[CH] Adoption of a List of Major Events for Free Broadcasting on Television

IRIS 2000-8:1/9

Patrice Aubry
RTS Radio Télévision Suisse, Geneva

The Federal Department of Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications (DETEC) has adopted a list of events of major importance which must remain freely accessible on television channels and therefore cannot be broadcast exclusively on pay channels in Switzerland. The list has been drawn up by the Federal Office for Communication (OFCOM) after consulting some 70 sport and media associations, including the Swiss Olympic Association.

The list approved by the DETEC covers sports events only, and is broadly similar to the lists adopted by other Member States of the Council of Europe. It includes the Olympic Games, the World Cup and the European Cup for football, the Tour de Suisse (cycling), the European and world athletics championships, the Athletissima meeting in Lausanne, the Davis Cup and the Fed Cup (tennis), the World Cup for downhill skiing in Switzerland, and the world downhill skiing championships.

The rules concerning events of major importance are based on Article 20a of the Federal Order on Radio and Television (ORTV). According to this provision, in force since 1 August 1999, television broadcasters which have signed an exclusive contract to broadcast an event of major importance for society, thereby depriving a considerable proportion of the public of the possibility of following the event either live or recorded, must pass the transmission signal on to one or more broadcasters under suitable conditions to enable them to make the event accessible to the public. Article 20a of the Federal Order also stipulates that the DETEC is to draw up a list of national and international events; the list is to be updated each year and communicated to the Standing Committee of the Council of Europe on Transfrontier Television.

The principle and methods for drawing up of a list of events of major importance for society are defined in Article 10 of the Protocol of 1 October 1998 amending the European Convention on Transfrontier Television of 5 May 1989. The Protocol was approved by the Swiss Parliament on 23 June 2000 by means of an Order subject to optional referendum. At the end of the referendum period, the Federal Council will be authorised to ratify the Protocol.

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Communiqué de presse du Département fédéral de l'Environnement, des Transports, de l'Energie et de la Communication du 21 août 2000 et liste des événements d'une importance majeure pour la société.

Press release from the Federal Department of Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications on 21 August 2000 and list of events of major importance for society.

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