[DE] Packages of Measures Decided by RBB to Increase Licence Fee Revenues

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In the late summer of 2012, Rundfunk Berlin-Brandenburg (Berlin-Brandenburg Broadcasting - RBB) submitted to its statutory bodies a final report on the "Package of measures for increasing the potential number of licence payers in Berlin". The aim is to induce those consumers of broadcasting services who possess operational radio and television sets, but have not paid the licence fee up to now, to comply with this requirement.

The implementation of the package of measures was proposed in 2008 by the Kommission zur Ermittlung des Finanzbedarfs der Rundfunkanstalten (Commission for Establishing the Financial Requirements of Broadcasters - KEF). RBB submits annual reports on the implementation of its measures. With regard to the Berlin market, it has been able to establish that the city has benefited from, albeit low, economic growth. However, as the German capital suffers from high unemployment RBB's transmission area has the largest number of people who are exempt from the payment of licence fees. In order to increase the subscriber base in Berlin, RBB carries out numerous measures to raise public awareness. For example, it has held a "TV licence week" in the Spandau district, during which citizens were handed leaflets and shown advertisements and advertising banners on the internet as well as a TV commercial in the waiting rooms of the Spandau authorities. In addition, inhabitants were provided with information on the licence fees at street stalls, and some 800 new devices were registered as a result of this measure. Furthermore, RBB has created the post of Kommunikationsbeauftragter (Communications Commissioner) to handle the marketing aspects of collecting fees and contributions. He/she is responsible for all kinds of marketing measures on the issue of the requirement to pay the licence fee as well as for the operation of the public service broadcaster's fee website, which also involves sharing information with the other regional broadcasters. Another measure implemented by RBB has been to step up licence fee advertising in its programme schedule.

RBB has been able to increase the number of registrations of new types of broadcast receiving devices (e.g., internet enabled PCs or mobile telephones - see IRIS 2007-1/11) by approximately 11,000. Guided tours of its broadcasting facilities, during which visitors were informed about the requirement to pay licence fees and how the money is used, are also said to have helped to raise the number of new registrations.

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Compared with 2010, RBB was able to post an increase in revenues of around EUR 270,000 in 2011. The package of measures is due to be adapted to the new licence “contribution” model.

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