# [GB] MED-TV Receives Suspension Order

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The Independent Television Commission (ITC) suspended on 22 March 1999 for a period of three weeks the satellite television service licence of Med Broadcasting Ltd (Med TV). At the end of that period, and having regard to the representations made by Med TV, the ITC must decide whether or not to revoke Med TV's licence. The action was taken under powers given to the ITC in Section 89 of the 1996 Broadcasting Act which oblige the Commission to serve a notice of suspension if a licence holder has included in its service one or more programmes containing material likely to encourage or incite crime or to lead to disorder of a nature sufficient to justify revocation. It was considered that several broadcasts by Med TV have clearly contained such material, such as various calls to carry out acts of violence in Turkey made in one broadcast. Med TV has previously received two formal warnings from the ITC for breaches of the Programme Code: in November 1996 (for two breaches relating to due impartiality;) and in March 1998 (for a breach relating to incitement to commit crime). Also, a complaint was upheld regarding a breach of the due impartiality provisions of the Code in March 1996. In January 1998, financial penalties totalling £90,000 were imposed upon Med TV for three serious breaches of the impartiality requirements of the Code. In November 1998, the ITC issued a notice to Med TV that its licence would be revoked if, over the following six months, its service failed to comply with the terms of its licence and the Programme Code. The notice required Med TV to take certain steps to ensure full compliance. This followed breaches of the Code relating to due impartiality and condoning violent behaviour. The Commission must now consider any representation from Med TV before deciding whether they are satisfied that it is necessary in the public interest to revoke the licence.

***Press release 18/99, 22 March 1999. See Programme Complaints and Interventions Reports April 1996, November 1996, February/March 1998, and October/November 1998. All are available from the ITC information office, 33 Foley Street London W1P 7LB, Telephone +44 171 255 3000, Fax +44 171 306 7800.***

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