

# Circom Report

CIRCOM Regional Newsmothly • CR is the European Association of 380 Public Regional TV Stations in 38 countries • January 2003/No 39

In Munich, Jan. 18

## Meeting of the Sub-Committee for Coproductions - Enlargement

The first meeting of the Sub-Committee for Coproductions as well as the Enlargement project is to be held in Munich, Jan. 18, at 1.30 am.

The meeting will take place at the Bavarian Station (Floriansmhlstrasse 60, Munich 80939 – Building 11, Conference Room No 1).

Attending the meeting will be Marija Nemicic, Peter Sauer, Tim Johnson, Valerie Joyeux, Pierre Couchard, Zoran Medved, Peter Kraewinkels, Jochan Kölsch, Christine Peters.

## 600 language combinations in translation work after the EU enlargement



Linguistic diversity is indispensable for the legitimacy of the European Union's planned enlargement. The United Nations has six working languages, and NATO has just two. However, the EU regards as official working languages all 11 languages commonly spoken in the 15 Member States, and the scheduled enlargement will double this number.

With the current 11 languages, there are 110 possible language combinations involved in translation work. But with 25 languages it rises to 600 combinations, language experts say. The political and logistical challenges are clearly enormous.

According to the Permanent Representative of Germany to the EU, Dr Wilhelm Schönfelder, after enlargement all Member States' official languages would remain official languages of the EU.

## CR programs on EbS in January - February

Some of the more interesting CR programs are on EbS (Europe by Satellite) on the following dates:

- Euro 3 (France 3 – Lille) and “Kovalski meets Schmidt” (ORB Potsdam). Both are to be broadcast on Jan 15, 16 and 18.
- “Quartette” (TV Kosice) and “Quartette” (TV Ostrava) on Jan. 22, 23 and 25.
- Balkan TV Magazine (ERT3 Greece) Balkan TV Videoclip Magazine (ERT3 Greece) in Jan.29 and 30 & Feb. 1. First broadcast is at 22.00 CET, second at 05.30 CET and third at 11.00 CET.

## The CR Calendar of Events in 2003

Here's the calendar of Events in 2003 for CIRCOM Regional members:

**Executive Committee:** 22 February: Budapest / 28 May: Trieste, Italy / 4 October: Leige, Belgium / 28 November: Poland

**European Board:** 28 May: Trieste / 29 November: Poland

**Prix Circom:** 9-13 April: Sinaia, Romania (judging) 29 May: Award Ceremony, Trieste

**Annual Conference:** 29-31 May: Trieste  
Training: 3-7 March: CR Technical Training, Avid Technology, Pinewood Studios / 12-15 March: TV Middle Management Workshop, Zagreb / 18 May: Television Journalism Workshop, Trieste

July: Workshop for Ethnic Minorities  
November: TV Newsroom Management Seminar, Strasbourg

## European Union events from Jan. 15 – Feb. 15

- Jan. 15 – New President elected, Czech Republic  
Jan. 17 – Casteau, Belgium. Nato's Allied Command Europe holds its change-of-command ceremony at SHAPE.  
Jan. 20 – Eurogroup meeting, Brussels  
Jan. 20-21 – Agriculture and Fisheries Council, Brussels  
Jan. 20-21 – European Convention of the future of Europe holds working session, Brussels  
Jan. 21 – ECOFIN Council, Brussels  
Jan. 21 – Genetically modified crops and their effect on wild plants will be discussed at a European Science Foundation conference, Amsterdam  
Jan. 21-26 – Biarritz. FIPA 2003. 16<sup>th</sup> International festival of audio-visual programmes.  
Jan. 22 – Commission meeting, Brussels  
Jan. 22 – ECPA – European Centre for Public Affairs – seminar on “Roots to Power” about campaigns to influence Europe, Brussels  
Jan. 22 – National elections in the Netherlands  
Jan. 22-24 – World Affairs Council  
Jan. 23-24 – 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Kyoto protocol on carbon emissions will be marked by a conference called Carbon Finance 2003, London  
Jan. 23-28 – 33<sup>rd</sup> annual World Economic Forum, Davos, Switzerland  
Jan. 26 – Launch of the European Year of People with Disabilities, Athens  
Jan. 27-28 – General Affairs and External Relations Council, Brussels  
Jan. 27-28 – EU Foreign Ministers meet, Brussels  
Jan. 27-28 – EU-Asian Ministerial meeting  
Jan. 29 – Commission meeting, Brussels  
Jan. 29-30 – European Parliament session, Brussels  
30-31 – Sustainable agriculture for developing countries will be discussed at a European Commission conference, Brussels  
Jan. 30-Feb.2 – 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference and Exhibition on Environmental Technology – HELECO, Athens  
Feb. 1 – Date of entry into force of Treaty of Nice  
Feb. 3 – Chamber of Commerce briefing with British Shadow Foreign Secretary, Michael Howard, Brussels  
Feb. 4-7 – “Learntec” conference and trade fair on education and information technology, Ettlingen, Germany  
Feb. 5 – Commission meeting Brussels  
Feb. 6 – Plenary session of the Convention, Brussels  
Feb. 6 – 9<sup>th</sup> European Automotive Conference, organized by The Economist, Brussels  
Feb. 7 – EU-Ukraine Ministerial meeting  
Feb. 10-11 – Agriculture and Fisheries Council, Brussels  
Feb. 10-13 – European Parliament session, Strasbourg  
Feb. 11 – Commission meeting, Strasbourg

Opened by [EurActiv.com](http://EurActiv.com)

## New policy section on EU's Education Policy supported by commission DG Education

EurActiv.com, the leading internet portal on EU affairs, has opened a new policy section on the EU's Education Policy. This section is supported by Commission DG Education & Culture. It is available at [www.euractiv/en/education](http://www.euractiv/en/education).

The new education section focuses on the developing role of the EU policies in the field of education, vocational training and youth. Major issues, such as the Bologna process, lifelong learning, e-learning, the Bruges process, the future of the European programmes and the White Paper on Youth, are explained. **Christophe Leclercq, EurActiv publisher**, said: "This section will allow us to deepen our policy coverage of some issues directly relevant for all European citizens. Despite the small EU budget devoted to education, education policies help building a European identity and people's employability".

**Viviane Reding, Commissioner for Education & Culture**, stated: "The Commission's aim is to encourage real debates with the stakeholders about European cooperation in education and vocational training. Directorate-General for Education and Culture is therefore happy to support the opening of the education section of EurActiv."

**Michel Rocard, Parliament Chairman of the Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport**, said: "I welcome the opening of an Education section on EurActiv. Indeed, this topic, which affects every citizen, should be given a high priority on the European agenda, in particular for the parliamentary elections in 2004".

**Kim Svendsen, Secretary General of the European Youth Forum**, commented, "This initiative can bring the debate on education in Europe out to broader circles."

We look forward to contribute on the role of alternative learning methods and in particular non-formal education, which is one way to fill the skills gap and ought to be an integrated part of any education policy".

**Tomek Helbin, President of AEGEE Europe**, stated, "We welcome the new 'Education' section of Euractiv.com. It is a fact that the gap between the EU policies, and youth, in particular is becoming enormous and more attention needs to be paid to overcoming these deficits".

**Viorica Alexandru, Managing director of "Club Europa" Romania**, stated: "Club Europa Romania is very happy to promote a European debate on education by sponsoring the education section on EurActiv. Education is a very important issue for Central and Eastern European countries as in this field enlargement is already done and works well. Furthermore, it plays a key-role in creating a knowledge society sharing common values".

## United Kingdom unveils media bill

Uk government proposals to allow US companies to own key British media assets, including major TV networks, moved a step nearer with the publication of the final draft of the Communications Bill. There was one small concession to those who claim that further deregulation will lead to a deterioration in program quality.

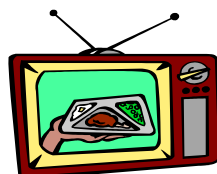
A new clause in the bill will give ministers the right to force the Murdoch-backed satcaster, BSkyB, to carry public service nets such as BBC stations and Channel 4. These powers will be held in reserve and will only be used as a final measure.

On the ownership question, the government said that "deregulation would promote competition and investment, but a few core rules would be retained to protect diversity and plurality."

Culture minister Tessa Jowell said that the bill is "highly deregulatory" but pledged that "at every stage of deregulation, broadcasting content will be protected."

Trade and industry secretary Patricia Hewitt added: "This bill will give companies an even better environment to develop their businesses in a sector of the economy which already accounts for 300,000 jobs and B#12 billion (19b euros) of investment a year.

"It will liberalise the market but at the same time will retain key safeguards that will protect the diversity and plurality of our media."



## Regulator confirms DTTV plans

The French regulator, Conseil Supieur de l'Audiovisuel (CSA), has just confirmed its plans to combine the country's private DTTV channels on to 4 multiplexes (mux).

The draft proposal includes the channels R2, R3, R4 and R6; Match TV, Canal+, i-TV, Sport+, Paris Premier, TMC, Cuisine TV/Com Eurosport and TPS Star.

Each mux is headed by a "big gun" , Lagard, Canal Plus group, M6 & Path, TF1 and, mixes free and pay channels while avoiding direct competition in the same mux.

In few months time, each mux will choose a commercial distributor or platform. The CSA's decision is likely to make these choices easier as for instance, Network R3 will probably come down in favour of Canal Plus if this group decides to be a platform operator.

Because the CSA choices are more "editor centric" than "consumer centric" the scheme has been criticised for ignoring the fact that consumers will probably choose channels by type and theme, not by group, and mix free-to-view channels with pay-to-view ones.

## Pathe's rooster goes digital

The announcer of British news for over half a century, Pathe media company, has placed its entire British news archive on the internet.

The site was launched by UK Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell, as part of a 79m euros national lottery initiative, of which 1.6m euros went toward putting the archive online. The archive contains footage from events such as the 1912 sinking of the Titanic, the First and Second World Wars, the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and man's first steps on the moon.

Those wishing to access the material for professional use will need to acquire a licence but the general public is able to view it for free. Owners Daily Mail and the General Trust Group do intend to eventually have a subscription-based entry system but are envisioning this development in a few years time.

While the original 35mm archive was housed in a special warehouse covering some 30,000 square feet, it's digital descendant takes up five square feet on a single computer. The content has been stored in a 'streamlined' format to allow for fast download over standard 56k modems, and retain high enough quality to achieve a watchable image.

## BBC3 to broadcast from February

BBC Three has been given the green light by the UK Government and will launch on February 9, 2003.

The BBC's latest digital channel was previously turned down by Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell, for not being distinctive enough in its content.

But the re-submitted proposal has gained approval and will replace BBC Choice, broadcasting comedy, news, drama and entertainment to a target audience of 25 to 30-year-olds.

The channel will air on Freeview DTT, cable and satellite, with a strict mandate to adhere to demands that at least 90 per cent of programming originate in Europe. This will prevent the use of tactics like those of E4, which airs popular US shows prior to their terrestrial debuts.

# Expanding the network of trainers - technicians

Since 1994, Circom Regional has been training young television journalists from all regions of Europe. Over 500 journalists have attended Circom Regional training workshops and the network and reputation is going from strength to strength.

The style of Circom Regional training is to bring together young journalists from their member stations, usually about 30 in number, to the location of the Circom Regional annual conference, which usually takes place at the end of May in a European regional location which changes annually. The training itself takes place two 10 days prior to the conference. This gives the journalists an opportunity to attend, not only the training, but also the conference seminars that are the main showcase in Europe for the best in regional television programming. The conference workshops cover the issues and debates that surround present operations and the future of regional broadcasting.

The training has proved to be enormously popular and has been financially supported by Circom Regional and the Council of Europe's Human Rights Media Division.

Circom Regional member stations including ARD GERMANY, France 3, BBC, and Swedish Television have provided journalist trainers. These trainers have provided their services free of charge, either individually or as a "gift" to Circom Regional from the respective stations.

Member stations have provided some technicians to help the operation and technical aspects of the training. However, technical training is now at the forefront of journalism training and more and more young journalists want to know how to shoot and edit. Circom Regional therefore realises that the technical support needs to be of a standard that will be of benefit to the members of the training workshops and subsequently to their member stations. The technicians therefore, need to be able to shoot and edit their material alongside the journalists, and also be able to pass on related knowledge in the process.

Circom Regional is therefore, expanding its network of trainers/technicians, focussing on people employed by Circom Regional member stations who work on news, and who wish to operate in a multi-skilled environment. The technicians would ideally be able to operate a camera or edit on non-linear systems or both. The technicians would also need to have the support of their member stations, who would be willing to release them once a year for two weeks to work with Circom Regional training.

Eight technicians will be accepted on the course, although it is likely that only six will be used each year for the delivery of the training. The annual selection will be on a rotation basis

The annual selection will be on a rotation basis and will be at the discretion of the Circom Regional Training Project Manager.

Technical support has been received so far from Sony and Avid who have agreed to play an active role in the delivery of the training.

The equipment used is Sony DV/DVCam cameras and lap-top editing using Avid DV Xpress software

Course Objectives

To train eight technicians in a system of filming and editing news stories that is understandable and acceptable to the methods used by Circom Regional training.

To reach a level of competence in both and camerawork and non-linear editing that reflects a high degree of professionalism and expertise.

To establish a network of Circom Regional technicians/technical trainers throughout the regions of Europe.

To be at the forefront of changes in the technical support within a news operation. Course Outline: Sunday 2 March 2003: Arrival.

Day 1: Introductions, the equipment to be used. Filming for news – theoretical, Filming for news - practical

Day 2: Filming a news story – planning and practical work

Day 3 to 5: Avid DV Xpress 3 day training course, utilising delegates own filmed material.

Day 6: Optional day in London (This will help take advantage of cheaper air fares).

Approximate course costs:

Accommodation: £700.00

Transport to and from Airport: £60.00

Evening meal allowance: £140.00

Total costs: £900.00

## Old classics for new digital station

The BBC announced the launch of its latest - and last- new digital station.

BBC7 was to premiere in mid-December with a two-hour simulcast on Radio 4, after an unexpected delay caused by problems securing the rights to some of the BBC's recording catalogue.

The digital station - available to those with the new breed of digital radio sets and digital TV consumers - will feature comedy and drama classics, as well as a daily live children's programme. The station's major output will be what the BBC calls "archive material", or more commonly known as repeats.

Jenny Abramksy, the BBC's director of radio, said the station would help drive new listeners to digital radio. It completes the BBC's portfolio of digital stations launched this year - Five Live Sports Extra, the Asian Network, the black music station 1Xtra, and the pop and rock station 6Music.

## Broadcasters stalled by new digital law

Legislation covering DTV in the Czech Republic has suffered a set-back and will not be ready until the end of 2003.

A new cabinet has thrown out the original digital legislation in favour of a new law covering all communication platforms, which has prevented

the broadcasters from going ahead with their plans to begin providing their iTV services.

Two years ago Czech Digital Group and Radiokom began running tests on both local and national scales to determine digital coverage. With the tests completed, the groups were hoping to recoup money and start making profits.

Experts say that there is a possibility that once a new law is instituted, the tests will have to be repeated, draining further money from the companies involved. In fact, companies have already commented that their inability to begin broadcasting early in 2003 will cost them revenues

## Afghanistan press freedom moves forward

One year after the collapse of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, press

freedom in the country has been generally positive, says a new report. According to a research by the press right group Reporters Without Borders, independent radio stations are sprouting, women's magazines have been launched for the first time in years and the capital, Kabul, has 150 publications alone.

However, press freedom in many parts of the country remains vulnerable, with warlords and provincial governors controlling almost all local media, the group warns. The organisation recently completed a fact-finding mission to the country in October to assess the state of the media.

"The provincial radio and television stations have been completely taken over by the governors," a trainer from the Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR) said. "The content is very poor, just propaganda or local information. It's really Radio Governor."

Reporters without Borders added that journalists in Afghanistan remain cautious about reporting on subjects considered taboo, including Islam, ethnic tensions and human rights atrocities committed by warlords.

The report also notes how the United States army has restricted journalists from reporting on its activities in Afghanistan or investigating the deaths of Afghans killed by US bombing attacks.

# Enlargement: an exciting new chapter in EU's history

“The future of the enlarged European Union” was the subject of the European Parliament’s historic enlargement debate on November 19, 2002, in Strasbourg. Here’s the full text of the opening address by Pat Cox, the President of the European Parliament.

Enlargement of the European Union is our greatest political priority at this time and a priority which has dominated much of the work of our Parliament and most of the focus of my presidency of Parliament since last January.

This unprecedented gathering of parliamentarians in Strasbourg today marks a special moment on our shared pathway to our old continent's rendez-vous with an exciting new chapter in our history. I warmly welcome our visiting parliamentary partners from the Accession States. I am deeply touched by your presence and by this moment, imbued as it is with the feeling that your time has come. Today is not yet a premature celebration of what is but rather a foretaste of what can be. We are challenged before history successfully to conclude this truly continental scale act of reconciliation and healing. As politicians we are challenged to give leadership, to win the calculus of public consent in the Member States and the Accession States alike. There is no public relations or information campaign substitute for real politics based on conviction and reason. Now is the time for politicians to repossess the enlargement agenda from the experts who have prepared the way.

I thank the European Commission for their leadership, expertise and dedication on behalf of the European Union. From now on, we the elected parliamentarians must play our part. I thank the Danish Presidency and their predecessors for their determination to succeed and wish our Danish colleagues a successful and positive conclusion on enlargement in Copenhagen next December. Today we rehearse tomorrow's reality and I believe we can put a fair political wind in the Danish sails to ensure success.

## THE NEW MOMENTUM

Recent events have accelerated the inclusive and irreversible process of enlargement. There is a new momentum since the month of October. On 9 October the European Commission - in the Plenary of the European Parliament - announced that ten candidate countries were ready to join the European Union in 2004. On 19 October this momentum took very real form. As an Irish European, I am very proud to remind you that after a very active campaign, the Irish electorate gave an emphatic “yes” to enlargement. Close to the date of the 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the collapse of the Berlin wall, the only people to be directly consulted metaphorically removed the last brick of the Berlin wall and gave a clear message to the European Union's leaders: “enlargement yes and enlargement now”. This momentum carried forward to the Brussels European Council at the end of October which paved the way for a viable compromise.

Today is a further step forward. As representative of the European Parliament, let me recall that it was the European Parliament in November 2000 that first set a timeframe for completing the first wave of the next enlargement, namely that it should be completed in time for the new Member States to take part in the next elections to the European Parliament in 2004. This is a prospect which soon awaits ten new Member States.

Let me repeat today what I told the National Assembly of Bulgaria and the Joint Houses of the Romanian Parliament last week: The fifth Enlargement of EU will come in two waves. It is inclusive and irreversible. There should be no preconditions. It is my personal wish that this House and that the European Council in Copenhagen will commit the European Union to a headline date of 2007 for the membership of Bulgaria and Romania. I believe it is part of a moral and political contract, and an anchor of stability in what could be a sea of political uncertainty. Such a target can enhance the necessary transformation still to be achieved by those states and, subject of course to their delivery of what is required, adds for them a real incentive to achieve the necessary change. Last week Kofi Annan's plan for Cyprus offered an historic challenge. He has provided the people of Cyprus with a once-in-a-generation opportunity for a comprehensive settlement, and the best chance after decades of deadlock for a comprehensive settlement enabling a united Cyprus to join the European Union. It is now up for the leaders of both communities to seize this unique opportunity. It will require all the considerable reserves of wisdom and political and moral courage of which President Clerides and Mr Denktash should be capable.

After a lifetime of dedicated service to their respective communities, I do not doubt that they will seek to rise to the task: let me tell them clearly from this historic parliamentary gathering today that they can count on the full support of the European Parliament going forward.

After a lifetime of dedicated service to their respective communities, I do not doubt that they will seek to rise to the task: let me tell them clearly from this historic parliamentary gathering today that they can count on the full support of the European Parliament going forward. In this context, it is a pleasure for me to give a particular welcome to the representatives of the Cyprus House of Representatives, sitting here in the Chamber, and also, to our guests from the Turkish Cypriot community sitting in the Gallery.

As you know, the Grand National Assembly of Turkey has just recently reconvened after their country's general elections and has yet to nominate its delegates to the Joint Parliamentary Committee with the European Parliament. We look forward to meeting them at an early date.

Meanwhile I am pleased to inform you that the leader of the AKP, Mr Erdogan, is expected in Strasbourg later this week.

## 2003 - THE YEAR OF PARLIAMENTARIANISM

If 2002 is the year of preparation for enlargement, assuredly 2003 will be the year of parliaments - with accession treaties to be ratified, with the enlargement message to be sold and with our European parliamentary engagement with Accession States to be deepened. We the elected MPs in the national parliaments of Member States and Accession States and Members of the European Parliament must now do our work. We are the ones with direct contacts to our constituents. We know the aspirations and anxieties of our peoples. We must take possession of the enlargement agenda and communicate it to our citizens. We must give answers but also we must bring vision and give leadership. We are the indispensable democratic link between our constituents, our countries and the European idea. That is why today is so important and why it is also important that our media are here in Strasbourg to cover the event. I thank them for being here in such large numbers.

## EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT / OBSERVERS

Let me recall, that our European Parliament's commitment to enlargement does not stop with today's special session. To all of the Accession States let me say : as soon as you have signed the Accession Treaty, but before it enters into law, the European Parliament wishes to create an avant-garde of this new Europe. We will invite you to send observers to the European Parliament, with all rights of participation in our Groups, our Committees and our Plenary, except the right to vote.

Your observers will come to our Parliament to participate, to demystify, to better understand and to explain to your own public how the European Union works and the better to contribute to your own public debates. At the same time, it will give us in Parliament the opportunity to cope with Europe's new political and cultural diversity and respectively to engage in a process of mutual understanding and political socialisation .

## THE WIDER CONTEXT

Dear Colleagues from the Candidate States,

Until the past decade History robbed you of your rightful place in our European integration project. Your time is now coming. Yours is a generation of transition and transformation that can dream of and deliver new opportunity for your peoples, by signing up to the unique democratic experiment that it the European Union and by sharing the community of values that it represents the values of pluralist democracy, rule of law, market economy, cultural diversity, solidarity and sustainability. Together we can build our continent wide European Union. For the first time in millennia a Union that unites us through a Europe of common values, not at the point of a sword, not from the barrel of an ideological gun, but by the free will of free and sovereign peoples. This is the glittering prize which awaits success. Today is the first time ever on the floor of this House for Accession State parliamentarians to express their hopes, aspirations and concerns.

Let us resolve here today to seize this special moment and together to make History.

# Fundamental Reform of Public Sector Broadcasting in Ireland

RTE, the Irish National Broadcaster, was granted an inflation-linked licence fee increase from the beginning of 2003. The licence in Ireland is now €150, but for the first time 5% of the licence fee every year is to be available to other broadcasters to back "innovative" public service programming. RTE must meet certain specified programming and management standards laid down by an independent regulator, the Government has decided.

Reacting to the news the Director General, Bob Collins, welcomed the decision which was taken following a 2 ½ year debate on public service broadcasting. The debate culminated in the publication of [Report of the Forum on Broadcasting: Department's Report to the Minister](#) RTE had requested:

- a licence fee of €150, an increase of €43 per annum
  - that this sum be erosion proofed
- that consideration be given to the introduction of a commercial licence fee to address the current inequity where householders pay the same rate as those who benefit commercially from having access to television services.

The Government decision on these issues is as follows:

- an increase of €43 per annum
- the application of CPI - X%
- the Minister is to bring forward proposals for a commercial licence fee for licensed premises.

In addition the Government also decided:

- to allocate 5% of the net licence fee to a special public service broadcasting fund for new, additional, innovative content from which free-to-air broadcasters (including RTE) can draw
- that RTE will become a commercial State company with its own Board of 12 Directors
- to abolish the black and white licence fee
- to introduce a direct debit payment system to allow payments be spread over 12 months

These decisions are part of a package, which outlines a fundamental reform of Public Service Broadcasting. The details will be articulated as legislation is developed over the coming months and RTE will play its part in that development. The fundamental question, that of public funding for RTE, has now been addressed.

Following is the press statement issued by the Minister for Communications, Marine and Natural Resources and that of the Chairman of the Authority.

## The statement

Dermot Ahern TD, Minister for Communications, Marine and Natural Resources, today announced a new framework for public service broadcasting with fundamental reform of policy and regulation. The Minister said the Government has approved major legislative changes in the broadcasting sector, along with the establishment of a new Content Regulator for both public and private broadcasters. Under the changes announced, the Government has approved a €43 increase in the television licence fee.

The new annual licence fee with effect from January 1<sup>st</sup> 2003 will be €150. The old black and white licence is to be abolished. A Post, charged with collecting the licence fee, will introduce a direct debit payment system to allow householders spread their fee payment over 12 months in line with payments to other businesses and organisations. RTE will be able to seek annual increases up to the level of the Consumer Price Index but any future increases will be conditional on achieving agreed change

management programmes and broadcast commitments. The new Content Regulator would have to be satisfied that any licence fee increase request was justified before passing it to the Minister for approval. There will also be a five year review of the licence fee. *RTE is in the process of delivering significant change. It knows further change is on the way and it has to be more cost effective and financially accountable in how it delivers its remit. RTE is in a very competitive market place. In an age of increasing globalisation, not least in the message we get on our television screens, I believe the uniquely Irish voice of the station and its reflection and commentary on the life of the nation should be preserved and nurtured. The reforms agreed by Government will require legislative change and I am making it my priority to bring forward those changes as quickly as possible. I am satisfied that this decision sets the framework for far reaching changes in broadcasting and is a real commitment by Government to public sector broadcasting.* Five percent of the net proceeds from the new fee (€7 approx) is to be ring fenced as a special broadcasting fund for new, additional, innovative content, from which all free-to-air broadcasters (independent broadcasters licensed by the BCI and RTE, with special emphasis given to locally based community broadcasters), can draw. This fund is expected to amount to approximately €8 million annually. The new fund is aimed at creating additional innovative public service programming beyond that which is already required of broadcasters and will also be available to support digital archiving. The fund will be administered by the Single Content Regulator, to be known as the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI). The BAI will cover independent and public broadcasters as recommended by the report of the Broadcasting Forum. The Regulator will perform the functions of the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland in the case of independent broadcasters and take on the existing regulatory role of the RTE Authority. RTE is to become a commercial State company with its own board of 12 directors. The Minister is also to bring forward proposals for the introduction of a new commercial TV licence for licensed premises. The Minister said that RTE has been mandated by Government to provide additional indigenous output in Public Service Broadcasting an increase in peak time home produced drama on RTE 1, an increase in Irish language and bilingual programming, an increase in news and current affairs programming, amongst others. RTE is to provide a Statement of Commitment, specifying programmes planned, by the end of the year. (see appendix) *Clearly, this is an issue that has to be addressed. The Government has accepted the €43 figure against the backdrop that of all public service broadcasters in the EU, RTE has up to now the greatest dependency on commercial revenues (64%) for its operations. The new fee increase will reduce this dependency leaving RTE joint highest for commercial revenue dependency with Italy, the Minister said. Minister Ahern said: If we want responsible public service broadcasting we will have to pay for it. I believe the decision today strikes a balance between establishing public service broadcasting on a firmer footing and introducing a content regime which will ensure the taxpayer receives value for their investment.*

## Weekly overview of "Highlights" offered by the EC

The European Commission offers a free weekly overview of "Highlights" for the coming week. It is sent out electronically each Friday and gives very practical information on important European Union events of the coming week (what, where, when, link to background information, name and telephone no of the spokesperson, etc.).

Interested journalists can subscribe free of charge and on-line on this web address: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/press\\_room](http://europa.eu.int/comm/press_room) and then click on "EuropeMedia" in the right top corner. Then they will be guided through the registration.

Other interesting web sites:

EUROPA server: <http://europa.eu.int>

Virtual Press Room:

[http://europa.eu.int/press\\_room](http://europa.eu.int/press_room)

Europe by Satellite:

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/ebis>

## Public broadcasters to pay for Sky

The UK's new Communications Bill is to back Sky's call for public service broadcasters to pay for their carriage on the satellite platform.

As public service channels are obliged to appear on all platforms, the BBC, ITV and Channel 4 had wanted an 'at-cost' agreement with Sky, where they would have had to pay no more than the 313,456 euros that it purportedly costs Sky to transmit the channels each year.

In response, Sky argued that the channels should receive no special treatment and, like everyone else, should have to pay the satellite platform for carriage.

In response, the Director-General of the BBC, Greg Dyke, has threatened to pull BBC transmissions from Sky, worried at the probability of massive cost hikes when it comes to re-negotiating contracts next year.

Advanced-television reports that a source in terrestrial broadcasting said: "Every British government is scared that if they don't roll over for Murdoch, there'll be trouble."

## Eutelsat expands coverage

Eurobird 2 is a Ku-band satellite with a high-power Superbeam coverage that is focussed on western and central Europe, stretching from the British Isles and southern Scandinavia in the north, to Spain Italy and Greece in the south, and across to Poland and Hungary in the east. With a standard dual-feed installation all households already equipped to receive Eurobird 1 will be able to access broadband Internet services simultaneously direct from Eurobird 2.

Eutelsat has also announced the launch of its W5 communications satellite. Scheduled to enter into service by the end of 2002, W5 will enable Eutelsat to extend its market presence in Asia as far as the Pacific Ocean. From its orbital position at 70.5 degrees East, it will provide high performance fixed coverage encompassing Europe, Middle East, central and southern Asia. [www.eutelsat.com](http://www.eutelsat.com)

## 5<sup>th</sup> Annual TV Meets the Web Seminar to be held in Amsterdam, May 15-16

Van Dusseldorp & Partners' Fifth Annual TV Meets the Web Seminar, one of Europe's leading events which will explore how the digital media industry in Europe is restructuring to achieve profitability. The event will be held on May 15th and 16th, 2003, at Amsterdam's Royal Tropical Institute. Under the theme, 'Digital Media: The Path to Profitability', the event will provide representatives of broadcasters, media and entertainment companies, telcos, consumer electronic manufacturers and IT solution vendors with the opportunity to discuss strategies for strengthening their business models, increasing revenue through the provision of new content and services, and making operations more efficient to reduce costs.

Delegates will have the opportunity to network with other professionals and learn about critical issues such as:

- developing successful multi-channel content concepts
- launching content and services which consumers will pay for (video on demand, audio and video subscription packages, SMS and MMS services)
- developing and introducing premium content subscription services (packaging and pricing schemes)
- developing strategic content and distribution partnerships which yield revenue such as those involving broadcasters and mobile operators.

Companies which will deliver presentations at the event include:

### ●Microsoft (Europe)

- former head of analysis and policy planning in the European Commission's Information Society Directorate on a year-long leave of absence to work for Microsoft.

- will discuss the importance of secure and reliable software which guarantees that digital media companies can profit from their content, services and applications.

### ●Vodafone (United Kingdom)

- will discuss its launch of colour and picture-based services across Europe via its Vodafone live! service and outline how it plans to develop partnerships with content providers such as broadcasters, film studios and producers of premium video and audio content to generate revenue.

### ●RealNetworks (USA)

- will discuss the success of its GoldPass and RealOne premium content subscription services which charge users in North America and Europe for streaming audio and video content supplied by broadcasters and music labels.

### ●VideoNetworks Limited(United Kingdom)

- will share information about its experience as one of the UK's only video-on demand service providers, including insight into the provision of diverse TV programming, flexible pricing structures and different subscription packages.

### ●Thomson (France)

- will outline its expansion into the home cinema market by launching a digital media recorder which combines a DVD player with PVR capabilities.

### ●TV2 Interactiv (Norway)

- will discuss TV2 Interactiv's experience of participating in the CinemaNow Worldwide Network which delivers video on demand and

subscription video on demand services to localized markets.

- will discuss specific conditions in Norway, such as high broadband penetration, and how these conditions affect the launch and commercial viability of this video on demand initiative.

### SPECIALTY WORKSHOPS

The Seminar will also feature a series of specialty workshops which will help delegates understand the most pressing issues related to topics such as fighting piracy through digital rights management, content billing, broadcasters' use of streaming video, and the negotiation of revenue-sharing deals between content producers and distributors.

### DIGITAL MEDIA SHOWCASE

To mark the event's fifth anniversary, Van Dusseldorp & Partners has added a special feature to the event: a multi-platform digital content showcase. Representatives of broadcasters, media and entertainment companies, and content production companies will present their most creative, multi-platform content concepts and compete for the TV Meets the Web Excellence in Digital Media Award. Winners will be announced at the event.

For complete information on the event, visit

<http://www.tvmeetstheweb.com/may2003/index.php>

For a list of the 350 delegates who attended the 2002 TV Meets the Web event, please visit

<http://www.tvmeetstheweb.com/may2002/participants.php>

### REGISTRATION

Register before January 16, 2003 to take advantage of Van Dusseldorp & Partner's early bird registration rate of EURO 750 (plus VAT). The regular rate is EURO 1250. To register, visit

<http://www.tvmeetstheweb.com/may2003/registration.php>

## Croatian Government proposed the new Law on Croatian Radio Television

Croatian Government proposed the new Law on *Hrvatska Radiotelevizija* (HRT - Croatian RadioTelevision) on December 5, 2002 and passed it to the regular procedure in Croatian Parliament. The draft Law determines that HRT should stay one integral public institution, instead of two as provisioned by the current Law, but with three organizational units: Television, Radio and Music Production. The governing bodies of the HRT should be: HRT Council, HRT General Manager and HRT Management Board. HRT Council will be made of 11 public figures, selected on the public tender and approved by parliament for a 4-year term. Half of the council will change every two years and politicians and members of parliament are not allowed to be its members. HRT Council will then choose the General Manager, also upon public tender, for a four-year term and pass the HRT Statute. The main task of the HRT Council then will be to supervise implementation of accepted programming guidance. The General Manager will propose to the HRT Council, upon a public tenders, his candidates for the directors of organizational units and all four of them, plus one representative of the HRT employees will make up HRT Management Board, responsible for day-to day operations of the HRT. Directors of the organizational units of Radio and Television will then propose to the HRT Council, upon a public tender, their candidates for the posts of Programme Directors and Editor-in chief of news and current affairs, with the previously obtained consent of the HRT journalists. The Law is expected to be passed in Croatian Parliament early February 2003.

## Third frequency of national TV to be privatized in Croatia

*Vijeće za radio i televiziju* (Council for Radio and Television) called on December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2002 for a public tender for the privatization of the third frequency currently used by *Hrvatska radiotelevizija* (Croatian RadioTelevision). The tender should be published in Official Gazette and potential concessionaires should file for tender documentation within 60 days from that date. The deadline for applications is May 20, 2003. The offers will be opened on June 10, 2002 and the new concessionaire should be known by October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2003. The current Law on Croatian Radiotelevision set the deadlines for this privatization (March 2002), but they were not respected.

## "SMS Meets TV" hits Lisbon next February

Across Europe, SMS based applications are generating eye-catching revenues for television producers, broadcasters, distributors and mobile operators. Recently, it was revealed that UK television hit 'Popstars - the Rivals' has been processing up to 200,000 SMS votes and information requests per hour at peak times. New applications have been launched that allow MMS pictures to be displayed during conventional tv programming. In the Netherlands, viewers can vote via SMS, based on a digital picture, whether a fellow viewer is 'hot or not'. In addition to concepts tied to popular programming, SMS TV is quickly leading to the generation of entirely new television applications such as chat and dating channels. In some countries, basic teletext SMS channels are receiving upwards of 100,000 messages per day! With this in mind, the second 'SMS Meets TV' seminar (<http://www.smsmeetstv.com/overviewlis.php>) is to be held at the Dom Pedro Hotel in Lisbon on February 6. Building on the success of the recent Amsterdam based SMS Meets TV event (<http://www.smsmeetstv.com/report.php>), the organisers aim to provide a deeper exploration of this marketplace and stimulate discussion from leading international broadcasters, production houses, concept creators and mobile operators.



From June 2-6

## The 4<sup>th</sup> Int'l Festival on Environmental Protection & Cultural Heritage in Ohrid

The IV International Festival of TV programmes, titled "ECO-2003", is to be organized under the auspices of Co.Pe.AM. and in association with Circom Regional, in Ohrid, FYRO Macedonia, June 2-6.

The competition of "ECO-2003" is designed to attract editions / programmes from all genres (informative, factual, educational, science, school topics, programmes for children, animation, light entertainment, and feature programmes) outlining themes dedicated on protection of environment and cultural heritage, as well;

All public TV stations / producing corporations are invited to send optionally up to two editions / programmes following each main category (one dedicated to the protection of the environment and the second dedicated to the protection of the cultural heritage);

There are no limits in conjunction with footage of the relevant material;

Only programmes produced after 1 January 2001 are to be considered as eligible for the festival competition;

All entries should be submitted on tapes – BETA, SP, PAL, dubbed or subtitled in English language. Tapes should contain three copies of the script in the original language, as well as three copies of translated script in English; Along with the closing ceremony (June 5 – the

international ecology day), the festival jury composed of international judges is going to institute four creative awards: the best directing, camerawork, script, editing, as well as supplementary special awards by Co.Pe.AM; Grand Prix by Circom Regional for the best programme in general competition, UNESCO Diploma, Statuette issued by the Macedonian Ecological Press Center...

All tapes and scripts of programmes, together with the remainder of accompanied promotional material should be delivered by April 15, to the following address:

Macedonian Radio and Television (for "ECO-2003")

Bul. Goce Delcev b.b., 1000 Scopje, FYRO Macedonia

## Journalist get war trauma training

The BBC is putting in place plans to help journalists cope with trauma as broadcasters weigh up the prospect of covering a war with Iraq.

With the UN inspectors search for signs of banned weapons production now underway, the BBC has begun chemical, biological and radiation warfare training. Teams of journalists will take part in a hostile environment training programmes and will be fitted with respirators and other vital equipment.

A training programme will be also be launched to help journalists handle the emotional impact of reporting from a war zone. A series of workshops, discussions and seminars, as well as counselling services, are being planned to train journalists and other news staff to recognise and deal with the symptoms of traumatic stress, both during and after their assignments. Editors and managers will also be trained in recognising the symptoms of trauma that could be displayed by journalists who have witnessed the horrors of war.

"War is a traumatic business and we cannot avoid that. There is nothing you can do to prettify it, but you can manage the consequences of it," said Mark Brayne, a former World Service journalist. After training to be a psychotherapist, he set up the programme with the BBC and the Dart Centre Europe for Journalism and Trauma.

## Public consultation on digital TV

The European Commission has begun a public consultation process on the remaining barriers to achieving access to services and information through open platforms in digital television (DTV) and third generation (3G) mobile communications. The 'information society for all' vision aims to make electronic services an everyday reality for all citizens, and bring administrations, businesses, citizens, homes and schools into the digital age. Erkki Liikanen, Commissioner for Enterprise and the Information Society, said: "In the future, all digital communications platforms will be able to deliver electronic and information society services. But the precise capabilities of each delivery platform will differ. Therefore open platforms for digital television and 3G mobile will contribute to user choice and interoperability."

Organisations within the DTV and 3G markets have undertaken voluntary initiatives in order to achieve interoperability, but the Commission proposes to monitor the results closely and is prepared to intervene if users are deprived of access to information society services due to a lack of interoperability.

Once the public consultation process is complete, a final report is expected to be adopted as a communication addressed to the European Parliament, the Council, and the Committee of the Regions and the Economic and Social Committee. The consultation will run until 15 February 2003, and a public hearing in Brussels is currently scheduled for 4 February.

## EU broadband oligopoly challenged

The European Commission may resort to court action to open up the broadband market in Europe. Spurred on by the Brussels authorities, the Commission is perturbed with the slow pace of regulations to permit new entrants in the European Union (EU) broadband market.

According to its soon to be released telecommunications report, new broadband operators have been able to penetrate only 0.5 per cent of the EU high-speed Internet market via copper lines. Thus, incumbents still hold a market share of nearly 90 per cent of the market. According to sources, France is drawing up a survival plan for the struggling France Telecom.

## DTV trials look successful in Belgium

The first test phase for digital television in Belgium is proving to be a success. According to the Flemish public television VRT, 75 per cent of the participants in the trial use the extra services available. News and children's programmes are most popular among users with 45 per cent making use of the electronic programme guide and recording facilities at least once a week. The same amount of users also surf the internet through the digital TV service.

The project, digital home platform, received 9m euros from the Belgian Government. The European Union is also considering whether the platform would be suitable to carry its digital project, 'e-Europe'.

# 450 participants attend News World Dublin 2002

## Summary of the key issues

More than 450 participants attended News World Dublin 2002 - making it one of the most successful ever conferences in the event's eight year history. News World 2002 began with a keynote speech by Irish prime minister Bertie Ahern and ended three days later with a major debate on the disconnect between politics, press and the people, hosted by Sir David Frost.

News World - the premier conference and exhibition for the international news industry - announced that it would be returning to the Burlington Hotel in Dublin in 2003, from November 18-20.

### Press freedom and censorship in war zone

Nightline host Ted Koppel has waded into the ongoing debate about war reporting by admitting that, in some cases, the US military is right to exercise censorship. "Live TV coverage could realistically endanger US troops in combat," he told the Libel Defence Resource Centre. "The military ought to have the right to censor that." However, he added: "I think we and representatives of the Pentagon need to get these issues ironed out."

If I'm running a war [against Iraq] and I've got representatives of ABC, NBC, CBS, CNN, MSNBC, al-Jazeera, and the BBC, and they're out there with my troops and they've got the technical capacity to feed back what is happening live, so that the folks who are sitting in Baghdad have only to turn on their set to CNN and they can see what's happening on the front lines from the American vantage point. I'm saying it would be criminal to permit that."

What journalists on the frontline should and shouldn't be allowed to witness and report has become a contentious issue of late, with reporters claiming the US military has been blocking its attempts to report on the campaign in Afghanistan. The military, in turn, has in turn cited national security and personal safety issues when refusing to cooperate with the media.

### Warning

Television journalism risks being "trivialised" in the rush to bring viewers the latest news, rather than explain its significance. That was the warning given to News World delegates in Dublin by Bob Collins, director general of Ireland's state broadcaster, RTE. "What is needed more than ever is understanding on the part of our audiences," said Collins. "We're at risk of seeing news as populism; news as entertainment."

### Training

News organisations that lack resources to train journalists to work in hostile environments should quit the news business "and hand over to those that really care for their staff". That was the hard-hitting message from Chris Cramer, president of CNN International Networks, as he introduced the News World 2002 session on reporting in conflict zones. Cramer said 2002 had been "a terrible and tragic year for our profession".

### Disconnect

The growing disconnect between media, politicians and voters was the subject of News World's forum, introduced by Sir David Frost, presented on Tuesday with the News World Lifetime Achievement Award. As delegates were told earlier in the week, research has established that news programming, and political coverage in particular, is increasingly losing audiences, especially among younger viewers.

## Communications bill signals the selling off of British media

British broadcast media could become simply "a satellite of the US" if the new communications bill comes into force, a UK press watchdog has warned. The bill, unveiled on Wednesday, would allow "significant deregulation to promote competition and investment" according to the government. But, the Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom said that it could signal the selling off of many British broadcasting firms to the highest bidder, and in particular, to the US media giants.

The bill lifts restrictions preventing newspaper groups from owning Channel 5, allowing a bid for Britain's youngest commercial television station by Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, and, for the first time, will allow US media groups to acquire UK broadcasting licences.

### 10 million contract for US broadcaster

After much speculation on his future, veteran US news anchor Petteer Jennings has inked a new deal with ABC News which will keep him with the broadcaster for another three years. As part of the deal, the World News Tonight anchor will also set up his own production company to produce TV documentaries.

Previous reports said ABC was hoping Jennings would take a pay cut as part of his new deal, but he is said to have signed a contract worth around US\$10m - roughly the same amount as his previous contract.

## Circum Report

The "CIRCUM Report" is a monthly publication of CIRCUM Regional, the European Association of Public Regional TV Stations - available on the CR Internet site and coming to CR member stations and personnel either through E-mail or as an A4 size printed newsletter, through the CR General Secretariat from Zagreb. The French version of the CIRCUM Report is conceived and published by the Strasbourg Secretariat with support from the Region Alsace, the Conseil General du Bas-Rhin and the City of Strasbourg.

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All member stations are considered as potential contributors for this publication, with stories about new and innovative ideas, co-productions, exchanges, modern technologies, etc. Especially welcome are short stories and one-liners.

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