

Broadcast and On Demand Bulletin

Issue 553, 7 September 2026



Toofan

Type of case	Broadcast Standards
Outcome	In Breach
Service	NTV
Date & time	29 May 2026, 11:30
Category	Scheduling
Summary	Ofcom's Decision is that a film containing violence was not appropriately scheduled. In breach of Rule 1.3 of the Broadcasting Code.

Introduction

NTV is a free-to-air satellite television channel broadcasting a range of genres, including news, current affairs, religious and entertainment programming. It is aimed at the Bangladeshi community in the UK, and broadcasts in several languages including Bengali and English. The licence for the service is held by International Television Channel Europe Limited ("ITCE" or "the Licensee").

Ofcom received a complaint about the broadcast of the 2024 Bengali language film, *Toofan* broadcast on Friday 29 May 2026 at 11:30. The complaint raised concerns that the film was inappropriately scheduled as it included "gruesome brutally bloody stabbing and beheading violence" and without any warning or mandatory pin requirement.

Toofan is a 1990s-set action thriller which has been classified as "15" by the British Board of Film Classification ("the BBFC"), which described it as featuring scenes of "brutal violence and bloodshed, chaotic shootouts and crunchy fight scenes"¹. The complaint raised concerns that scenes of "gruesome brutally bloody stabbing and beheading violence", was inappropriately broadcast, given that it was shown at 11:30 on a Friday.

¹ See: <https://www.bbfc.co.uk/release/toofan-q29sbgvjdgvlbjpwwc0xmdiymjq1>.

The film, which appeared to be unedited included frequent scenes of violence and death, in particular bloody injury detail including:

At 11:33, a scene showed a mass shooting, including shots of a character using a large machine gun to kill multiple people in a mass shooting. This scene was then repeated at 13:41;

- At 12:24, a scene showed fatal violence, including a man being stabbed to death and another man being beheaded with a machete. This was followed by a shot of the decapitated head being carried by the killer;
- At 13:28, a scene showed a man being choked to death during a wrestling match; and
- At 13:44, a scene showed multiple people being assassinated.

We considered this raised potential issues under the following rule of the Ofcom Broadcasting Code (“the Code”):

Rule 1.3: “Children must...be protected by appropriate scheduling from material that is unsuitable for them...”.

Rule 2.3: “In applying generally accepted standards broadcasters must ensure that material which may cause offence is justified by the context...Such material may include, but it is not limited to, offensive language, violence...humiliation, distress, violation of human dignity, discriminatory treatment or language...Appropriate information should also be broadcast where it would assist in avoiding or minimising offence”².

Ofcom therefore requested comments from the Licensee on how the programme complied with these rules.

Response

The Licensee said that it “sincerely apologise[d]” for the content broadcast adding that it conducted an internal investigation and established that the issue “resulted from an unintentional error by our newly appointed programme scheduler”. It said that steps had been taken to address the issue and to help ensure that a similar error does not occur in the future.

The Licensee said that it “fully understand[s] and appreciate[s] the importance of complying with Ofcom’s rules” and are “committed to adhering to its rules”. The Licensee further added that it could assure Ofcom that it has taken “appropriate steps to prevent any recurrence”.

In addition to the action taken in relation to the programme scheduler, the Licensee said that it had “arranged refresher training on Ofcom compliance” for their team and reinforced the importance of “giving Ofcom’s regulations the highest priority in our day-to-day operations”.

² Ofcom initially sought comments from the Licensee under Rule 2.3 (Offence) of the Broadcasting Code. However, after careful consideration of the editorial context in which the violence appeared, we decided that the material was sufficiently contextualised within the film and did not pursue the investigation further under Rule 2.3.

Finally, the Licensee apologised again and said that it would be grateful if Ofcom “would consider this matter resolved without the need for any further action”.

In response to Ofcom’s Preliminary View, the Licensee reiterated that it had taken “robust steps” since then to ensure that such “unintentional mistakes” did not recur.

Decision

Reflecting our duties under the Communications Act 2003, Section One of the Code requires that people under eighteen are protected from unsuitable material in programmes.

Ofcom takes account of the audience’s and the broadcaster’s right to freedom of expression as set out in Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights, when considering a broadcaster’s compliance with the Code.

Rule 1.3

Rule 1.3 requires broadcasters to ensure that children are protected from the broadcast of material that is unsuitable for them by scheduling content appropriately. Appropriate scheduling is judged by a number of factors including: the nature of the content; the time of broadcast; and likely audience expectations.

Ofcom first considered whether the material in this case was unsuitable for children. As set out in the introduction, the film is an action film about the entanglement of an actor with a feared gangster and his criminal empire. The film included frequent graphic scenes of violence, including mass shootings, the beheading of a man, including a shot of the killer carrying the severed head, and a man being choked to death. Ofcom considered that, given the graphic scenes of violence as described above was unsuitable for children.

We then considered whether the material had been appropriately scheduled.

Ofcom took into account the 2023 research on [Audience Attitudes to Violence and Sexual Content on Television](#), which stated that violence in post-watershed programming had become increasingly graphic, intense and realistic, with participants viewing depictions of lethal violence, weapon use, serious beatings and other previously taboo forms of violent behaviour as the norm, embedded within mainstream television content.

However, in assessing whether the material had been appropriately scheduled, Ofcom also took into account findings from the same research, which indicated that participants felt strongly about the “perceived need to protect children from content they may not be ready to process, as well as fears about glamorising and normalising violent behaviour for both children and susceptible adults”. The research also found that audiences continued to regard the watershed as an important and effective means of protecting children from potentially harmful material and assisting parents in managing children’s viewing. Participants considered that the watershed played a significant role in helping parents ensure that television watched in the home, including content viewed incidentally or in the background, was suitable for children. The research further found that parents expected graphic and realistic depictions of violence to be broadcast post-watershed and relied on broadcasters to provide information about programme suitability through content warnings. They expected such warnings to indicate not only the presence of violence but also its severity, using terms such as “graphic” or “explicit”.

Additionally, Ofcom took into account its 2021 [Minority Ethnic Audience Research](#) which found that ethnic minority audiences considered that broadcasters should provide warnings and signposting and “use the watershed to protect children under 18”.

In our view, the film contained frequent and sustained graphic violence in the film, including mass shootings, decapitation, and other scenes of graphic violence which required careful scheduling to protect children. We took into account that the British Board of Film Classification (“BBFC”) had classified the film as “15”, indicating that it was not suitable for viewers under the age of 15. While we acknowledged that audiences were increasingly accepting of graphic, intense and realistic violent content in post-watershed programming, Ofcom considered that the repeated depictions of killings and injury were unsuitable for daytime viewing. We therefore, considered that the material had not been appropriately scheduled.

We acknowledged the Licensee’s representations that the scheduling error had “resulted from an unintentional error by our newly appointed programme scheduler”. However, we took into account that the film had been broadcast at 11:30, well before the watershed without any warning or signposting that could have alerted parents. Additionally, we noted that it was broadcast during the three-day Eid-ul-Adha celebrations, when many Muslim families and communities gather to celebrate together, increasing the likelihood that children could have been watching in the audience.

We acknowledged the Licensee’s explanation of the circumstances that had led to the scheduling error in the broadcast of this film, as well as the steps it had taken since then to avoid recurrence. However, Ofcom’s Decision is that the broadcast of the film was not appropriately scheduled so as to protect children from this unsuitable material, and therefore breached Rule 1.3 of the Code.

Breach of Rule 1.3 of the Code.