

## Movie trailers on TV: recent ASB decisions

The [Advertising Standards Board](#) has made 8 decisions (or Determinations) related to trailers for cinema films between July and October this year. The complaints lodged with the ASB related to the screening of trailers for M or MA15+ movies on free- to- air TV, and all except one related to programs screened before 8.30pm. Two of the complaints were about trailers seen in early evening programs replayed using On Demand.

This level of complaint to the ASB about film trailers (and for some trailers there were multiple complainants) seems high. Few however were upheld (3 cases out of 8).

### Summary of the cases

Case no.	Distributor	Film	Classification	Determination
0298/17	Sony	<i>Rough night</i>	MA15+	dismissed
0363/17	Roadshow	<i>Annabelle 2</i>	MA15+	dismissed
0369/17	Universal	<i>Girls' trip</i>	MA15+	upheld
0383/17	Sony	<i>Dark Tower</i>	MA15+	dismissed
0384/17	Roadshow	<i>It</i>	MA15+	dismissed
0408/17	Roadshow	<i>It</i>	MA15+	upheld (On Demand)
0433/17	Sony	<i>Flatliners</i>	M	upheld (On Demand)
0443/17	Sony	<i>Flatliners</i>	M	dismissed

In making its decisions the ASB takes into account, the advertiser's response to the complaint (which usually includes reference to the classification given to the trailer by the Commercials Acceptance Division (CAD) of Free TV Australia); the context in which the trailer was shown; and relevant Codes of practice including the Australian Association of National Advertisers (AANA) Codes.

The ASB frequently quoted Clause 2.3 of the [AANA Code of Ethics](#) in its decision to dismiss many of the complaints about levels of violence in these trailers. This Clause reads "Advertising or marketing communications shall not present or portray violence unless it is justifiable in the context of the product or service".

ACCM has a range of concerns about the above decisions by the ASB. These include the reliance on Clause 2.3 to assess the trailers for violent movies, the apparent lack of child development expertise with which to judge whether trailers will impact children ; and further why the ASB is making Determinations about the placement of trailers, when this would appear to be the responsibility of Free TV Australia and the ACMA.