

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

8 December 2014

### **Accuracy complaint about opinion piece attacking Israel upheld**

The Broadcasting Standards Authority has upheld a complaint that a radio opinion piece criticising Israel's actions in the Israel-Hamas conflict breached the accuracy standard.

During Newstalk ZB's *KPMG Early Edition* broadcast on 1 August 2014, the host condemned Israel for targeting civilians, and stated that a recent bombing of a Palestinian school had 'killed every civilian inside'.

The BSA decision noted that other news coverage reported that up to 16 people were killed and 200 others injured in the bombing of the school, where 3,300 people were sheltering.

The broadcaster argued that the number of people killed in the school, 'makes no difference to the point that the host is making, that the attack was unacceptable'.

The BSA said that while the death of any number of people is a tragedy, it was a significant overstatement to say that all civilians sheltering at the school had been killed, when in fact, it was 16 of some 3,300 civilians sheltering in the school, who were killed. This difference was considered to be material, as the host used the incident to bolster her strong position against Israel's actions.

While hosts are entitled to express their opinions in editorials within news and current affairs programmes, they must ensure that if they make factual statements material to the issues discussed, these are accurate so that the audience is not misled, the decision said.

No order was made as the BSA deemed publication of the decision sufficient to remedy the breach and correct the inaccuracy.

**Ends**

The full decision is available at [www.bsa.govt.nz](http://www.bsa.govt.nz)

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