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| <b>COMPLAINT NUMBER</b> | 18/115                    |
| <b>COMPLAINANT</b>      | R Collins                 |
| <b>ADVERTISER</b>       | Madman Films              |
| <b>ADVERTISEMENT</b>    | Madman Films, Out of Home |
| <b>DATE OF MEETING</b>  | 17 April 2018             |
| <b>OUTCOME</b>          | No Grounds to Proceed     |

**Advertisement:** The movie poster for the film The Death of Starlin shows a line-up of the 5 main characters in the film and a funeral scene. It has star ratings from The Guardian and Empire Magazine movie reviewers with an Empire review quote “Absolutely Hilarious.”

**The Chair ruled there were no grounds for the complaint to proceed.**

**Complainant, R Collins, said:** The currently running film "The Death of Stalin" is advertised as a hilarious comedy. It shows the brutal end of the Stalin era, the violent power play for leadership after Stalin's death execution and the burning of a body and shovelling of its ashes up afterwards.

It shows people being lined up and shot with blood splattered walls.

It this now hilarious comedy?

**The relevant provisions were Code of Ethics - Basic Principle 4, Rule 4, Rule 5;**

**The Chair** noted the Complainant's concern the advertisement made light of the movie's serious subject matter by promoting it as hilarious comedy.

The Chair noted the reference to the word 'hilarious' on the advertisement was a quote from a review of the film by Empire magazine and as such is the opinion of the reviewer.

The Chair said the film about the death of Stalin, the brutal dictator of the Soviet Union, and the chaotic political manoeuvring that followed was a satirical black comedy which used humour to portray a serious underlying political message.

She noted the Oxford Dictionary's definition of satire was “the use of humour, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose and criticise people's stupidity or vices, particularly in the context of contemporary politics and other topical issues.”

While acknowledging that this type of humour may not be everybody's taste, the Chair ruled the advertisement was unlikely to cause serious or widespread offence taking into account generally prevailing community standards.

Therefore, the Chair ruled the advertisement had been prepared with a due sense of social responsibility to consumers and did not reach the threshold to breach Basic Principle 4 or Rules 4 and 5 of the Code of Ethics.

Accordingly, the Chair ruled there were no grounds for the complaint to proceed.

**Chair's Ruling:** Complaint **No Grounds to Proceed****APPEAL INFORMATION**

According to the procedures of the Advertising Standards Complaints Board, all decisions are able to be appealed by any party to the complaint. Information on our Appeal process is on our website [www.asa.co.nz](http://www.asa.co.nz). Appeals must be made in writing via email or letter within 14 days of receipt of this decision.