

Ofcom Broadcast and On Demand Bulletin

Issue 436
11 October 2021

Notice of Sanction – Loveworld Limited

Type of case Broadcast Standards

Outcome Financial penalty of £25,000

Service Loveworld Television Network

Date & time 11 February 2021, 17:00
12 February 2021, 11:00

Category Material misleadingness
Harm

Summary Ofcom imposed a sanction for serious, repeated and reckless breaches of the Broadcasting Code for misleading and potentially harmful content in relation to the Coronavirus pandemic and vaccination rollout. Financial penalty of £25,000.

Loveworld Television Network (“Loveworld”) is a religious channel broadcast on satellite in the UK. The licence for Loveworld is held by Loveworld Limited (“LL” or “the Licensee”).

This sanction related to two episodes of *Full Disclosure*, a current affairs programme, broadcast on 11 February 2021 at 17:00 and 12 February 2021 at 11:00. Ofcom’s investigation found that the programmes contained materially misleading and potentially harmful statements about the Coronavirus pandemic and vaccine rollout, including but not limited to, the following:

- repeated assertions were made that having a vaccine is equivalent to being infected with the live Coronavirus, and that catching Coronavirus was as safe, and could even potentially be safer, than receiving a vaccine;
- that there had been a number of serious side effects or medical complications from taking a Coronavirus vaccine, including that a pregnant woman had a miscarriage “*within hours or within days*” of taking a vaccine;
- that alternative treatments for the Coronavirus were available but were being deliberately withheld from UK patients for financial reasons;
- that young people “*are not affected*” by the Coronavirus; and

- that in Wales, Coronavirus “*was not even in the top ten biggest killers in the country*”.

In [Ofcom’s Decision](#) published on 19 April 2021 in Issue 424 of the Broadcast and On Demand Bulletin, Ofcom found that the programme had breached the following rules of the Broadcasting Code:

Rule 2.1: “Generally accepted standards must be applied to the content of television and radio services...so as to provide adequate protection for members of the public from the inclusion in such services of harmful and/or offensive material”.

Rule 2.2: “Factual programmes or items or portrayals of factual matters must not materially mislead the audience”.

The 19 April 2021 Decision set out the specific reasons as to why Ofcom found the programme to be in breach of the Code. Given the seriousness of the breaches and in order to remedy the potential harm to viewers as quickly as possible, Ofcom directed the Licensee not to repeat the programme and to broadcast a statement of Ofcom’s findings. Ofcom also said it would consider imposing a further sanction in addition to the direction.

In accordance with Ofcom’s penalty guidelines, Ofcom subsequently decided that in addition to the above steps, it was also appropriate and proportionate in the circumstances to impose a financial penalty of £25,000 in respect of these serious, repeated and reckless Code breaches (payable to HM Paymaster General).

The [full sanction Decision](#) was published on 6 October 2021.