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ON MONDAY 14TH JULY

**Summary of Lewis Silkin LLP's Investigation
for Banijay Productions UK Limited**

14 July 2025

Overview

Lewis Silkin LLP was asked to investigate any allegations raised in relation to Gregg Wallace ("Mr Wallace") concerning his conduct during his tenure as a judge and presenter on programmes made by production companies now owned by Banijay Productions UK Limited ("Banijay"). The Investigation also considered: allegations against other people involved with these programmes, what policies and training were in place, and whether complaints had been raised in the past.

The investigation heard evidence from 78 witnesses, including 41 complainants. In the event, all of the allegations in respect of which findings were made were linked to the TV programme, MasterChef. For context, MasterChef is an unscripted programme, which brings Mr Wallace into contact with a very large number of contestants, who are a mixture of members of the public, professional chefs and celebrities. Mr Wallace's persona (often described as energetic, humorous, and generally able to put contestants at ease) contributed to the show's success. However, these interactions and some comments made within earshot of contestants or colleagues sometimes resulted in offence and/or left people feeling uncomfortable.

Allegations and findings

83 specific, in-scope allegations were made against Mr Wallace, the vast majority of which (94%) related to behaviour which was said to have occurred between 2005 and 2018.

Just over half of the allegations against Mr Wallace were found to be substantiated. The majority of the substantiated allegations against Mr Wallace related to inappropriate sexual language and humour, however, a smaller number of allegations of other inappropriate language and being in a state of undress were also substantiated. One incident of unwelcome physical contact was substantiated.

During the course of the investigation, Mr Wallace was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. The findings made should be viewed in the context of his neurodiversity.

10 standalone allegations were made against other people, 2 of which were substantiated.

Complaints, policies and training

11 complaints or concerns were found to have been raised about Mr Wallace's behaviour over the period from 2005-2024. Some of these issues were raised with the production company and some with the BBC. The majority of these were addressed informally.

The production company undertook an investigation into an allegation in 2015 and understood the complainant was happy with the outcome. The BBC intervened in response to a complaint in 2017, following which Mr Wallace was warned of the need to change his behaviour. Mr Wallace took steps to heed that warning.

Prior to 2016, there was limited information available to those working on the programme about standards of behaviour or complaints channels, and little training was provided. This has improved significantly since 2016 when the production company merged with Endemol, and since 2020 when it was acquired by Banijay UK.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document provides an overview of an investigation led by Karen Baxter, Partner and Head of Investigations at law firm, Lewis Silkin LLP, on behalf of Banijay Productions UK Limited ("**Banijay**"). Karen Baxter was supported in conducting the investigation by a team of specialist investigations lawyers from Lewis Silkin (the "**Investigation Team**").
- 1.2 The investigation was formally commissioned on 17 December 2024 and was prompted by allegations about Gregg Wallace ("**Mr Wallace**") which were reported in the national press in late 2024.
- 1.3 This summary provides a high-level overview of the investigation process and its conclusions insofar as they relate to the above. A detailed report has been provided to Banijay.
- 1.4 The Investigation Team's conclusions are limited to findings of fact; it was not asked to determine whether things should have been done differently or to make recommendations. Those are matters for Banijay and, where relevant, the BBC.

2 INVESTIGATION PROCESS

- 2.1 **Evidence Gathering:** Complaints were notified to the Investigation Team through various channels, including emails being sent to the dedicated email address for the Investigation Team; passed on via Banijay and/or the BBC and also by individuals contacting the Investigation Team directly. The Investigation Team also took proactive steps to contact several of the individuals who were identified in the press as having concerns in connection with Banijay programmes.
- 2.2 **Witnesses:** 78 people were interviewed (of which 41 were complainants, 29 were current or former employees of Banijay/the production company and 8 were current or former employees of the BBC).
- 2.3 **Other evidence:** the Investigation Team reviewed contemporaneous emails and documents, and, where relevant and proportionate to do so, unedited programme footage ("**rushes**"). The investigation also included a set visit to understand the working environment at MasterChef.
- 2.4 **Co-operation:** Banijay, its production companies and staff, and the BBC witnesses were co-operative with the Investigation Team throughout. Equally, Mr Wallace has been co-operative and forthcoming - he has been interviewed three times by the Investigation Team, amounting to more than 14 hours of interview.
- 2.5 **Confidentiality:** Many complainants were concerned about being identified and Banijay agreed that their names would not be shared by the Investigation Team. The Investigation Team took various steps to retain anonymity for all witnesses, including replacing witness names with a pseudonym and grouping allegations into one of three time periods (2005-2011, 2012-2018 or 2019-2024) to prevent identification of individuals.
- 2.6 **Standard of Proof:** Findings were made based on the civil standard of proof – i.e. on the balance of probabilities (not beyond all reasonable doubt).

3 MEDICAL INFORMATION

- 3.1 During the course of the investigation, Mr Wallace was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder and has shared relevant medical reports with the Investigation Team. Mr Wallace has agreed to the inclusion of this information in the report and in this summary.
- 3.2 Mr Wallace's neurodiversity diagnosis is considered highly relevant in the context of the findings made, particularly regarding his use of humour as a 'masking' technique and his difficulty in reading social cues. Mr Wallace accepts that his diagnosis may help to explain some of his actions, but he does not wish to hide behind it.

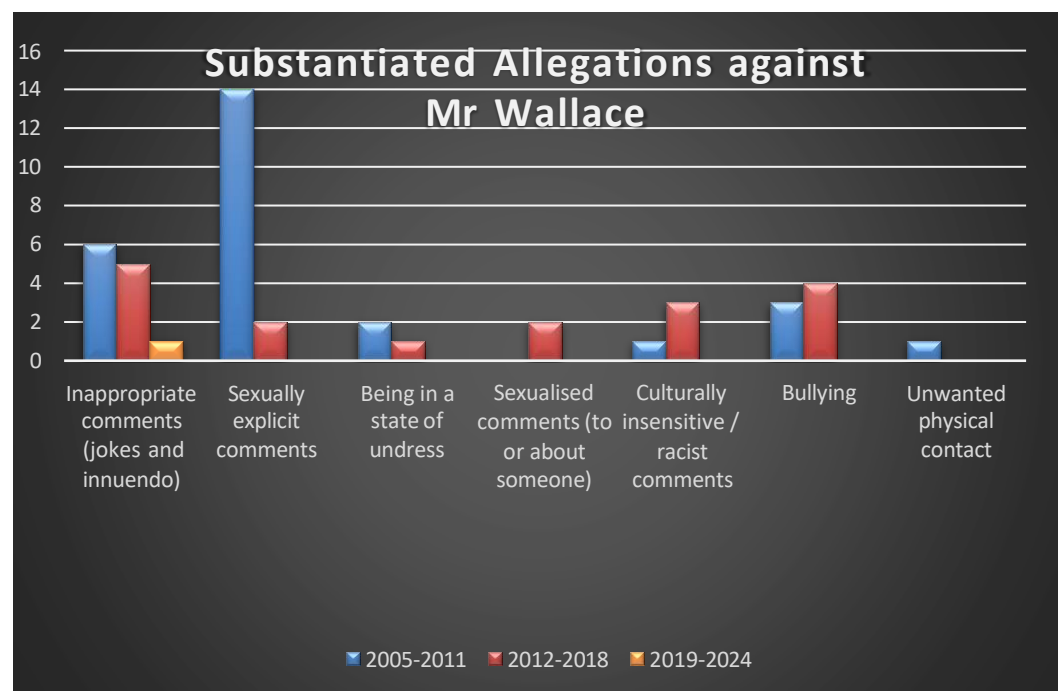
4 ALLEGATIONS: MR WALLACE

- 4.1 **Allegations:** 83 specific and in-scope allegations were raised against Mr Wallace. All of the allegations in respect of which findings were made related to events connected in some way to MasterChef.
- 4.2 **Categories:** Allegations against Mr Wallace were grouped into seven categories. The categories of allegations were:
- (a) Inappropriate comments (jokes and innuendo)
 - (b) Sexually explicit comments
 - (c) Being in a state of undress
 - (d) Sexualised comments made to or about someone
 - (e) Culturally insensitive / racist comments
 - (f) Bullying
 - (g) Unwanted physical contact
- 4.3 **Time periods:** Allegations against Mr Wallace were grouped into three time periods: 2005-2011, 2012-2018 and 2019-2024. The vast majority (94%) of the allegations made against Mr Wallace related to the earlier two periods of time: from 2005-2011 and from 2012- 2018.
- 4.4 **Points taken into consideration:**
- (a) MasterChef is an unscripted programme, which brings Mr Wallace into contact with a very large number of contestants, who are a mixture of members of the public, professional chefs and celebrities, depending on the series. Over the period of 2005-2024, Mr Wallace will have come into contact with over 2,500 individuals across all series.
 - (b) Mr Wallace was consistently described as energetic, humorous, and generally able to put contestants at ease, which contributed to the show's success. However, these interactions and some comments made within earshot of contestants or colleagues sometimes resulted in offence and/or left people feeling uncomfortable. Sometimes other people who were present laughed along. Occasionally these comments were called out in the moment by people who heard them, but very often they were not.
 - (c) As is common across the TV industry, most of the people working on MasterChef are freelance staff. Several witnesses spoke about their reluctance to complain because of the perceived instability of their roles.
 - (d) Many contestants spoke about feeling uncomfortable or offended by certain jokes made by Mr Wallace and/or his behaviour, yet they accepted that their reactions in the moment would not have conveyed this distress to him, or to others. In some instances, complainants described laughing in the moment due to awkwardness or

unease, rather than genuine amusement, which may have led others, including Mr Wallace, to believe they were unperturbed by the remarks. Witnesses who were contestants reported that the fact that they were being filmed at the time of the interactions, and their desire to do well in the competition, meant that they were unlikely to complain or allow their reactions to show.

5 FINDINGS: MR WALLACE

- (a) In relation to Mr Wallace, the Investigation Team found evidence which substantiated just over half of the 83 allegations against him; 45 in total.
- (b) The majority of the substantiated allegations against Mr Wallace related to inappropriate sexual language and humour, however, a smaller number of allegations of other inappropriate language and being in a state of undress were also substantiated. One incident of unwelcome physical contact was substantiated.
- (c) Further detail is provided in the graph below:



- (d) The overall conclusions in respect of the 83 allegations were as follows:

Time Period	Substantiated allegations	Insufficient evidence	Not substantiated
2005-2011	27	22	1
2012-2018	17	9	2
2019-2024	1	0	4
TOTAL	45	31	7

6 FINDINGS: OTHER INDIVIDUALS

- 6.1 10 standalone allegations were made about other people, in relation to the period from 2012 to 2018/2019. The Investigation Team found evidence which substantiated 2 of these allegations. Both of the substantiated allegations relate to inappropriate language (one of swearing and one of racist language). Of the remaining 8 allegations, 6 were classed as insufficient evidence and 2 as not substantiated.

7 FINDINGS: POLICIES AND REPORTING CHANNELS WITHIN THE PRODUCTION COMPANY

- 7.1 In the earlier years of the production company (pre-2016), there was little or no formal training or clear escalation procedures for reporting inappropriate behaviour for MasterChef production staff. The lack of awareness of any policies or formal reporting mechanisms prior to 2016 contributed to underreporting and normalisation of certain inappropriate behaviours.
- 7.2 In more recent years, and particularly since the MasterChef production company was merged with Endemol in 2016 and the Endemol Shine Group was acquired by Banijay in 2020, formal policies, regular training, and anonymous reporting lines have been introduced and are now more widely advertised. The Investigation Team has seen evidence of a substantially improved welfare system which is now in place, with steps taken proactively both during production and post-production so that issues can be identified and addressed.

8 FINDINGS: COMPLAINTS HANDLING

- 8.1 Whilst 19 people claimed to have made complaints or raised concerns about Mr Wallace while he was providing services on Banijay programmes, the Investigation Team only found evidence which substantiated 11 formal or informal complaints or concerns being made about Mr Wallace's behaviour in connection with MasterChef over the period from 2005-2024.
- 8.2 Of those 11 complaints or concerns, 8 of these were understood to be complaints or concerns when they were received. The remaining 3 matters were treated as comments or observations as opposed to complaints or concerns. As such, no further action was taken in relation to those 3 matters.
- 8.3 Of the 8 which were understood at the time to be complaints or concerns: 4 were raised to both the production company and with the BBC, 2 were raised only with the production company and 2 were raised only with the BBC. Further detail about what they related to and how they were dealt with is set out below:
- (a) The 8 complaints / concerns primarily related to inappropriate and/or sexually explicit language. None related to physical contact.
 - (b) 6 were raised to the production company. Of these:
 - (i) 1 (in 2015) resulted in an investigation and action was taken to ensure the complainant was satisfied with the outcome, albeit that Mr Wallace was not informed about the complaint; and
 - (ii) 5 complaints or concerns were addressed informally: 3 (2 in 2017 and 1 in 2023) resulted in follow-up discussions between the production company and Mr Wallace, 1 (in 2017) was not substantiated, and 1 (in 2024) resulted in follow-up discussions with the complainant.
 - (c) 6 were brought to the attention of the BBC (including 4 of the complaints or concerns referred to in paragraph 8.3(b) above). Of these:
 - (i) 2 were made directly to the BBC (in 2013 and 2014 respectively) and the BBC are understood to have responded to the complainants directly;
 - (ii) 3 were flagged to the BBC by the production company (1 in 2015 and 2 in 2017); these were noted by the BBC, and the BBC was satisfied with the production company's response; and
 - (iii) 1 was raised to the BBC (in 2017) as well as separately being raised to the production company (addressed above). There were discussions between the BBC and the production company. The BBC then took prompt steps to address this issue and arranged a meeting between the BBC, Mr Wallace and

his agent at which the standards of behaviour expected of him were made clear.

8.4 Overall, the Investigator found that:

- (a) when concerns were reported to the production company:
 - (i) there was a tendency to address the concern informally on a case-by-case basis and not therefore consider each issue as additive to any prior allegations or to matters which had been observed by senior members of staff;
 - (ii) there was a failure to retain records of any action taken, particularly in the earlier years between 2005-2011, with the result that the effectiveness of any action taken could not be assessed;
 - (iii) the escalation process at the production company had not been adequately communicated to enable individuals to understand the process to ensure that they had an opportunity to raise concerns at the time the incident occurred;
 - (iv) concerns were not always flagged to Mr Wallace, so he was not necessarily aware that his behaviour had caused offence;
 - (v) when addressed formally, issues were still not always raised clearly and directly with Mr Wallace, to the extent that he remained unaware of some, (although not all), of these concerns until the allegation arose in the press;
- (b) in relation to issues being advised to and/or handled by the BBC:
 - (i) the BBC was largely satisfied with the production company's response to the issues that had been raised with it;
 - (ii) there was no consolidated or central record of issues or concerns which had arisen in relation to Mr Wallace;
 - (iii) the 6th complaint (as referenced in 8.3(c) (iii)) was addressed more formally, but information relating to Mr Wallace's prior alleged behaviour was not fully communicated within the BBC. As a result, the 6th complaint was addressed as a 'first offence', albeit that prompt action was taken. At the time, the BBC made clear to Mr Wallace that this was a significant issue and that there was an expectation that his behaviour needed to be modified.

8.5 For completeness, after he received this message from the BBC, there is evidence which shows that Mr Wallace took some proactive steps to modify his behaviour, seek guidance from colleagues on his choice of language, and to remove himself from work-related social situations.

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