

Case - Television Programme “Masked Rider The Next” (幪面超人 The Next) broadcast on the Cable Children Channel of Hong Kong Cable Television Limited (HKCTV) on October 30, 2010 at 7pm-9pm

A member of the public complained about the television programme “Masked Rider The Next”. The substance of the complaint was that the programme was terrifying to children and unsuitable for broadcast on the Children Channel.

BA’s Findings

In line with established practice, the Broadcasting Authority (BA) considered the complaint case in detail, including the recommendations of its Complaints Committee and the representations of HKCTV. The BA’s findings are set out below.

The BA noted that –

- (a) the programme under complaint was a Japanese feature film about three Masked Riders joining force to combat Shocker Riders and their organisation which planned to infest Japan by converting all humans into cyborgs. Its cinematic release was classified as Category IIB (Not Suitable for Young Persons and Children) under the Film Censorship Ordinance (Cap. 392) in 2008 for containing strong violence and shocking scenes; and
- (b) apart from violence and shocking portrayals, the film also contained sexual references.

The BA, having regard to the relevant facts of the case, considered that since the Cable Children Channel was a channel specifically targeting children, parents

would have a reasonable expectation that children could watch materials broadcast on this channel on their own. The programme under complaint, even with its fast-cutting shots and dim lighting, was violent and horrifying. The scenes of the bandaged woman, the decapitated man and his headless torso, the woman who was pushed down the stairs and had her face burnt, were unnerving and scary to children. The fact that the victims were human beings in daily life settings might also result in a stronger impact on children. The programme was in breach of paragraph 10 of Chapter 6 and paragraph 2 of Chapter 7 of the Generic Code of Practice on Television Programme Standards (TV Programme Code) governing violence and frightening scenes in programmes targeting children.

In respect of sexual references¹ in the film, the BA considered that the inclusion of sexual references in a programme targeting children was inappropriate. The programme was also in breach of paragraph 8 of Chapter 2 of the TV Programme Code which stipulates that nothing unsuitable for children should be shown on channels targeting children.

Decision

The BA considered that HKCTV, as a responsible licensee, should have been aware of the impact of unsuitable broadcast materials including violence and horror on the psychological development on children. The BA decided that HKCTV should be **warned** to observe more closely the relevant provisions in the TV Programme Code.

¹ There were portrayals of a teenage female student trying to embarrass a male teacher by standing on a desk and flipping her dress in front of him and the rest of the class teasing the teacher as a virgin; a female rider caressing her chest seductively in front of her enemy, saying that fighting with him would bring her orgasm.