



ADJUDICATION NO: 18/A/2026

NAME OF PROGRAMME: PROMO

DATE AND TIME OF BROADCAST: 7 MAY BETWEEN 13:30 TO 13:40
23:00 TO 2:30

BROADCASTER: SABC UKHOZI FM

COMPLAINANTS: MAKHUBU

COMPLAINT

Complaint that a promo aired on Ukhozi FM used the religious term “Our Father” in a derogatory or disrespectful manner.

APPLICABLE CLAUSES

Clause 4 (1) of the Free-to-Air code of conduct:

Broadcasting service licensees must not broadcast material which, judged within context, sanctions, promotes or glamorises violence or unlawful conduct based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, or mental or physical disability.

ADJUDICATION

[1] A complaint was lodged with BCCSA against Ukhozi FM concerning a promotional segment featuring DJ Sphe.

[2] **The complaints read as follows:**

The use of the Religious name (Our Father) in the derogate manner on Thursday 07 May 2026 13:40 and 13:30. The promo played on Ukhozi FM I found to be an insult to God how can Dj Sphe have such as his nickname?

The Lord's Prayer

The Lord's Prayer, also called the Our Father, is found in Matthew 6:9-

4. (1) Broadcasting service licensees must not broadcast material which, judged within context, sanctions, promotes or glamorises violence or unlawful conduct based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, or mental or physical disability.

Exodus 20: **You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain**

[3] **The Broadcaster responded and the Complainant's reply (in bold) was follows:**

BCCSA COMPLAINT: MXOLISI MAKHUBU - UKHOZI FM - PROMO - 07.05.2026 - 13:30

With regard to the above-mentioned complaints, please find our comments as follows:

1. The phrases "Our Father" and "MaMkhulu" (*if one is looking at the same written Makhubu and decides to write something from his heart show how careless is the person*) referenced in the promo are longstanding nicknames associated with specific presenters. In the case of presenter Sphe Live, the nickname "Our Father" was bestowed by listeners several years ago and has since been widely used in his previous on-air roles and now has been adopted within the station's listener community.

It is careless statement to regard one month one week as longstanding in UKHOZI FM Bestowed by the listeners of which Radio Station? Is he still serving that radio station? If the masses serve something it does not mean it is correct.

2. The nickname stems from the presenter's consistent on-air conduct, which listeners perceive as caring, respectful, and nurturing. It is used in a figurative and affectionate sense, referencing a fatherly role or presence rather than invoking or referring to any religious doctrine, prayer, or sacred text.

In this instance it would be wise to support the statement with evidence, on the airwaves if I say once "Jesus wama 2k" then everyone calls me that after I said that once. The same radio station that is trying to justify the Our Father derogy name use it allowed the person called himself uJesus wa2k that show had no so much impact because it was on Saturday night it was esy not to listen to the show than reporting such matter the trend is becoming a culture.

3. Within the context of the broadcast, the phrase was not used in a derogatory, offensive, mocking, or irreverent manner toward religion, nor did it seek to trivialise or demean the Christian faith or the Lord's Prayer. The usage was descriptive and colloquial, aligned with common linguistic practices where terms such as "**father**" carry broader cultural and social meaning beyond strictly religious contexts.

Father as opposed to Our Father is not the same

4. Having assessed the content in its full broadcast context, we are of the view that the promo/sweep does not contravene the Broadcasting Code of Conduct, including provisions relating to the sanctioning, promotion, or glamorisation of harm or discrimination based on religion.

TRUE THE PROMO IS FINE THE PROBLEM IS HE NICKNAME "OUR FATHER" UKHOZI FM IS THE NATIONAL BROADCASTER THAT SERVE A LOT OF PEOPLE THAT DOES NOT USE ANY COMMUNICATION CHANNELS TO THE STATION TO VOICE THEIR UNSATISFACTION.

5. Nevertheless, the station acknowledges the sensitivity of religious references and remains committed to exercising due care in its programming to respect the diverse beliefs of its audience.

NEVERTHELES NYIKO SHIBAMBO YOU ARE PROMOTING THE USE OF THE NAME "OUR FATHER" AS THE JOKE IN THE PERSONAL AND SABC POSITION CAPACITY YOU TAKING SIDES INSTEAD OF LOOKING AT THE FACTS. PECEIVE AS CARING HAVE YOU DONE A SURVEY TO ORDINARY CITIZENS THE SAMPLE OF PEOPLE WHO ALWAYS CALL THE STATION IS FAR THAN 100 I HEAR ALWAYS SAME NAMES. I LISTEN TO THE SHOW ALMOST EVERYDAY I CAN LISTEN TO ANOTHER STATIONS FOR THIS SLOT THAT IS THE REASON WHY I AM COMPLAING I COULD HAVE SWITCHED TO OTHER STATION. I HAVE NOTICE ON FRIDAY THE PROM WAS NOT PLAYED THANK YOU."

EVALUATION

- [4] Having considered the complaint, the broadcaster's response and the context of the broadcast, I listened to the impugned promotional segment aired on Ukhozi FM. The issue before the commission is whether the use of the nickname "Our Father" in the promo constitutes a contravention of the Broadcasting Code, particularly in relation to material that may be offensive or disrespectful towards religious beliefs. The complainant argues that the phrase is inherently insulting to God and inappropriate for broadcast use, while the broadcaster maintains that it is a longstanding, listener generated nickname used in a figurative and non-religious sense.
- [5] The first step is to consider the nature and meaning of the expression in context. It is common in broadcasting for presenters to acquire nicknames through audience engagement. These nicknames usually reflect perceived personality

traits rather than being a literal description or meaning. In this case, the broadcaster submits that “Our Father” is intended as an affectionate reference to the presenter’s perceived caring or guiding presence, rather than any invocation of religious doctrine. While the complainant disputes the longevity and legitimacy of the nickname, there is no evidence that the term was used in a doctrinal or liturgical sense during the broadcast.

- [6] The question is whether the expression would reasonably be interpreted by an average listener as a mockery or trivialisation of the Lord’s Prayer in terms of the Christian faith. Although the phrase “Our Father” is strongly associated with Christianity, context is critical. The impugned content, as described, does not appear to have been used in a mocking tone, nor was it accompanied by comments targeting religion. The absence of explicit ridicule or derogatory framing of the term weighs against an intention to offend.
- [7] In assessing the alleged contravention I am guided by the provisions of the Code. The Code prohibits content that sanctions, promotes or glamorises harmful discriminatory conduct based, *inter alia*, on religion. In this matter, the material does not promote hostility toward Christians or any religious group, nor does it encourage discrimination. The complaint is therefore primarily based on perceived disrespect rather than demonstrable harmful conduct. While the broadcaster must be mindful of religious sensitivities in a diverse audience environment, the fact that the use of religiously resonant language in an entertainment context may cause concern for some listeners, does not necessarily establish a violation of the Code.
- [9] Furthermore, I am mindful that religious language carries significant meaning for many listeners and must be handled with care in broadcasting. However, the Code requires an objective assessment of whether material crosses the threshold into prohibited conduct, rather than whether it causes subjective

offence. On the facts before me, I am not persuaded that this threshold has been met.

- [10] Having assessed the content in its full context, I find that the use of the nickname “Our Father” in the impugned promotional material does not constitute a contravention of Clause 4(1) of the Broadcasting Code. The phrase is more appropriately understood as colloquial branding of the presenter rather than a reference to, or denigration of religious doctrine. **The complaint is therefore not upheld.**



SINENTLAHLA MBOKWE
COMMISSIONER: BROADCASTING COMPLAINTS COMMISSION