[GB] Agreement Reached on Timing of ITV News

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In the last issue of IRIS (see IRIS 2000-8: 8) it was reported that the Independent Television Commission, the UK regulator for private broadcasters, had ordered the ITV companies to re-time their news bulletins because of a drop in audience figures after the moving of the main evening bulletin from 10 p.m. to a later time. The companies had challenged this by judicial review. The judicial review application was withdrawn after a compromise deal had been reached with the Commission. This will result in the provision of a news bulletin at 10 p.m. on Mondays-Thursdays, though reduced in length from thirty to twenty minutes. In addition it will be possible to re-schedule the bulletin on an average of one evening per week to permit the showing of longer programmes after the 9 p.m watershed when more adult content may commence. The Commission also agreed to permit an extra 2.5 minutes of advertising during the peak hours of 6 p.m to 11 p.m., though the total daily limit remains unchanged.

The BBC has in the meantime announced plans to move its main evening bulletin to 10 p.m. and this will thus be in direct competition with the re-timed ITV bulletin.

ITV and ITC Resolve Evening Schedule Issue, Independent Television Commission, Press Release 69/00

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