European Commission: Irish Broadcasting Funding Scheme Approved

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On 10 October 2005, the Irish Minister for Communications received notification from the EU Commission that the broadcasting funding scheme established under the Broadcasting (Funding) Act 2003 is compatible with EU state aid and competition rules. The scheme, which has been devised by the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland (BCI) in accordance with the Act, is called “Sound and Vision”. “Sound and Vision” is a production grant scheme designed to support new television and radio programmes in the areas of Irish culture, heritage and experience and adult literacy. All broadcasters in the State, both public service and private commercial, will be entitled to apply for grants from the fund. The fund is made possible by setting aside 5% of the monies for the television licence fee collected from the public. It is estimated that the fund will have an annual value in excess of EUR 8 million. The implementation of the scheme was delayed by the need to obtain the approval of the EU Commission. As a result a total of EUR 23 million has already accumulated in the fund. The BCI has been ready to put the scheme into operation for some time now and should therefore be in a position to begin the process of allocating funding immediately.

Broadcasting (Funding) Act 2003

http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/pdf/2003/EN.ACT.2003.0043.pdf

Details of funding scheme

http://www.bci.ie/broadcast_funding_scheme/index.html

Announcement of EU Commission approval

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