

BCCSA give thumbs up to "befok", "fokol"



By Herman Manson: @marklives

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The Broadcasting Complaints Commission of South Africa (BCCSA) has overturned an earlier decision that the word "befok" contravened the commission's code of conduct.

The initial complaint was filed after 5FM DJ Elana Afrika read the word from a SMS sent in by a listener responding to a discussion on the cost of a Bafana Bafana jersey that said, "For them to ask us that kind of money, hulle is befok."

Indeed they are. The commission found that the word "befok" is derived from Afrikaans slang and is used "to describe a number of things among them being things that are really good, exciting and cool e.g.: The rock show was befok. It can also mean crazy, mad, stupid and so forth e.g.: Are you befok? Colloquially the word is used quite commonly and is not regarded as crass or used as an expletive or an insult in Afrikaans, except maybe in more conservative sectors of Afrikaans society."

Not similar

The commission found that the term "befok" is not similar to the word "fuck" (from which the commission notes it is derived and which it considers "grossly offensive language"). The BCCSA points out that the code does not prohibit mere crudeness. A large number of kids must have made up a large part of the audience for it to be breached.

The commission notes it recently made a similar ruling after the word "fokol" popped up in a Koos Kombuis song played on RSG. At the time, the BCCSA held that "when using the word 'fokol' within the context of the Koos Kombuis song, it strikes one that the word is not used to invade dignity or to be derogatory of someone, but is primarily meant to illustrate despondency with what he regards as poor service."

Heard it elsewhere

It noted that kids old enough to understand the word would have heard it elsewhere already, be it on TV or on the playground.

For more, go to www.bccsa.co.za.

**Interestingly, the commission references a [list of Afrikaans slang on Wikipedia](#) in a move that is bound to enrage Bizcommunity.com's [befokte Canadian readership](#)...*

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The inaugural Vodacom Social Media Journalist of the Year in 2011, Herman Manson (@marklives) is a business journalist and media commentator who edits industry news site www.marklives.com. His writing has appeared in newspapers and magazines locally and abroad, including Bizcommunity.com. He also co-founded *Brand* magazine.

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