing.
- Most concern was therefore expressed when exposure was **unavoidable or unexpected** and again represented **the right to choose**. The promo for Real Life shown during the News with no warning represented a case in point.

There was some dissent in opinion regarding the Board's decisions, as outlined below.

Clip	Board Decision	Number who wanted complaint upheld (out of n=31)
Family Guy	Decline	24
Criminal Minds	Uphold	16
Outrageous Fortune	Uphold	19
Promo for Real Life	Decline	24
The Edge Morning show	Decline	19

When prompted to consider the good taste and decency standard, specific comments regarding the clips were as follows:

- **Family Guy:** the programme should have been screened at a later time of 8:30pm to prevent accidental exposure to children of adult themes and should have been rated AO 8:30. In the context of good taste and decency, few people felt personally offended, but the name of the programme and the cartoon format created expectations that would not suggest the sexual content to those who had never seen the programme.
- **Criminal Minds:** the programme warranted a later screening time of 9:30pm due to potential for younger viewers to accidentally view it. However, in terms of the good taste and decency standard, participants felt that the content was only moderately graphic and was within the expectations for the programme.
- **Outrageous Fortune:** participants agreed to uphold the complaint that the classification of the programme was incorrect, citing the extreme language within the first 10 minutes after the 8:30pm watershed as unacceptable. In terms of good taste and decency specifically, while most people were accepting of the word **shit** and moderate use of **fuck** most people felt the word **cunt** and the sexually explicit comment within ten minutes of the watershed time was unacceptable despite expectations of bad language in the programme.
- **Real life promo:** participants were unhappy that the Board declined to uphold the complaint, mainly because they disagreed that the content was not unsuitable for child viewers under the guidance of an adult. especially as no PGR rating was provided. In addition, in terms of the good taste and decency standard, there was some disagreement that the promo was not salacious.
- **The Edge Morning Show:** opinion was split on whether to uphold the complaint in

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terms of the good taste and decency standard, since content on the Edge was expected to be slightly offensive. Consistent with the complainant, the target issue was the reading out of the text which mentioned AIDS, but no participant would have complained.

#### **Evaluation of the Board decision communication**

Response to the revised formatting of case summaries was **positive**, representing an improvement in the amount of information provided and the accessibility of the information to the general public. Specifically:

- the language is **easier to understand** and less ~~legalese~~
- the use of **questions as headings** makes it easier to delineate the different standards, and
- the summary at the end makes for quick reading.

Suggestions were to move the end summary statement to the beginning of the report, and to provide links within the report as a means of drilling down into detail if required.

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## Needs Assessment

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### Background

As specified in the Broadcasting Standards Authority's (BSA's) Statement of Intent 2011-2014, members of the public must litmus test at least 5 BSA decisions in order to:

- Help ascertain where Board decisions sit relative to public opinion- this would contribute to ensuring members had a clear appreciation of the diversity of community views and public attitudes towards these decisions
- Evaluate whether Board decisions were presented and communicated in a way that was clear, accessible, and easy to comprehend (particularly relevant given recent focus on improving these communications).

Litmus testing was most recently carried out in 2009, with two focus groups comprised of the general public aged between 25 and 35 years. Five television clips were used, two relating to the good taste and decency standard and the others relating to children's interests and privacy and fairness.

In May 2012, Nielsen was commissioned to conduct another round of litmus testing, but instead ran four focus groups, three of which were with members of the public aged 18-75 and a fourth with recent complainants. In addition, focus was on only one standard - that of good taste and decency. The following report details the findings from these four groups.

Recommended actions are based on our research findings. Nielsen acknowledges that the BSA may already be undertaking recommended actions and strategies. Recommendations should be taken as reinforcing existing actions as much as creating new strategies and actions for BSA.

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### Research Objectives

The overall objective of the research was to determine whether the Board's decisions were an accurate reflection of the general public's current attitudes and to assess response to the revised communication format.

Specific objectives of the research were to:

- Identify each individual's issues independently to ascertain whether the target objections matched those spontaneously mentioned
  - Ascertain whether the participants would have upheld the complaint
  - Examine individual and group response to the Board's actual decision
  - Evaluate the Board's communication of the decisions and identify possible means to improve on the revised format.
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## Research Design

### Sample structure

A total of four focus groups were conducted. All groups were held at the Nielsen Takapuna offices in the evening (from 6:30-8:30pm). Three of the groups were comprised of the general public aged 18-75, while the fourth was made up of people who had recently made a complaint to the BSA. Participants came from a range of Auckland areas, and all participants were paid \$70 for attending.

Group	Description of group
<b>Group One:</b>	8 x Participants aged 18-30 years. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Female x 4</li> <li>• NZ Euro/Euro x 6</li> <li>• Maori x 1</li> <li>• Pacifika x 1</li> <li>• A range of lifecycle stages (single, with a partner, parents)</li> </ul>
<b>Group Two:</b>	8 x Participants aged 31-55 years. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Female x 4</li> <li>• NZ Euro x 4</li> <li>• Asian x 3</li> <li>• Pacifika x 1</li> <li>• A range of lifecycle stages (single, with a partner, parents)</li> </ul>
<b>Group Three:</b>	8 x Participants aged 56-75 years. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Female x 4</li> <li>• NZ Euro x 4</li> <li>• Maori x 1</li> <li>• Asian x 2</li> <li>• Pacifika x 1</li> <li>• A range of lifecycle stages (single, with a partner, parents)</li> </ul>
<b>Group Four:</b>	7 x Recent complainants. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Female x 4</li> <li>• NZ Euro x 5</li> <li>• Asian x 1</li> <li>• Pacifika x 1</li> <li>• 2 x who had complaints upheld</li> </ul>

### Process

After a brief warm-up where participants discussed programmes they enjoyed viewing, and those they avoided, the group was shown five clips in a row and informed that all had triggered complaints. Order of clips was rotated so that no clip was shown first twice. Participants were asked to note down any initial thoughts or feelings.

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The five clips were:

1. Coburn and TVWorks Ltd . 2011-173: Family Guy
2. Milich and Television New Zealand Ltd . 2011-053: Criminal Minds
3. Binks and Others and TVWorks Ltd . 2010-141: Outrageous Fortune
4. McCormick and Television New Zealand Ltd . 2011-134: Promo for Real Life . The World's Most Enhanced Woman and Me
5. Simmons and Walker-Simmons and RadioWorks Ltd . 2012-004: The Edge Morning Show

Information about the BSA and the good taste and decency standard was then revealed to the participants. Opportunities to ask questions and gain clarification were provided.

In order to record individual feelings prior to discussing as a group, participants then viewed each of the clips one at a time, preceded by information regarding viewing time, ratings and any verbal/written warnings. During and after each clip, participants were asked to independently note:

- Any specific issues they personally had with the clip
- What aspects they felt might have triggered the complaint
- Would most people feel this way, and if not, why not
- Whether they felt the BSA should uphold the complaint
- How severe they would rate the clip in terms of the good taste and decency standard (where 1 was %nothing wrong with it+and 5 was %extremely bad taste and indecent+).

The responses to each clip were then discussed as a group, noting areas of particular concern (if any). Finally, the actual BSA decision was revealed and discussed as a group. Participants were asked to respond to the presentation (how it was communicated) and the content of the BSA decision.

Following discussion of the five clips, the old and revised formats of the case summaries were discussed, noting areas of improvement and opportunities for further refinement.

Appendix 3 contains the discussion guide used in the groups.

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## Overview of Findings

### Interpretation of results

Given the time constraints and methodology, a number of factors need to be considered when examining the findings:

1. Participants were shown clips rather than the whole programme, and as such, the context of the clips was defined by the boundaries delineating the beginning and end. An example is the Family Guy clip which began with she screamed so I slapped her which may have placed undue emphasis on the comment. BSA decisions have to take into account a number of contextual factors including the programme as a whole.
2. Asking participants to be the BSA may have resulted in people being more critical than they would normally be in an everyday viewing situation. Indeed, most people agreed that they were unlikely to be sufficiently upset by what they viewed to have made a complaint.
3. Understanding of the task improved as the group progressed. To mitigate this, clips were rotated for each group, so that no clip was shown first twice.
4. Time constraints restricted discussion around the tension between the harm elicited by viewing of content and the harm in restricting access to it which is a critical part of BSA determinations. For example, a person wanting to uphold a complaint needs to consider the implications on their ability to choose to view something on a future occasion. Subsequent research should allow for greater exploration of this issue.
5. Overall, comment more commonly gravitated towards the children's interest standard, even though the standard was not discussed with participants. Care was taken to direct participants to consider whether the content was expected in the context of the programme and whether it reflected community norms.
6. Few demographic differences can be revealed using this methodology. However, where differences exist, comment is made to highlight these.

### Synopsis

During the discussion, care was required to tease apart the tension between being personally offended, and the desire to allow freedom of choice. In a number of cases, participants were not inclined to complain about something if it was in an appropriate timeslot, since they did not feel they had the right to prevent others from viewing something just because they personally found it distasteful. Most concern was therefore expressed when exposure was unavoidable or unexpected.

Participants found it very difficult to separate out the different standards, with a considerable degree of overlap between the good taste and decency standard and the children's interest standard.

- The most common concern across the groups and the five clips was that a child might accidentally be confronted by adult material screening prior to, or around the watershed timing of 8:30pm.

- Perceptions were that children viewing the programmes were likely to be disturbed and require an adult to explain the content. This placed parents in the position of having to explain information they did not feel ready or inclined to discuss.
- This particularly included the sexual innuendo shown in the Family Guy clip at 7:30pm, the portrayal of the extremely large breasts in the Real Life Promo clip at 6:40pm, and the excessive and explicit swearing in Outrageous Fortune at 8.30-8:40pm.
- As such, the timing of the programmes, rather than warnings or content, was the key complaint across clips.

In terms of the standard in question, significant concerns were raised for three of the five clips, only one of which was upheld by the Board (Outrageous Fortune):

- Outrageous Fortune (for extreme language);
- Family Guy (name, cartoon format and timing misleading viewers to think it might be a family programme); and
- Promo for Real Life (slightly salacious AO content shown during family time without a PGR rating).

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The two clips drawing the most criticism (Family Guy and the promo for Real Life) did so due to the **unexpected** sexual content viewed prior to the 8:30pm watershed. This mirrors the concerns raised in the 2009 research which criticised one of the clips as *exposing children to sexual options they may not be old enough (or do not yet need to) understand*.

## Clip One (Family Guy – 2011-173)

### Synopsis

*Programme classification PGR, I would say definitely breached the standard. Target audience, well it was broadcast at 7.30pm, that's PG period and that's not a suitable programme for that audience, and I don't think it matters what sort of warning they have at the beginning because people often miss that anyway (European, male)*

A complaint was made under section 8(1B)(b)(i) of the Broadcasting Act 1989, that the cartoon . Family Guy . contained sexual content and innuendo, allegedly in breach of standards relating to good taste and decency, responsible programming and children's interests. The complainant felt the sexual content was ~~totally~~ inappropriate to screen during children's normally accepted viewing times, in particular given its animated style , meaning it was more likely to attract a younger audience.

The Authority **declined to uphold** any of the three alleged breaches in standards, stating that the ~~sexual~~ content was subtle and inexplicit and the sexual innuendo would have gone over the heads of younger viewers; the content was not unsuitable for supervised child viewers; and the episode was correctly rated PGR, preceded by a visual and verbal warning, and screened in an appropriate time-band.

In contrast to the Authority, **24 of the 31 participants voted to uphold the complaint.**

- Personal opinion regarding the content of the clip was polarised, with some people admitting they enjoyed the programme, while others thought the programme was stupid and mildly offensive
- The main focus of concern was accidental exposure of children to adult themes rather than good taste and decency
- The content, for the most part, was not considered indecent in an adult context if shown at an appropriate time.

In summary, the **participants disagreed with the Board's decision**, stating the programme should have been screened at a later time of 8:30pm to prevent accidental exposure to children of adult themes. As such the programme should have been rated at least AO 8:30.

- In the context of good taste and decency, few people felt personally offended, but the **name of the programme** and the **cartoon format** created expectations that would not suggest the sexual content to those

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who had never seen the programme.

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**Main issues  
regarding the  
clip**

In agreement with the complainant, the main issues participants had regarding the Family Guy clip were:

- Timing
- The cartoon format
- The sexual content
- Violent language (not mentioned by the complainant).

1. Timing . the main concern was that, despite the written and verbal warnings, a child could still have accidentally been exposed to the content. Participants felt that 9:00pm was the earliest the programme should screen - a later timing of the programme was therefore requested:

*The rating and the time as well. Although even 8:30 I thinks' too young as there's still a lot of kids who are up at 8:30, personally I think if it's only for adults it should be on before 9:30 or 10 even. Adult only to me, adults only means 18, adults are 18 so if you're prepared for under 18's to watch it (European, female)*

*Well my 11yr old is still up at 8:30, so maybe 9 cos then by that stage she's sort of getting ready and in bed (European, female)*

*I don't think it's. PGR's obviously allowed to be on at 7:30 so I don't think it should be a PGR (European, female)*

*I'm ok with the decision, except the only thing is about the timing, apart from that I think the decision is ok (Asian, male)*

*It was because of the time, if that was on at 11 o'clock at night I don't think anyone would be particularly bothered, but at 7.30pm (European, female)*

*I think people need to be reminded with the correct classification, that it's not a children's programme. PGR would suggest that it is, I think it needs to be rated AO just as a reminder (European, male)*

*I think like Andrew said, they're covering themselves with the pre warning at the start, so I mean but what sort of times I don't even catch the warning before I turn the programme on aye (Maori, male)*

2. The cartoon format (in combination with the name ~~F~~Family Guy~~q~~ Free to Air and timing) . making people think the programme was directed at children who might therefore allow their children to watch the programme with less parental attention than the warning would warrant:

*But the fact that it's 7:30, it's a cartoon, kids will be watching, parents might not be there, I mean it might have a PG label but parents might not be watching it, and I wouldn't feel comfortable with my kids watching it (European, male)*

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*Some cartoons is what children like to watch and, especially the timing, so it would be something tempting for the children to watch. I don't think the timing and the cartoons are context (Asian, male)*

*I didn't like the material in a cartoon format at all. Yeah as everybody has already said, it's a cartoon, kids are supposed to be watching it but this is not sort of the material that you would like them to watch, so yeah I have issues with Family Guy and also Simpsons as well (Asian, female)*

3. The sexual content . Participants felt that the word *sex* would grab the attention of *teen*aged children (although perhaps going over the heads of younger children). The implied oral sex, the sounds of orgasm, and the rough treatment of the dolls would either upset children or trigger them to ask questions that parents didn't feel inclined to answer. This contradicts the findings of the Board that children would be unlikely to understand the implied connotations in the scene. As such, similar to the 2009 research, content that implies oral sex is deemed inappropriate for child viewers.

While the content was not appropriate for children, participants did not feel personally offended by the material.

*I definitely agree, my 10year old son watches it and think it's absolutely hilarious, I've walked into the room and my 4year old daughter is sitting watching it there as well, because it was in cartoon format, it's, she had no idea what was going on obviously, but it's not something I want her or him watching, yeah, way too early. (European, female)*

*Maybe the sort of harshness of him thumping the doll on top of the, the man doll on top of the woman doll. (European, female)*

*I don't know it would have gone over their heads you know. It would have been not 4 and 5 year olds who would watch that programme generally I don't believe. It would be our pre-teeners and that would have gone right in there (European, male)*

*Even just the words, sex at that time of day, my 8 year old, he goes ooh, if he hears the words sex, it's on everything, no matter what time of day or night (European, female)*

*It's explicit, it's not subtle (Pasifika, male)*

*But they would understand that it's something a bit icky, the word sex is used I don't know how many times, and she's stripping off and she's talking about making love, kids are going to pick up on that (European, female)*

4. Additionally, although the complainant did not raise the issue, participants in two of the groups spontaneously mentioned *she screamed so I slapped her* as being an offensive thing to say, particularly in the format of a cartoon. However, lack of prior context for the comment is likely to be an important reason for attention being paid to this comment.

*I just think that the power of popular media and cartoons, such as these to influence even teenage mentality is more powerful and insidious than we realise. I didn't like that very first comment, 'she screamed so loud I had to slap her', do you really want your teenagers hearing that? (Pasifika, female)*

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*The wrong message is sent to younger folk about marital sex which is supposed to be holy as such. I am not religious myself but that aspect. And that opening comment about oh she screams so I slapped her ... Oh come on, where are we at with that? We are so against and correctly so, against violence particularly against women, what sort of a bloody comment is that? I found that terribly indecent. Unacceptable (European, male)*

For the most part, participants voiced surprise at the Board's decision to decline the complaint:

*The programme was wrongly classified! (European, female)*

*I actually wonder if the person who is involved in reviewing this, what their experience is with parenting – maybe they had kids a long time ago or maybe they don't have kids at all. Because, 'standard 1', saying that it would have gone over the heads of younger viewers – we all know that kids in primary school these days understand what these things are (European, female)*

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## Clip Two (Criminal Minds – 2011-053)

### Synopsis

*Violence and killing someone is evidently the worst of crimes, but we are desensitised to it (European, male)*

*I would not have complained but I give them thumbs up for upholding the complaints because it does show, to me it shows that they are watching. I felt the general... it is a Criminal Minds programme... I mean that is the essential part of it but I applaud them for upholding it. (European, male)*

A complaint was made under section 8(1B)(b)(i) of the Broadcasting Act 1989, that the programme . Criminal Minds . showed victims being covered in petrol and set on fire, allegedly in breach of standards relating to good taste and decency, responsible programming and violence. The complainant said the episode contained graphic images and details on how to commit gruesome crimes, which she considered encouraged anti-social behaviour and imitation, and was inappropriate for broadcast at 8:30pm.

The Authority **agreed the episode breached standards** relating to good taste and decency, responsible programming, and violence stating that the level of violence in an 8.30pm broadcast was unacceptable, despite the episode's AO classification; the violence was explicit; and the programme was incorrectly classified, as the high degree of explicit violence and disturbing adult themes warranted an AO 9.30pm classification and later time of broadcast.

Opinion was clearly polarised, with **16 of the 31 participants voting to uphold the complaint**

- A number of people indicated they actually enjoyed the programme and didn't personally have an issue with the level of violence depicted
- There was a low level of concurrence with the complainant that the violence was of an instructional manner.

In summary, there was **agreement with the Board** that the programme warranted a later screening time of 9:30pm due to potential for younger viewers to accidentally view it.

- However, in terms of the good taste and decency standard, participants felt that the content was only moderately graphic and was within the expectations for the programme.

### Main issues regarding the clip

Participants raised three main issues that mirrored those raised by the complainant:

- Degree of violence
- Timing
- Instructive nature

1. Degree of violence - The violence was felt to be expected in this sort of programme . particularly with the name ~~£~~Criminal Minds~~q~~(as opposed to ~~£~~Family Guy~~q~~which participants felt misled viewers into thinking it was a family programme). The level of violence for some participants was no worse than that shown on other programmes, and did not step over the line in terms of good taste and decency.

While a minority of participants indicated they were sensitive to violence (particularly women), the warning and the slow build-up was sufficient for them to change channel in time. Boundaries were around the pouring of fuel, lighting of the match and the subsequent flame. Had the victim been shown actually burning, the violence would have overstepped the line.

This is similar to comments made in the previous 2009 report identifying where the line should be drawn and acknowledging the slow build up to the final event.

*It's pretty standard for that type of show (European, female)*

*I have to think about it really, because I'm not, I'm kind of in the middle but, because it is a programme about serial killers and stuff so, but it, I just felt it was probably a bit graphic (European, male)*

*I actually stopped watching it because, I got nightmares, because it's quite, it is quite explicit at times. And so with that in mind, I didn't think this was too bad, because I had, like that wouldn't give me a nightmare, but some of the other stuff I've seen on that show would. That's why I guess, like in that context, I wouldn't uphold this complaint. (European, male)*

*And actually pulling someone along on the chain is not very nice but it wasn't, I've seen where people have been thumped and kicked and punched and stabbed and much worse. My worry was that they were going to show him on fire which I have seen on TV and that's so disturbing and thankfully they didn't (European, female)*

*I think by modern standards it's probably moderately graphic rather than extreme, 20 years ago that would have been extreme violence, they wouldn't have broadcast it, now I think it probably would be regarded as mild compared, there was no blood, there was no face being ripped apart, which you do see on PGR. It went on for quite a length, but it was probably only moderate and for an AO after 8.30pm it's probably not (European, male)*

*[Over the line is...]Seeing the body actually burning (European, female)*

*Yeah and perhaps the guy screaming with the actual pain. He is screaming because he knows what's going to happen, but that would have been...(European, male)*

*I think the concept itself is pretty revolting but I think that they finished their*

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*scene within a very fine line, for me if they had shown a little bit more, like the guy actually going up in flames, I mean it didn't, it kind of gave you that quick flick of flames and a guy hanging back further than the flames were (European, female)*

*I actually turned my head away right from when he, kicked the person off the bed or something, onto the floor, because I'm very sensitive to violence on TV, I don't watch it. (European, female)*

*Coming to the, I mean as you said, it came exactly at the beginning of the programme. It just came after the warning, so I would have definitely switched it and turned it off, turned it to the other channels so I don't think I would have continued watching that. (Indian, male)*

2. Timing - While the level of violence was within acceptable boundaries for most, timing was again a potential issue due to the risk of accidental exposure to children near the watershed time of 8:30pm, and as such, opinion mirrored the findings of the Board. This was particularly the case since the violence occurred at the beginning of the programme. This risk needed to be balanced against the wish of others to watch the programme at this time rather than having to wait until 9:30pm.

*I think the time, I do think 8:30 is quite... I mean that's the time that I would want to watch TV but I do think it's quite early for, really there should be two levels of AO. I think it's quite early for that. (European, female)*

*I don't really think it was like that bad, it clearly states at the start of it like it's an adult only, like my concern would be, oh my daughter goes to bed before 8:30, I wouldn't have her up at that time, and I know it's on at that time, I'm like, I don't know. Yeah basically like, that sort of stuff happens like in the world, like all the time, and if people want to watch... (Pasifika, male)*

*Yeah kids can be, they could have brushed their teeth like just before 8:30, you know and then like, then they're taking an extra bit longer, and then they come out and then go through the lounge to their room or whatever, and then it could be on, you don't want them to see it like then you know, so I think 9 o'clock is just that bit later (Maori, male)*

*What would bother me, is it's starting at 8:30, I know plenty of 11 to 15yr olds who'd still be up watching TV, the warning would come on, they wouldn't see it or really hear it, or might not factor, it might not compute, it starts and before you know it, this child has watched something graphic, that they associate the TV with entertainment, and kind of, that's what disturbs me is people of that type of age, who would see it, so it's not the actual programme or the context, but it's the time that it was on. (Asian, female)*

*I think the timing of the programme is too early, my 3 and a half year old is often up at 8:30, much to my frustration, but he's just one of these young toddlers who is still wide awake and wired at 8:30, and so I just need to take him to his room and put a DVD on so he can fall asleep. There's no way I would have him in my bed while I'm watching my own thing, and that's yeah unacceptable. (Pasifika, female)*

*Yeah I agree, I mean all they're saying is what we've basically said, is it shouldn't be on at 8:30 it should be later. (European, male)*

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3. Instructive nature - Similar to the complainant, (though not a strong concern), some discussion was made in three of the groups around the potentially instructive nature of the depiction and the fact that low-minded people might be inclined to copy it. While some felt it would incite violence, others felt it would be more of a deterrent.

*Because it was so explicit as to how you could you know, could kill someone like that. I really hate those acts of violence. Encourage people if they are that way inclined. (European, female)*

*It doesn't encourage people it just, I think it could be a deterrent. It's building up tension it's just a director's way of building up tension. The slow music to start off with and dragging out the victim, turning them up and all this business. I mean I can tolerate watching violence on TV but not necessarily, if it's part of a plot, I just sit there and watch it whereas my daughter will just walk out the room. Not interested. (European, male)*

*I think its gratuitous but it kind of teaches even not kids, but even low minded people that this is how they do it. It kind of gives you an idea it is how they do it (Pasifika, male)*

When informed of the Board's decision, most participants were happy.

*Yeah I agree, I mean all they're saying is what we've basically said, is it shouldn't be on at 8:30, it should be later. (European, male)*

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## Clip Three (Outrageous Fortune – 2010-141)

### Synopsis

*You know your kids are still wandering around and you know you're still putting them to bed, and the last thing you want them seeing is that, or listening to the swear words. (European, male)*

A number of complaints were made under section 8(1B)(b)(i) and 8(1B)(b)(ii) of the Broadcasting Act 1989, that the programme . Outrageous Fortune . contained coarse language in the first ten minutes of the programme including the word cunt as well as frequent use of variations of fuck and shit when younger people could still be watching. The offensive sexual reference was also mentioned.

The Authority agreed the programming breached standards of good taste and decency, responsible programming, and children's interests stating the frequent coarse language before 8.40pm was unacceptable in context, despite the AO classification and the expectations of regular viewers; obscenities in the first 10 minutes of the programme constituted strong adult material broadcast too close to the 8.30pm watershed; and the material warranted an AO 9.30pm classification and later time of broadcast.

Of the **31 participants, 19 wanted to uphold the complaint**, with the language combined with the timing being the frequent focus of discussion:

- A number of people indicated that, as a rule, they personally enjoyed the programme
- Use of shit and moderate use of variations of fuck was generally acceptable
- However, the frequent and extreme swearing was inappropriate for child viewers.

In summary, the participants agreed that **the Board had made the right decision to uphold the complaint** that the classification of the programme was incorrect, citing the extreme language within the first 10 minutes after the 8:30pm watershed as unacceptable.

- In terms of good taste and decency specifically, most people felt the word cunt and the sexually explicit comment within ten minutes of the watershed time was unacceptable despite expectations of bad language in the programme.

## Main issues regarding the clip

While opinion regarding the clip was divided, several consistent issues arose, some of which reflected those of the complainants:

- Explicit and extreme language (divided opinion)
  - Exposure of children to the language
  - Timing
  - Nudity (less of an issue).
1. Explicit and extreme language . the most commonly cited issue was the sexually explicit (lick my clit) and extreme bad language (particularly cunt and various forms of fuck). While the word shit and a single mention of fuck might have been acceptable, the repeated use of the word stepped over the line.

*The language was awful. (European, female)*

*I think it violates the norms of society, because yes there are people who talk like that, but most people don't and you are not allowed to talk like that in the workplace. So that's a pretty good leveller (European, female)*

*I think most of that is pretty inoffensive; it's nearly everyday but the use of the c word. Most people still find it fairly offensive, especially most females find it offensive, and I think the only reason they're putting it in there is for shock value. It's for, they could use another word, 'bitch' or something like that, but no they decide to use that one. (European, male)*

*It was nothing, I mean it's not something I like to hear but it's... I can hear that outside on the street ... it's ok to accept but to be used so many times, in that short clip, was a little too much (European, female)*

*I didn't find that particularly, as much as I don't like it, I didn't find that particularly offensive, it was the sexual, the 'c' word and what she described that girl (European, female)*

*It's pretty... I suppose the explicit language... which you don't really get that explicit on TV News, but the 'f' word is pretty common place these days, so yeah given that, I can see why people would complain, but the early time I have a problem with, 8.30pm isn't that late (European, male)*

*I'd say 'shit' is okay. They could have used other language other than the 'c' word which would have just as much impact. (European, male)*

However, offence was not universal, with a number of participants feeling the language was in context of the programme and reflected the way society actually spoke. Removing the bad language would have detracted from the programme.

*For the impact, it, I think she was making a point and that's how she expresses, it expresses how much she felt about that person, and in the context of the programme that was the word that needed to be used*

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*(European, female)*

*It's more like kiwi way sort of stuff, you know, it's like a reflection of part of society (European, male)*

*Heaps of people can relate to it. You know and they enjoy watching it. It's a part of New Zealand (Maori, male)*

*I watch a bit of it and I think it's real life and I go to parties out West very occasionally and meet people like that and I'm always astounded and I say to the women have you just walked out of Outrageous Fortune. (European, female)*

*They were trying to create the reality of out West. Just the people I know, I know people that absolutely love Outrageous Fortune, they love it for that. The nudity was, they were just doing the art scene anyway and the language, I don't like that language myself but if you choose to watch it they give you the warning. So if they take all that away it loses its whole being. (European, female)*

2. Exposure of children to the language . while the use of the language was contentious, the use of such language around the watershed of 8:30pm was of particular concern because children might take the use of such language on tv as tacit approval to experiment with the language outside the home.

*I didn't find the showing of the nude body offensive, I could explain that to my 3 and a half year old. 'Oh she was a model for an art class' and he would logically understand that, he's a very rational person. But that c word, I'd be mortified if mine heard that, and if they actually registered it as this new word they've never heard of, and started experimenting with using it, they're going to go to day care and spread it around. You know you would just alarm bells go off and you are very alert to that kind of language, especially that, that's the most offensive word that I personally find in use (Pasifika, female)*

*I think like in context, say like your 4 year old daughter walks in and like hears that word, and then goes repeating it. It's kind of where, that's kind of where that's coming from. Where like burning somebody alive, who's obviously very extreme and quite twisted, but a kids not going to go to school and like, maybe if, you know what I mean (European, female)*

3. Timing . there was general agreement over the timing of the show, with almost all participants suggesting the programme be screened at a later time of 9:30pm to avoid accidental exposure to children, particularly because the language could be heard even if the children were not actually viewing the programme.

*You know your kids are still wandering around and you know you're still putting them to bed, and the last thing you want them seeing is that, or listening to the swear words. (European, male)*

*Yeah, but I don't want you know, a later time slot would be nicer because I don't want my kids looking at that when they're trying to sleep. I don't want them swearing. (European, female)*

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*Because 8:30 is a time when children just start to go to bed, the same as the case with my daughter as well, so if that picture was shown at 8:30, and the idea is with just 10 minutes of that, so I don't think that should be there (Asian, male)*

*I think timing, yeah that show used to be on at 9:30 for quite a while I think. I don't know what made them think they could change it to earlier, even though the content of the show, I don't know it didn't seem to change from what I know of the show (European, female)*

4. Although not discussed to any length in the group discussions, individual comments indicated that nudity was also an issue for some, but within context for others.

*The fact that straight away there was nudity, right at the very start (European, male)*

*Well I think it was too explicit in most cases. The aspects that I thought triggered would have been the extreme language and the nudity. And I don't think I'm any different from anybody else. (European, male)*

Participants were happily surprised by the upholding of the complaint by the Board, but were unsure why the broadcaster was penalised to a greater extent than for the Criminal Minds programme, given the disturbing nature of the violence. However, this may be due to the lack of time participants were given to examine the case summaries in detail.

*I thought it's a very good decision that the BSA made (Asian, male)*

*I'm amazed they upheld it, judging on the others, but I'm glad they did... Thank you BSA for upholding that (European, female)*

*I'm surprised that they're more strict on language than they are on violence (European, male)*

*I don't necessarily agree with them getting fined, but I think if you're going to have a cost for breaching the standard then everyone should have the same, why didn't Criminal Minds get \$3000 cost. (European, male)*

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## Clip Four (Promo for Real Life: The World's Most Enhanced Woman and Me – 2011-134)

### Synopsis

*Why would TV1 want to advertise that? We actually saw that - my children and husband were having dinner and that was on. I was trying to turn it over, it was too late they caught a glimpse of it, it's outrageous! You could advertise that at 8.30/9.30/10.30pm, but during, kids are still there, like I said we were a family eating and watching the News. (European, female)*

A complaint was made under section 8(1B)(b)(i) of the Broadcasting Act 1989 that the promo for Real Life: The World's Most Enhanced Woman and Me contained footage of a number of women with very large breasts and was therefore thought to be in breach of the good taste and decency and children's interest standards. The complainant thought the promo was vulgar, crass and should not have been screened during children's viewing times.

The Authority declined to uphold the complaints that this was in breach of standards relating to good taste and decency and children's interests because the footage was relatively inexplicit (all the women were clothed, one was wearing a bikini top) and was not salacious; and the content was not unsuitable for child viewers under the guidance of an adult and did not contain any material that warranted a higher classification.

Of the five clips, the complaint against the Real life promo clip was the one that drew the strongest criticism, with **24 of the 31 participants wanting to uphold** the complaint.

- Initially, a number of people found themselves judging the choices the women made (or the objectification of women that triggered this behaviour), rather than the decision of the broadcaster to screen the promo during the News. *"It's degrading of women. Utterly (European, female)".*

Nevertheless, participants were **unhappy that the Board** declined to uphold the complaint:

- They disagreed that the content was not unsuitable for child viewers under the guidance of an adult . especially as no PGR rating was provided.
- In terms of the good taste and decency standard, there was some disagreement that the promo was not salacious.

### Main issues regarding the clip

Initial comment on the clip typically revolved around the role of society in making women think extreme breast enlargements was an inspiring choice. However, participants were reminded that it was not the women's behaviour that was to be judged, rather the screening of the promo during the News. Further prompting revealed a number of issues:

- The lack of warning
- Timing
- Salacious editing
- Wording at beginning of the promo.

1. The lack of warning - The programme was shown during the News when people of all ages might be watching and no-one was given any warning of the content. Nevertheless, children would be unlikely to be watching the News on their own, meaning parents would be there to discuss any issue that arose with the children. However, the lack of warning took control away from the parents of being able to exercise their right to censor what their children viewed:

*I didn't realise it was when the News was on which I think is you know... we always sort of watch the News in the kitchen while we're making dinner and the kids are at the table doing their homework or whatever. My 10year old would probably just think it was funny, and he's a boy and so, actually I shouldn't say that, so it doesn't worry me... but if it was a 10year old girl watching it, I might feel a bit different. My 4year old daughter would probably just go, but as it said in the actual ad, it's not the inspiration you'd want for your kids, yet they're sitting there watching it. (European, female)*

*Why would TV1 want to advertise that? We actually saw that - my children and husband were having dinner and that was on. I was trying to turn it over, it was too late they caught a glimpse of it, it's outrageous. You could advertise that at 8.30/9.30/10.30pm, but during, kids are still there, like I said we were a family eating and watching the News (European, female)*

*And I think most children don't tend to watch the News on their own, so they're going to be there with adults so you know, you do have that sort of screen (European, male)*

2. Timing . Given the programme had an AO 9:30 rating, the promo should not have screened at 6:40pm. The issue again was due to children being exposed to content that participants felt was of an adult nature:

*It's a show that is obviously, definitely strictly adults only being at 9:30, yet they've shown the ad for it, when children would be quite likely watching (European, male)*

*Yeah I'd have no problem with that as if it was played at night, but you know after 8:30 (European, male)*

*I mean, the one thing is the timing especially at 6:40, even the promo showing too much off the pictures was not a good time, and if it was a late time no problem (Asian, male)*

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*Yeah well as a parent, it's not the kind of curiosity that you want to incite in your children, and you can just imagine them straight away starting to ask questions, you know why, why do those women have such big boobs you know mum, and then do you, you don't want to engage in that kind of logical rational so all that you can possibly do is shut it down, nip it in the bud and say ah don't worry about that it's just all silly. Forget about it and immediately distraction (Pasifika, female)*

3. Salacious editing - In addition to issues with timing, several women took exception to the editing of the programme, which they felt was titillating and flippant, undermining the factual nature of the programme:

*I think the promo's just done a couple of things I didn't like, I think it's taking certain clips out, out of context, strung them all together to get your attention, and so and just put together it's just really distasteful so it was like breasts on the table, was like sitting on a table is similar, just that snip of that and then him fondling her, out of the context of maybe the whole conversation that was leading up to that. (European, female)*

*It could have been, yeah the editing, well say the editing yes, yes (European, female)*

*I thought the tone of it was a bit flippant and putting women down a bit (European, female)*

*They could have shown different shots of the actual, because it was actually a documentary which was, I actually watched it, which was weird ... The women were like hardly wearing anything and they could have shown them in more, for the promo it didn't have to be quite so graphic. They could have made it look like a documentary. (European, female)*

*The way the promo was shown it was abusive, it took something completely away from them. It violated, absolutely 'sense of decency', but on the other hand it seemed to be building into this thing of this is something that people can do to themselves. (European, female).*

4. A few women also took exception to the first line of the promo: "inspiration for thousands of women", and the fact that it was sending the wrong message to young girls who would be accidentally exposed to the content:

*I mean that first line, "inspiration for thousands of women"... why should children be, like why should children be taught, or have, be exposed to that ... You're mature enough to deal with it, I'm talking about, I mean that's on at the time when kids are you know, 7, 8 year old girls, 9, 10 you know (European, female)*

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Given the number of participants who wanted the complaint upheld, the decision of the Board to decline upholding the complaint met with general surprise and derision:

*That's the worst result out of all of those that I've heard (European, female)*

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## Clip Five (The Edge Morning Show – 2012-004)

### Synopsis

*That's kind of what I got from it, that it was one of the members there was actually gay, and it was done in banter so I guess it's in bad taste for me rather than being offensive... No because I don't think it was a deliberate put down, I don't think it was a nasty malicious put down (European, female)*

A complaint was made under section 8(1B)(b)(i) of the Broadcasting Act 1989 that the reading out of a listener's text message on the Edge Morning show (Dom, your song was so gay I'm pretty sure I just got AIDS from listening to it) breached the standards of good taste and decency, accuracy and discrimination and denigration standards. The complainant felt the term gay in this context was derogatory and the implication that AIDS was a gay disease was offensive, ignorant and blatantly homophobic.

The Authority declined to uphold the complaint against all named standards because given contextual factors such as the target audience and their expectations of content on The Edge, the potential harm to listeners did not outweigh the broadcaster's right to freedom of expression; the programme was not a news, current affairs or factual programme to which the accuracy standard applied; and the content of the text message was directed at the host's song and not against homosexuals as a section of the community.

A total of 19 of the 31 participants indicated they wanted to uphold the complaint.

- The clip elicited the least amount of comment of the five shown to participants
- Concern about children's accidental exposure to the clip was relatively low compared to the other clips.

In summary, **opinion was split** on whether the Board should have upheld the complaint in terms of the good taste and decency standard, since content on the Edge was expected to be slightly offensive:

- Consistent with the complainant, the target issue was the reading out of the text which mentioned AIDS, but opinion ranged from mildly amused to moderately offended
- No participant said they would have complained.

**Main issues  
regarding the  
clip**

Opinion was divided, with a range of comments elicited by the clip. People found the conversation:

- mildly amusing, and typical of the Edge
- slightly distasteful and facile
- moderately offensive and derogatory
- took things too far.

1. No issue - A number of participants didn't really feel there was an issue or actually found it mildly funny. The content was typical of that on The Edge Morning show and represented the way people talked. If people didn't like the channel, they shouldn't be listening to it.

*I struggled to, I didn't really have a specific view myself (European, female)*

*I reckon it was funny (Maori, male)*

*I think if people listen to that sort of radio programme that's what you get. If you don't like it turn it off (European, female)*

*I think radios also like an idea of what general conversation is about, I guess. You know it's not saying it over and over and over again (European, female)*

*Well that's the whole thing if you know what the Edge is like then your whole family probably wouldn't be listening to it. It was in bad taste and it was really insensitive, but whether it actually breaches that, I could think of other things that are much worse in bad taste, that weren't upheld (Asian, female)*

2. Simply distasteful . Others, although disliking the banter, would not have complained, but would have been happy if the complaint was upheld:

*I felt it distasteful, but I wouldn't have, I wouldn't like I don't really, I mean it's not funny and it's not like, I think it's a bit disrespectful to people, especially people who may have aids or are HIV positive who aren't gay. Because it's not the only way to contract it, so for that reason I find it distasteful but I wouldn't have bothered making a complaint, but I would uphold a complaint, does that make sense? (European, female)*

*I don't know for me, I would uphold it, but I wouldn't complain because they've had much worse things on there really. You know and it's all been blown up on the current affairs shows, but nothing has actually ever happened from that. Like 'hug a ginger day' and gingers aren't getting bullied and kicked at school you know. It's hard but, I'd say I'm not surprised from that radio station (European, male)*

3. Offensive and derogatory . a few participants found the entire conversation to be derogatory - sanctioning the conversation was to contribute to the slippery slope of degrading quality in the media:

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*Just because they're laughing and having a joke and saying at the same time doesn't make it right. In fact there are a lot of drongos out there who would think it's ok in other contexts (European, female)*

*It was derogatory is the way it's used, in a very derogatory way (European, female)*

*I think that's a really big question is because if they are always in the gutter, does it make it okay that they are publicly broadcasting in the gutter? And as you say you're accidentally going through and you get this earful of offensive stuff that you can't stop and yet they are right there in your private space, in your car, your home. They have invaded your space with this offensive stuff because it's out there in the public (European, female)*

4. % I nearly got AIDS just listening to it+. although not personally relevant, some participants felt that reading out the comment about AIDS took things too far and trivialised a tragic condition:.

*Just the comment, you've got aids, about being gay. I mean I would have laughed but I think they would have upheld it... Yeah I think it's because people die from that and stuff, so it's probably a lot that actually have aids. (European, male)*

*It wasn't so much the gay comments, but more the AIDS comments (Maori, male)*

*I wouldn't have thought they would complain on the gay usage but the AIDS thing is the thing that was insensitive and mean (Asian, female)*

*I think it's just that one comment, 'so gay I got AIDS', it's just you know over the top. The rest of it's just banter and kind of borderline amusing, but that particular thing, I think is offensive (European, male)*

*I've never listened to the Edge before but I appreciate what sort of programme it is. It's like that's the sort of the humour you would expect. The offensiveness - like certain broadcasters, that's the way they actually promote themselves, but they took it too far, it went on, they developed it and they laughed about it too much and they added too many things like AIDS as well. (European, male)*

While participants were not particularly surprised by the Board's decision to decline the complaint, they would have also been supportive of it being upheld:

*I'm certainly not surprised and to that extent I can't say I'm disappointed. Because it was the outcome that I would have expected. They apply current norms that they've defined which I suppose is one of the reasons why we are here, to find what is the current norm of good taste. Personally if I applied my norm of good taste most of what's broadcast would not be broadcast. (European, male)*

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## Response to revised BSA decision formatting

### Response to the new BSA decision formatting

In response to previous feedback regarding the case summaries, the BSA altered the formatting to simplify them and make them easier to read.

- Participants were therefore able to compare the old formatting used in the Criminal Minds and Outrageous Fortune decisions with the new formatting used for the remaining three decisions.

Overall, response to the new formatting was very positive. Specifically:

- The language is easier to understand and less legalese. However, double negatives were noted as a point of confusion
- The use of questions as headings made it easier to delineate the different standards and made the decision more reader-friendly
- The summary at the end made for quick reading (which could be moved to the front of the document instead).

*I like the way this short version asks the question ... did the broadcast breach the standards of good taste and decency? Whereas that, in the long version, it's a bit more dry (European, female)*

*One looks like a legal document and the other is one the lay person can actually understand (European, female)*

*There were a lot of negatives in there, that the content was 'not suitable', and then 'not upheld' and I just, got bogged down in the negatives I think (European, female)*

While a few participants preferred the longer version since all the relevant information would be contained, most preferred the shorter format. Links could therefore be provided to assist with drilling down into more detail as required to understand a decision better.

- An example is the reasoning behind any orders that are made (e.g. the \$3000 fine to TVWorks Ltd for Outrageous Fortune). Thus while simplicity is important, the new format should make sure that rationale for punishment is available in some form (this may already be the case).
- Also, a couple of people liked the concept of being able to view similar decisions on the website so as to decide whether it would be worth making a complaint, or from a legal perspective of precedence (one participant was a lawyer). Again, links would be an appropriate means of cross-comparison.

*And why don't they just do a summary of their findings? You know on a short page and then click on the link and you get the full discussion (European, male)*

*Also if you just want to understand why they came up with an absurd decision, as they often do, there is no information here that tells you. But with this you can see the arguments from both sides, and they say well actually the broadcaster*

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*was right I shouldn't have complained, I can understand in the context that programme was fine. So for me I want the extra detail. (European, male)*

*I would have to say I definitely prefer the Binks one, firstly if you object to the result, you're certainly going to look to see if it was upheld or not, that's fine, it's not upheld so you leave it, but what if you want to appeal, want to go to the High Court? ... Secondly if you were going to make complaint and you want to actually see what other people have complained about in the past where they have been upheld and you want to use those as precedents - see which way the BSA is thinking - you need this information. (European, male)*

*I think the similar decisions, so they've said there's a previous decision with TVNZ, I think that's pretty interesting so you can go into that and see kind of that line where they are coming from. (European, male)*

There was some confusion over whether the longer case summaries reflected a more complicated case, and also whether the number of individuals named on the summary reflected the severity of complaint. However, this was only raised because participants were able to view the two versions together, and was not a reflection of preference.

In summary, the new formatting represents a **significant improvement** over the older formatting, containing the **right amount of information** and making the decisions **more accessible** to the general public.

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## Appendix I – Discussion Guide

**1. RESEARCH INTRODUCTION (2 MIN)** - Greetings, and brief explanation of topic . understanding broadcasting standards regarding television and radio. Gut feeling, fun, philosophical discussion, no right or wrong . important to accept that other people have different opinions from yourself

- Confidentiality, explanation and consent to record audio, video
- Introduce clients, timing, amenities
- Thank people for their participation

**2. TELEVISION/RADIO AND ME (5-10 MIN) –**

- What are the reasons we watch tv? What are we looking for (relaxation, to be informed, entertainment etc). Who do we usually watch it with, when and what are we also doing at the time?
- What kind of programmes/channels do you tend to watch/listen to, and why?
- Which, if any, do you avoid and why?

**3. BROADCASTING STANDARDS - General discussion (5-10 Min, depending on if this is the complainants group)**

Broadcasters in New Zealand have a code of practice and are responsible for maintaining standards in their programmes . The Broadcasting Standards Authority is the authority that oversees New Zealand's broadcasting standards and provides the public with a free, independent complaints service.

- Has anyone ever made a complaint, or gone to their website to get information?
  - If so, what were your impressions of the process?
  - If not, why not? Is it that they've never found anything offensive, or is the process difficult?

**4. INDIVIDUAL RESPONSE TO BSA DECISIONS (15 min)**

For the rest of our discussion tonight, I am going to show you clips of shows that people have made complaints to the BSA about. Some of the complaints were upheld (which means that the BSA agreed with the complainant and took action) and some were not upheld (which means the BSA did not agree that there had been a breach of the BSA standards).

There will be 5 clips all in a row. As we go through, I'd like you to jot down your gut feelings and thoughts. Please don't discuss them at this stage. *Hand out sheet 1*

- Think about who you might be watching it with, and at what time;
- Is it what you'd expect to see on that programme?

Then we'll go through each one, one at a time and spend a bit more time on each, then discuss whether it was acceptable that it was aired at that time and date.

*Show all five clips at once*

## **5. BROADCASTING STANDARDS – GOOD TASTE AND DECENCY (5 min)**

Broadcasting standards cover a number of different issues concerning what we watch on tv or listen to on the radio. In our discussion today, we will be covering just one of the standards – the good taste and decency standard.

**What I will show you now is the good taste and decency standard as it is written in the broadcasters code of practice**

SHOWCARD: The standard states that Broadcasters should observe standards of good taste and decency, The guidelines provided for this standard are: broadcasters will take into account current norms of good taste and decency bearing in mind the context in which any content occurs and the wider context of the broadcast e.g. programme classification, target audience, type of programme and use of warnings etc.

- What do you understand by this standard? *Probe on ease of understanding, use of language, amount of information, are there any questions?*

## **6. INDIVIDUAL JUDGEMENTS (80 min)**

*Show each of the five clips (rotated order) and leave time for them to write down their thoughts on each. Provide information regarding channel, programme, time and rating*

Think about the time it was viewed, and who might be viewing it at this time: *Hand out sheets 2-6 with the following questions*

- What are the specific issues you have (if any?). Give specifics
- What aspects do you think triggered the complaint?
- Would most people feel this way, or are you different from most?
- If you were in the BSA, would you have upheld this complaint (ie. do you agree that it breached the standard of Good Taste and Decency?)

Ok, now we are going to discuss these clips and then I will tell you what the BSA's decision was.

So, what was everyone's thoughts for clip 1?

- Who voted to uphold the complaint?
- What would we say about good taste and decency in relation to this clip? What were the things we were considering when making our decision?
- Where is the line in terms of good taste and decency?
- How do we decide this?
- Would your decision have been different if it was a different channel or a different time of day?

I will pass the BSA written response around and get you to read their decision.

- What are your initial responses?
- How clear and easy to understand was their decision? *Probe on relevance, amount of information, use of language*

- Where were the similarities and differences between the BSA's and your own decisions?
- Do you think this judgment reflects the attitudes of today's society? In what ways?

Now like you each to rate the presentation (how it was communicated) and the content of the BSA decision on a scale of 1-5 where 1 is very poor and 5 is excellent.

Think about how easy it was to understand, how relevant it was to you and how much information was provided.

- What were your scores, and why did you give them? *Probe on both content and presentation*
- What, if anything, could be improved?

Repeat for Clips 2-5

We're nearing the end of our discussion now. To wrap up, thinking about the decisions made by the BSA, and the way they were communicated, what is the one thing you'd like to say to them?

## Appendix II – Nielsen Quality Assurance

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### Quality Assurance

Nielsen is committed to the principles of Total Quality Management, and in 1995 achieved certification under the International Standards Organisation ISO 9001 code.

The company maintains rigorous standards of quality control in all areas of operation. We believe no other commercial research organisation in New Zealand can provide clients with the level of confidence in survey data that we are able to. Furthermore, Nielsen is routinely and regularly subjected to **independent external auditing** of all aspects of its survey operations.

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### ISO 9001

Nielsen is committed to the principles of Total Quality Management, and in 1995 achieved certification under the International Standards Organisation ISO 9001 code. In March 2007 Nielsen also adopted the standards specified in AS20252.

In terms of this project, all processes involved are covered by our ISO 9001 procedures. As part of these procedures, all stages of this research project (including all inputs/ outputs) are to be approved by the Project Leader.

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### Code of Ethics

All research conducted by Nielsen conforms with the Code of Professional Behaviour of the Market Research Society of New Zealand.

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## Appendix III – Company Information

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**Company Profile** Nielsen Corporation is the world's leading provider of market research, information and analysis to the consumer products and service industries. More than 9,000 clients in over 90 countries rely on Nielsen's dedicated professionals to measure competitive marketplace dynamics, to understand consumer attitudes and behaviour, and to develop advanced analytical insights that generate increased sales and profits.

The company provides four principal market research services:

### **Retail measurement**

Includes continuous tracking of consumer purchases at the point of sale through scanning technology and in-store audits. Nielsen delivers detailed information on actual purchases, market shares, distribution, pricing and merchandising and promotional activities.

### **Consumer panel research**

Includes detailed information on purchases made by household members, as well as their retail shopping patterns and demographic profiles.

### **Consumer Research**

Includes quantitative and qualitative studies that generate information and insights into consumers' attitudes and purchasing behaviour, customer satisfaction, brand awareness and advertising effectiveness.

### **Media measurement**

Includes information on international television and radio audience ratings, advertising expenditure measurement and print readership measurement that serves as the essential currency for negotiating advertising placement and rates. In addition, Nielsen markets a broad range of advanced software and modeling & analytical services. These products help clients integrate large volumes of information, evaluate it, make judgements about their growth opportunities and plan future marketing and sales campaigns.

As the industry leader, we constantly work to set the highest standards in the quality and value of our services, and the passion and integrity of our people bring to helping clients succeed.

Our professionals worldwide are committed to giving each of our clients the exact blend of information and service they need to create competitive advantage: The right information, covering the right markets, with the most valuable information management tools, all supported by the expertise and professionalism of the best market research teams in the industry.

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