[GB] Department of National Heritage extends the regulatory and licensing powers of the ITC

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The Secretary of State for National Heritage, Virginia Bottomly, has issued an Order, The Broadcasting (Prescribed Countries) Order 1996, which will extend the existing regulatory and licensing powers of the Independent Television Commission (ITC) to all television services broadcast from the United Kingdom, regardless of which country the service was received.

The Broadcasting Act 1990 describes one type of television programme service under that Act as a non-domestic satellite service. Part of the definition of this service is that it consists of the transmission of television programmes by satellite for general reception in the United Kingdom or in any prescribed country (or both) where the programmes are transmitted from a place which is either the UK or is neither in the UK nor in any prescribed country. The existing Broadcast (Prescribed Countries) Order 1994 specified only European countries as prescribed. This means that anyone can broadcast from the UK beyond Europe without requiring a licence and under no regulatory control.

The new Order revokes the Order 1994 and instead extend the prescribed countries to every country of the world except the United Kingdom. All broadcasters will be obliged to comply with the ITC's rules on taste and decency, and impartiality. The Broadcasting (Prescribed Countries) Order 1996 comes into force on 15 April 1996.

Section 43(3) of the Broadcasting Act 1990 (a) and The Broadcasting (Prescribed Countries) Order 1996 No 904.

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