

Editorial Code of the SABC

The Board and Management of the SABC have affirmed their commitment to the principle of Editorial Independence and to an Editorial Code of Ethics. For the purpose of this Code, it is understood that the authority for editorial decisions vests in the editorial staff.

* We shall report, contextualise, and present news honestly by striving to disclose all essential facts and by not suppressing relevant, available facts, or distorting by wrong or improper emphasis.

* We shall be aware of the danger of discrimination being furthered by the media, and shall do our utmost to avoid promoting such discrimination based on gender, race, language, culture, political persuasion, class, sexual orientation, religious belief, marital status, physical or mental disability.

* We shall evaluate information solely on merit, and shall not allow advertising, commercial, political or personal considerations to influence our editorial decisions.

We shall respect the legitimate rights to privacy of individuals and shall do nothing which entails intrusion into private grief and distress unless justified by overriding considerations of public interest.

* We shall take due care and be sensitive in the presentation of brutality, violence, atrocities and personal grief.

* We shall seek balance through the presentation as far as possible of relevant viewpoints on matters of importance. This requirement may not always be reached within a single programme or news bulletin but should be achieved within a reasonable period.

* We shall prevail on news merit and judgement in reaching editorial decisions. Fairness does not require editorial staff to be unquestioning, or the Corporation to give all sides of an issue the same amount of time.

* We shall be enterprising in perceiving, pursuing and presenting, issues, which affect society and the individual, in serving the public's right to know.

* We shall be free from obligation to any interest group and shall be committed to the public's right to know the truth.

* We shall not accept gifts, favours, free travel, special treatment or privileges, which may compromise our integrity and any such offer shall be disclosed.

* We shall identify ourselves and our employers before obtaining any information for broadcast. As a general rule, journalism should be conducted openly. Covert methods must be employed only with due regard to their legality and to considerations such as fairness and invasion of privacy, and whether the information to be obtained is of such significance as to warrant being made public but is unavailable by other means.

* We shall not disclose confidential sources of information.

* We shall do our utmost to correct timeously any information broadcast and found to be prejudicially inaccurate.

* We shall foster open dialogue with our viewers and listeners, as we are accountable to the public for our reports.

* Legal and policy framework for broadcast news