[FR] CSA criticises hidden advertising in the 1995 annual reports of a number of television channels

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Hervé Bourges, Chairman of the French media supervisory authority, the Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel (CSA), presented the 1995 annual report of the CSA's activities on 12 September 1996. In addition to the balance sheets of the television channels, the report also includes a statement on the sanctions taken against radio and television companies.

Since 1.2.1994, the CSA has authority to penalise not only on the broadcasters it licences, but also the public-sector channels France 2, France 3, La Cinquième and RFO. Usually the sanction process progresses from a first stage of warning, with continued infringement resulting in the suspension of the broadcaster's licence (for a maximum of one month), a reduction in its duration, or a fine, to withdrawal of the licence.

Most infringements in 1995 concerned the regulations on sponsoring and unlawful concealed advertising (Decree no.92-280 of 27 March 1992; see IRIS 1995-9: 11). Thus TF1 received a warning on 5 January 1995 for having promoted books and cassettes by its subsidiary, TF1 Editions, three times outside advertising time during November and December 1994. M6 received warnings on 24 October and 19 December for interrupting children's broadcasts with advertising, which is not allowed. A further two warnings went to France 2.

In July 1995 TF1 paid the State the fine of FRF 30 million imposed on it in 1992, after much resistance. The fine was for not adhering to a broadcasting quota for French productions. M6 paid a fine of FRF 780 000 for concealed advertising in the magazine Capital (29 June 1994) and in Turbo broadcasts in July, August and September 1994.

The CSA also withdrew licences from three radio stations in 1995, and suspended a further 19 temporarily. 214 radio stations received warnings.

Skyrock Grand Sud had its licence reduced by one year, as did Ici et Maintenant , for allowing racist and anti-Semitic comments to pass on several occasions. In response to complaints from the CSA, three pirate broadcasters were also closed down in 1995.

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«La lettre du CSA», p.16-17: «L'activité du CSA en 1995», septembre 1996.

" La lettre du CSA",p.16 et seq: " L'activité du CSA en 1995", September 1996.

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