[NL] Public Broadcasting Service Fined because of Blocks of Advertisements

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On 15 September 2005, the Commissariaat voor de Media (Dutch Media Authority), sent an official letter to the board of Directors of the Dutch Public Broadcasting Service. In that letter the Authority informed the Board of its intention to impose a fine of EUR 13.500. The Public Broadcasting Service is responsible for the broadcasting time allocated to blocks of advertisements ("STER broadcasting time"). The BNN programme "Top of the Pops" was found to have been illegitimately interrupted by these "STER" blocks of advertisements.

The programme item "Top of the Pops", broadcast on 20 August 2005, had been an event celebrating a jubilee. During that day, a Top 100 of the best performances of the preceeding five years had been presented on Channel 2 from 12.00 h until 18.00 h and from 18.55 h until 19.55 h. From the moment that the Media Authority started monitoring the programme (13.50 h) until its end, the programme had been interrupted five times by STER blocks for approximately five minutes on each occasion.

Pursuant to article 41a para. 1d of the Mediawet (Dutch Media Act), a programme item of the Public Broadcasting Service can only be interrupted by advertisements if the event that is covered incorporates pauses. The Authority therefore holds the view that the programme "Top of the Pops", did not comply with these specific standards. On 5 October a hearing was held. The definitive sanction will soon be made public.

Commissariaat voor de Media, Nieuwsberichten: Reclameblokken in Top of the pops: boete voor Publieke Omroep, 19 september 2005

http://www.cvdm.nl/pages/actueel.asp?m=n&ID=1436

Press release of the Dutch Media Authority, Public Broadcasting Service faces fine for Top of the Pops advertising practices

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