[RU] Decree on Must-Carry Channels Amended

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President Dmitry Medvedev of the Russian Federation signed on 12 May 2011 a decree amending his earlier decree of 24 June 2009 on must-carry TV and radio channels (see IRIS 2009-10/25).

This act amends the list of the eight mandatory TV channels on all platforms (including the first multiplex of digital terrestrial television) as several of them have changed their names (and programme policies) since 2009. Channel Sport has become Rossiya-2 with gradually decreasing number of sports broadcasts at the expense of entertainment fare, channel Kultura was rebranded as Rossiya-K, and Russian Information Channel as Rossiya-24. Another one - Petersburg-5th Channel has changed its remit as a regional channel and now presents itself as a federal broadcaster 5th Channel (see IRIS *plus* 2010-1). The act also specifies that a channel mentioned in the original decree as “channel for children and youth” is indeed a brand new channel Karusel by a state-run joint stock company of the same name.

Thus the list of TV channels includes now: Rossiya-1, Rossiya-2, Rossiya-24, Rossiya-K (all belong to the state broadcaster VGTRK), Channel 1 (run by the state and friendly businesses), NTV run by a Gazprom-owned company, Petersburg-5th Channel (owned by another private broadcaster), and Karusel. The list of radio channels (all belong to VGTRK) remains unchanged.

As expected the decree also expands powers of the state broadcasting communications network RTRS (see IRIS Special: The Regulatory Framework for Audiovisual Media Services in Russia, 2010) in regards to contracting private networks and facilities for the purpose of distribution of the must-carry channels. It also lets RTRS the use of the first multiplex of Digital Terrestrial Television to deliver an additional, a regional one, in each “broadcasting zone” of Russia, apparently a channel of its own choice. The decree imposes the right of the Government to set tariffs for services provided by private operators to RTRS on all platforms, as well as tariffs for RTRS services.

О внесении изменений в Указ Президента Российской Федерации от 24 июня 2009 г. N 715 "Об общероссийских обязательных общедоступных телеканалах и радиоканалах" и в перечень, утвержденный этим Указом

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Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of 12 May 2011 No. 637 "On amending the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of 24 June 2009 No. 715 "On National Mandatory Free Television Channels and Radio Stations" and the list approved by this Decree", Rossijskaja gazeta No. 104 of 18 May 2011

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