[CZ] Amendment of Broadcasting Law with a View to Digitisation Approved

IRIS 2007-10:1/11

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In view of the impasse in the Czech Republic with regard to the switchover in broadcasting transmission from analogue to digital (see IRIS 2007-5: 5), it became clear that a new law on the digitisation of television would be necessary. The existing law was no longer suited to the needs of digital broadcasting.

The bill was drafted by the government and passed by the Chamber of Representatives on 27 September 2007 and must now go before the Senate and be counter-signed by the President of the Republic. No further major modifications are expected.

The deadlines, conditions and procedures for the development of the electronic communications network for digital terrestrial television transmission and the switch-off of analogue terrestrial broadcasting in the Czech Republic are to be determined in a “technical transition plan“. This technical plan for the switch-over from analogue to digital television terrestrial broadcasting is to be drawn up by the government and will then become mandatory. The date scheduled for the complete switch-off of analogue terrestrial television broadcasting is 31 December 2012.

In 2006 the broadcasting council had issued six digital television licences (to TV Barrandov, Febio TV, TV Pohoda, Z1, Ocko and RTA). As a result of a complaint made *inter alia* by TV Nova and Prima TV against this decision by the broadcasting council, the Prague district court cancelled the licences on the grounds of administrative deficiencies. These withdrawn licences are now, under the law, to be made valid again until the end of the transitional period. The licences of the largest private broadcasting companies, TV Nova and Prima TV, are also to be valid in the digital regime and are being extended by eight years. Both broadcasters can obtain a further (bonus) licence when they give up their analogue capability.

Licences for terrestrial digital transmission will, in the future, be issued basically to anyone fulfilling the personal and programme-related requirements. Consequently there will be no selection or competition procedure. Anyone with a licence can enter into contracts with electronic network operators in order to broadcast their channels.

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The possibility to advertise on public service television, which in the original proposals was almost completely done away with, remains in place under the present bill until the end of the transitional period.

Zákon, kterým se mění některé zákony v souvislosti s dokončením přechodu zemského analogového televizního vysílání na zemské digitální televizní vysílání. Tisk PS 262

http://www.psp.cz/cgi-bin/eng/sqw/historie.sqw?o=5&T=262

Law amending laws in connection with the completion of the changeover from analogue to digital terrestrial television

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