[DE] GVK and VPRT agree guidelines for labelling of scripted reality formats

IRIS 2014-10:1/11

Peter Matzneller
Institute of European Media Law (EMR), Saarbrücken/Brussels

On 19 September 2014, the Conference of Chairpersons of the Decision-Taking Councils (the Gremienvorsitzendenkonferenz - GVK) of the Land media authorities (Landesmedienanstalten) and the Private Broadcasting and Telemedia Association (Verband Privater Rundfunk und Telemedien e.V - VPRT) announced that, following joint discussions, they had agreed on a set of guidelines on the clear labelling of own-produced scripted reality formats. The purpose of these guidelines is to give viewers a standard level of transparency and information across all broadcasters and formats.

Broadcasters are required to select the appropriate wording and location for the relevant format. To this end, the voluntary code of conduct contains examples of how to word specific labels, such as “This case/story/plot is (completely) fictitious” or “Based on a real/actual story/event”.

The code of conduct also contains rules on the location and legibility of labels, designed to ensure that they are suitably recognisable. These include provisions on the place and timing of the insert as well as recommendations concerning the size, type and colour of the lettering.

The standardised labelling described in the guidelines should be used with immediate effect by all newly produced programmes. The guidelines also state that they should be reviewed on 20 September 2015.

Leitlinien für die Kennzeichnung und deren Wahrnehmbarkeit bei Scripted Reality-Formaten - Freiwillige Verhaltensgrundsätze der privaten Fernsehveranstalter, 19.September 2014

Guidelines on the clear labelling of scripted reality formats - voluntary code of conduct for private television broadcasters, 19 September 2014

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026