[BG] CEM’s report on the coverage of a catastrophe on the Trakia highway

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On 13 April 2018, a bus travelling in the direction of Sofia overturned on the Trakia highway near Vakarel. Six people were killed, four people were left in a serious condition, and dozens were injured.

The Council for Electronic Media (CEM) monitored the programmes of commercial media service providers (NOVA TELEVISION, BTV, CANAL 3 and EVROPA) and the programmes of the national public providers (BNT 1 and radio program HORIZONT) on 13 and 14 April 2018. The purpose of the monitoring was to assess (i) the media’s compliance with the requirements set out by the Radio and Television Act in respect of the protection of the privacy of those affected by the incident.

The monitoring in connection with the coverage of the accident established that there was a rapid media reaction. The making of one of the monitored reports involved an disproportional breach of privacy; this once again highlights the need to observe a basic principle relating to the privacy of citizens that is enshrined in the Radio and Television Act.

The excessive visual exposure of the incident and the intrusive behaviour of on-the-spot reporters from two major commercial media service providers provoked a strong response among a significant part of the journalists - there were many negative comments in the media, on websites and on social networks. Until now, CEM has received 12 complaints, most of which claim that there had been a violation of professional standards.

On the other hand, the monitoring noted the broadcasting of emergency phone numbers and of information regarding how drivers could circumvent the congestion caused by the accident; information on how to donate blood had also been disseminated. No names of injured people had been announced. The coverage did not contain footage of the victims of the accident.

CEM has repeatedly emphasised that the right to privacy and the right of freedom of expression do not take precedence over one another. Media service providers should both provide citizens with an opportunity to receive full information and ensure non-interference in their privacy. This is another case in which media coverage was guilty of a lack of balance between the exercise of the two

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fundamental rights guaranteed by the existing legislation.

Доклад на СЕМ за отразяването на тежката катастрофа на автомагистрала „Тракия”

http://www.cem.bg/controlbg/1151

CEM’s report on the coverage of the severe catastrophe of Trakia highway

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