[IE] No Change in Designated Free-to-Air Sporting Events

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Damien McCallig
School of Law, National University of Ireland, Galway

The Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources announced on 3 May 2011 that the current list of sports events designated for coverage on free-to-air television services should not be amended at this time.

Section 162 of the Broadcasting Act 2009 provides that the Minister may, by order, designate events of major importance to society, coverage of which can be provided by free-to-air broadcasters in the public interest. Under the Act the Minister may also determine whether coverage should be available on a live, deferred or both live and deferred basis.

The Minister's decision was made following a review carried out in accordance with section 173 of the Broadcasting Act 2009. The review incorporated a consultation process, which invited submissions from members of the public on the existing list of designated events and the possible designation of additional events. The Minister also considered an independent report prepared by Indecon International Economic Consultants, which evaluated the socio-cultural, economic and financial aspects and impacts of the proposed designation of certain sporting events in Ireland.

The events currently designated are all sporting events:

On a live basis:

- The Summer Olympics;

- The All-Ireland Senior Football and Hurling Finals;

- Ireland's qualifying games in the European Football Championship and World Cup;

- Opening games, semi-finals and the final of the European Football Championship Finals and the FIFA World Cup Finals Tournament;

- The Irish Grand National and the Irish Derby (Horse-racing);

- The Nations Cup at the Dublin Horse Show.

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On a deferred basis:

- Ireland’s games in the Six Nations Rugby Football Championship.

Ireland’s games in the Six Nations Rugby Football Championship will remain designated as deferred, but they are in fact shown live. The Minister has stated that he would be prepared to intervene if it was proposed in the future that the ‘Six Nations’ would no longer be available live and free-to-air.

Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, “Review of Designated Sporting Events”, 3 May 2011

http://www.dcenr.gov.ie/Press+Releases/Minister+Rabbitte+-+Review+of+Designated+Sporting+Events.htm

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