[RU] New Licensing Act Is Adopted

IRIS 1998-10:1/16

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Russian Parliament adopted a new licensing Act ("On Licensing of Certain Types of Activities"). From the moment of its entering into force, all regulation concerning licensing of any type of activity to be adopted by the Parliament or by the Government shall correspond to this act.

The Act enumerates activities on Russian territory, for which the licence is needed. These activities include: television and radio broadcasting; broadcasting of additional information (teletext); provision of services in the field of informational encoding; manufacture and distribution (except retail trade) of any phonograms and audiovisual products; public demonstration in cinema of any audiovisual products (exhibition of films). The main provisions of the Act are as follows: The maximum amount of licence fee cannot be more than the equivalent of 10 minimum monthly wages (approximately USD 55 as at the end of October). The term of licence cannot be less than 3 years, unless the licence seeker asks for a shorter term. The request for a licence shall be reviewed within 30 days (or less) from the moment of the official presenting of the request. The licensing bodies shall keep registers of issued licences, and those registers shall be open to the public. The licensing bodies can suspend the implementation of a licence, if there is a violation of the conditions (clauses) of the licence, which damages health, public morals or interests and state security. The licence can be annulled by the court upon a petition by the controlling governmental body. The reasons for annulment are: (a) presenting false information in the claim for issuing the licence; (b) the repeated or rough violation of clauses of the licence; (c) illegal decision of the state body on issuing the licence.

According to Russian experts, this Act is indispensable for allowing effective business in Russia, because many current governmental decisions on licensing of certain types of activities are in contradiction with federal statutes and with each other. The Act strictly limits any kind of arbitrariness of government bodies and its officials responsible for licensing procedure. This Act will stand in for the still pending Broadcasting Act, which would regulate the procedure of licensing in the broadcasting sphere in Russia.

Federalny Zakon Rossiyskoy Federatsii „O litsenzirovanii otdelnykh vidov deyatelnosty“. Rossiyskaya gazeta.

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Act on Licensing of Certain Types of Activities, adopted on 16 September 1998. Published in "Rossiyskaya gazeta" on 3 October 1998.

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