[IE] New Television Content Provision Contract Signed

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On 27 February 2014 the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI) signed a ten-year television content provision contract with UTV Ireland Limited. The contract creates a new general entertainment channel, to be known as UTV Ireland, which will be based in Dublin. The programme schedule will initially include news and current affairs, and a range of acquired documentary, drama and film content.

The application for a licence under Section 71 of the Broadcasting Act 2009 was lodged by UTV Ireland in November 2013. Negotiations with the BAI began on 6 February and the contract is the result of that process. Contracts granted under Section 71 are for content only and do not carry an automatic right to carriage on a platform. However, the contract does enable the contractor to negotiate carriage of the service, and its prominence on the Electronic Programme Guide (EPG), with the platform provider.

The programme service obligations associated with section 71 extend only to compliance with statutory Codes and Rules and with the European Audiovisual Media Services (AVMS) Directive requirements relating to European and Independent Production works (see IRIS 2013-7/17, IRIS 2013-5/32, IRIS 2012-7/28, IRIS 2010-1/29 and IRIS 2012-9/9). Unlike public service broadcasters and licensed commercial broadcasters, content-provision service providers are not required to pay a levy to the BAI. However, an annual fee of EUR 2,000 plus Value Added Tax, applies for the duration of the contract. It is expected that the new service will commence broadcasting in January 2015.

Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, BAI Signs Content Contract with 'UTV Ireland', 27 February 2014

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