

[LT] LRT Will Broadcast its Programmes via Satellite

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On 26 April 2006, the Radio and Television Commission of Lithuania (RTCL) decided to give authorisation to the Lithuanian Public Service Broadcaster to transmit its programmes via satellite. The said authorisations will give the right to the Public Service Broadcaster to broadcast two television programmes and two radio programmes via satellite SIRIUS 3.

The activity of the Public Service Broadcaster is regulated by the Law on the National Radio and Television of Lithuania (LRT) (see IRIS 2006-2: 17) and the Law on Provision of Information to the Public. The procedure for issuing authorisations, which grant the right to the public broadcaster to broadcast, is laid down in Article 31 of the Law on Provision of Information to the Public. According to this Law broadcasting and re-broadcasting activities in the Republic of Lithuania are licensed, except for the activities carried out by the public broadcaster. The Radio and Television Commission issues the broadcasting and re-broadcasting licences for persons who wish to engage in those activities.

Due to the fact that LRT activities are not licensed as mentioned above, the RTCL issues authorisations in order to ensure that the LRT programmes can be broadcast. These authorisations are essentially analogous to the licences but they are less detailed. They indicate the programme to be broadcast, the name of the satellite and the frequency.

The Law on Provision of Information to the Public foresees a priority right of LRT to get frequencies for broadcasting its programmes in a procedure which does not require tendering in order to ensure the broad dissemination of the LRT programmes in the whole country.

This priority right is also set out in the “Model for the Implementation of Digital Terrestrial Television in Lithuania”, which was approved by the Government on 25 November 2004 (see IRIS Merlin 2005-1: Extra). According to the Model, two positions are reserved for the programmes of the LRT, which is granted the right to broadcast two programmes without a rival.

LRT is the only public broadcaster in Lithuania. It has been broadcasting radio programmes since 1926 and television programmes since 1957. Lithuanian Television programme is being broadcast 18 hours per day on average and is receivable throughout the whole country. The programme is comprised of

informational, analytical and educational items, arts and sport broadcasts as well as various films.

Foreign citizens of Lithuanian origin were in particular looking forward to the possibility of viewing LRT programmes via satellite, because they had never had any opportunity to watch those programmes in real time. The possibility to watch Lithuanian programmes will allow the Lithuanian Community abroad to keep their identity and also to follow the developments in their homeland.

LRT is planning to start broadcasting its programmes via satellite by May this year.

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<http://www.rtk.lt/>

Decisions of the RTCL on the issuing of the authorisations, dated 26 April 2006

Law on Provision of Information to the Public

<http://www.rtk.lt/en/static.php?strid=27410&>

