



**Ad Standards** Community Panel  
PO Box 5110, Braddon ACT 2612  
P (02) 6173 1500 | F (02) 6262 9833

**AdStandards.com.au**

Ad Standards Limited  
ACN 084 452 666

## Case Report

<b>1. Case Number :</b>	<b>0119-21</b>
<b>2. Advertiser :</b>	<b>Activision Pty Ltd</b>
<b>3. Product :</b>	<b>Entertainment</b>
<b>4. Type of Advertisement/Media :</b>	<b>TV - On Demand</b>
<b>5. Date of Determination</b>	<b>12-May-2021</b>
<b>6. DETERMINATION :</b>	<b>Dismissed</b>

### ISSUES RAISED

AANA Code of Ethics\2.3 Violence

### DESCRIPTION OF ADVERTISEMENT

This TV On Demand advertisement is promoting Call of Duty and features scenes of explosions, shooting and a hellhound (a dog that also bursts into flames).

### THE COMPLAINT

A sample of comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:

*The game advertised is an M15+ video game with violent scenes that are not suitable viewing for children who are watching Lego masters.*

*Showing an ad for a ma15+ game during a family TV show*

### THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the complainant/s regarding this advertisement include the following:

*This ad was labelled "P18+", since the account holder watching the VOD at the time was over 18, the advert was displayed to them. We are unable to tell who is actually watching a VOD at a given time, only the age of the account holder.*



*We have since updated the filtering of these adverts to MA, which should prevent them from appearing in programs targeted at a younger audience, regardless of which account is watching at the time.*

*I hope that this resolves the complaint and that no further action will be required, however, if you do need anything further please let me know.*

## **THE DETERMINATION**

The Ad Standards Community Panel (the Panel) considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the AANA Code of Ethics (the Code).

The Panel noted the complainants' concerns that the advertisement features violent scenes which are inappropriate for viewing by children.

The Panel viewed the advertisement and noted the advertiser's response.

### **Section 2.3 Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not present or portray violence unless it is justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised.**

The Panel noted the Practice Note for this section of the Code which states:

*"In considering whether the violence or menace depicted in an advertisement is justifiable, the Community Panel may have regard to the audience of the advertisement. Graphic depictions of violence or a strong suggestion of menace have been found to present violence in an unacceptable manner especially when visible to a broad audience which includes children. For example, advertising for violent or horror movies, tv shows or video games should take care not to include images that give the impression that a character has just committed violence against someone (for example, a weapon with dripping blood), was the victim of violence (for example, freshly severed limbs) or is about to commit violence against someone (for example, gun aimed directly at a person or the viewer) where there is a broad audience which includes children."*

### **Does the advertisement contain violence?**

The Panel noted that the advertisement depicts multiple scenes which are representative of the story and game play of the video game. The Panel noted this included imagery of large canines on fire leaping towards someone, and someone swinging a weapon at another person. The Panel noted that although the consequences of these actions were not shown, the menace in the action would constitute violence.

### **Is the violence portrayed justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised?**



The Panel noted that the product being advertised was a violent video game, and that the scenes depicted in the advertisement were relevant to this.

The Panel considered that the violence in the advertisement was more suggestive than graphic. The Panel considered that although some viewers may find the footage frightening, the fleeting images meant that the overall impact of the violence was mild.

The Panel noted that some members of the community would prefer that video games with an MA15+ rating were not advertised at times when people under 15 can see them, however noted that such games may be legally advertised and the content of the advertisement itself was not explicit or inappropriate for a broad audience.

The Panel acknowledged the advertiser's response that they had changed the targeting of the advertisement so that it would only play during MA rated programming.

Overall, the Panel considered that the level of violence in the advertisement was mild and justifiable in the context of advertising a violent video game.

### **Section 2.3 conclusion**

In the Panel's view the advertisement did portray violence that was justifiable in the context of the product being advertised and did not breach Section 2.3 of the Code.

### **Conclusion**

Finding that the advertisement did not breach any other section of the Code the Panel dismissed the complaints.