

Notice of Sanction – Star China Media Limited

Type of case	Fairness and Privacy
Outcome	Financial penalty of £100,000
Service	CCTV News
Date & time	27 August 2013, 12:00 and 14 July 2014, 21:00
Category	Fairness and Privacy
Summary	Ofcom imposed a sanction for serious breaches of Rules 7.1 and 8.1 of the Broadcasting Code. Financial penalty of £100,000.

Introduction

CCTV News was renamed as China Global Television Network (CGTN) on 31 December 2016, and the service continued to operate under the same licence. The licence for the provision of the CGTN service was held by Star China Media Limited (“SCML” or “the Licensee”) until 4 February 2021 when the Licence was revoked by Ofcom.¹

The sanction related to the programmes, *China 24* and *News Hour*. *China 24*, a news programme, reported on the arrest of Mr Humphrey and included footage of him appearing to confess to a criminal offence. A follow up report was broadcast during *News Hour*, which reported on Mr Humphrey’s subsequent indictment for the offence and included footage of him apologising for having committed the offence.

In [Ofcom’s Adjudication](#) published on 6 July 2020 in Issue 406 of the Broadcast and On Demand Bulletin, Ofcom found that the programmes had breached Rules 7.1 and 8.1 of the Code.

Rule 7.1: “Broadcasters must avoid unjust or unfair treatment of individuals or organisations in programmes”.

¹ Ofcom revoked the Licence under section 238(4) of the Communications Act 2003 (the “2003 Act”) and Condition 28(2)(a) of the Licence on the basis that SCML had ceased to provide the CGTN service and, in the circumstances, it was appropriate to revoke the Licence. The reasons for Ofcom’s decision are set out in the [Notice of Revocation](#).

Rule 8.1: “Any infringement of privacy in programmes, or in connection with obtaining material included in programmes, must be warranted”.

The Adjudication set out the specific reasons as to why Ofcom upheld the complaint of unfair treatment and unwarranted infringement of privacy in connection with the obtaining of material included in the programmes and the programmes as broadcast.

In accordance with Ofcom’s penalty guidelines, Ofcom decided that it was appropriate and proportionate in the circumstances to impose a financial penalty of £100,000 in respect of these serious Code breaches (payable to HM Paymaster General).

The [full sanction decision](#) was published on 8 March 2021.