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BBC Removes John Torode Following Racial Language Finding

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The British Broadcasting Corporation has ended its contract with long-running MasterChef UK host John Torode after an external inquiry upheld claims he used an offensive racial term several years ago. Torode denies the accusation and insists he has no recollection of the alleged incident.

The Australian-born celebrity chef, who moved to the United Kingdom in the 1990s, has been a familiar face on British cooking programs for decades. According to the independent investigation conducted by British law firm Lewis Silkin on behalf of Banijay UK, the company producing MasterChef, Torode was accused of using a “highly offensive racist term” during a social setting around 2018 or 2019. Though the BBC has stressed it maintains zero tolerance for such language, critics have raised concerns about the broadcaster’s inconsistent handling of misconduct over the years.

Torode responded in a statement posted to his Instagram account, rejecting the claim and noting that even the investigation could not confirm the precise date or context of the remark. “I have no recollection of any of this, and I do not believe it happened,” Torode stated, emphasising that he apologised immediately if anything he said offended.

The termination follows swiftly on the heels of a separate controversy involving co-presenter Gregg Wallace, who faced allegations of sexual misconduct, inappropriate language, and other troubling behaviour. The Banijay UK inquiry substantiated 45 out of 83 claims against Wallace, concluding that his continued presence on the program was untenable. In a statement, Wallace acknowledged that some of his humour “missed the mark,” though he denied the most serious allegations and said he would consider further legal steps.

These developments have again spotlighted the British Broadcasting Corporation’s internal policies. A Banijay UK review found that complaints about Wallace’s behaviour had been raised as early as 2005 but were often treated as isolated incidents. Director-General Tim Davie admitted the broadcaster failed to act decisively in the past, describing the latest actions as “drawing a line in the sand” to enforce professional standards.

While some viewers will welcome the firm response, others are likely to see it as part of a broader pattern of institutional failures. With the BBC under growing scrutiny over how it manages long-standing workplace complaints, the departures of both presenters mark a significant shift in the network’s approach to accountability.