**[Public Hearing Opened on the Draft-Rulebook on Amending and Supplementing the Rulebook on the Obligations to Air Originally Created Programme, Music, Documentary and Feature Programmes](https://avmu.mk/en/2021/04/14/public-hearing-opened-on-the-draft-amendment-to-the-plan-for-allocating-and-distributing-the-digital-terrestrial-multiplex-capacities-to-the-operators-of-pecns/)**

At its 13th session held on 18 May 2021, the Agency Council adopted a Draft Rulebook on Amending and Supplementing the Rulebook on the Obligations to Air Originally Created Programme, Music, Documentary and Feature Programmes. Following the text of the Draft Amendment to the Rulebook, a public hearing was opened for the duration of 30 days.

**Press Release**

Referring to the statements by Prime Minister Zoran Zaev in an interview for the “Fokus” weekly, regarding episode 1, “Conspiracy Against the Air,” of the documentary series titled “Editorial Office”, made by the Investigative Reporting Laboratory (IRL), the Agency issued a Press Release to underline that the holders of public offices should refrain from publicly conveying standpoints that express suspicion in the credibility of investigative journalistic stories.

Investigative journalism is key to fulfilling the role of the media in uncovering and analyzing the issues of public interest and in serving as the critic of the authorities. In this context, journalists should not be discouraged; on the contrary, they should be encouraged to investigate various topics related to possible corruption or abuse on the part of the institutions or individuals. If a party concerned considers that the standards and principles of conduct set out in the journalistic codes have not been observed, they may use the existing mechanisms and address the matter to the self-regulatory bodies.

# **French Ambassador Cyrille Baumgartner Pays Working Visit to the AAAVMS**

**Information As a Public Good – Theme of This Year’s World Press Freedom Day**

The World Press Freedom Day was marked on 3 May 2021, under the United Nations’ auspices. The theme of this year’s World Press Freedom Day – Information as a Public Good – aimed to affirm the importance of this issue and to underline the need for strengthening journalism**.** This year, three sub-themes were highlighted as key topics: ensuring the economic viability of the news media, creating mechanisms for ensuring transparency of Internet companies, and enhancing media and information literacy capacities that enable people to recognize, value and defend journalism as a vital part of information as a public good.

The current COVID-19 pandemic has negatively affected the economic performance of news media and media pluralism, and has contributed to the emergence of a global “infodemic”, due to which, as the Agency reminded, it is necessary, now more than ever, to preserve media independence and promote fact-based reporting, which is crucial to the public good globally.

**Supervision over Broadcasters, PECN Operators and Print Media Outlets**

**Broadcasters**

During an ad hoc administrative supervision, performed in the line of duty over "TV Nova" from Gevgelija, the Agency concluded that the broadcaster had made a change into the ownership structure of the outlet without first notifying the Agency and prior to the change having been approved by the Agency, which is contrary to the Law on AAVMS.

This step, as assessed by both parties, would contribute to establishing closer ties between the two cultures, an exchange of values, and greater access to content that would contribute to learning and perfecting the knowledge of the French language more easily.

Director of the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services Zoran Trajchevski had a working meeting today with H.E. Ambassador of the Republic of France Mr. Cyrille Baumgartner and his delegation.

The meeting was focused on the prospects for increasing the number of French television stations retransmitted by the local cable operators.



**May 2021 No.5**

An ad hoc administrative supervision was performed on all 111 broadcasters, in order to determine if any broadcaster had changed their ownership structure without having notified the Agency and before the latter had approved the change. The supervision detected no violations.

The Agency performed regular administrative supervision over all 111 broadcasters that air TV or radio programme, concerning their obligation to submit data on their ownership structure, editorial board, funding sources during the previous year, total revenues and expenses in the previous year resulting from the provision of broadcasting activity and on the average viewership or listenership during the previous year, by 31 March of the current year at the latest, on a special form prepared by the Agency. The supervision showed that the obligation arising from Article 15, Paragraph 1, of the Law on Media, had been fully met by all 111 broadcasters.

**Operators of Public Electronic Communication Networks**

The Total TV operator underwent regular programme supervision concerning its obligation to ensure, free of charge, airing of the public broadcaster’s programme as part of its programme package. The supervision concluded that this operator – which, according to the notification from the Agency for Electronic Communications can operate on the territory of RNM – had failed to provide the programme services of "MRT2", "MRT3", "MRT4" and "MRT5", as part of its programme package, which is contrary to Article 143, Paragraph 3, of the LAAVMS.

As regards the obligation of the operators retransmitting programme services to provide, as a must and free of charge, the programme services of the public broadcaster as part of their programme packages, regular programme supervision was performed over 14 cable operators. The supervision showed that all operators of public electronic communication networks covered by the supervision had been acting in accordance with this obligation arising from the LAAVMS.

As for the obligations relating to the programme services’ registration with the Agency and providing subtitles for the programmes retransmitted by the operators, regular programme supervision was performed over the operators of "Nafi and Beko" and "Drim Sat IPTV", both from Gostivar. The supervision found that the cable operator "Drim Sat IPTV" had been retransmitting the programme service of "TV Tera" for its viewers, without it being covered by the programme package registration certificate issued by the Agency.

Regular programme supervision concerning the obligations related to the registration of programme services with the Agency and providing subtitles for the programmes retransmitted by the operators, was performed on "Kabel L Net", "Kabel Net", "Makedonski Telekom" and "Viva Net".The supervision concluded that the "Viva Net" operator, which, based on the notification from the Agency for Electronic Communications can operate on the territory of the municipality of Berovo, had been retransmitting the programme service of "Agro TV" for its viewers, although this programme had not been covered by the programme registration certificate issued by the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services.

The Agency performed control programme supervision over the "Altra Sat 2000" operator from Ohrid to determine whether this operator had acted upon the public warning measure imposed due to retransmission of programme services not registered with the Agency, in accordance with Article 141 of the LAAVMS. The supervision showed that the "Altra Sat 2000" operator had acted upon the decision sent by the Agency in full.

The Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services performed regular programme supervision over 17 operators of public electronic communication networks. Subject to this supervision was the operators’ obligation to ensure that their retransmitted programme packages include, obligatorily and free of charge, the programme services of the public broadcaster. The supervision concluded that the obligation under Article 143, Paragraph 3 of the LAAVMS had been fully met by all operators of public electronic communication networks.

As for the obligations related to the registration of programme services with the Agency and providing subtitles for the programmes that are retransmitted by the operators, regular programme supervision was performed over the "Vinsat Cable" operator from Vinica. No violations were found during the programme supervision conducted.

The Agency performed control programme supervision over the "Pet Net" operator from Gevgelija to establish if this operator had acted upon the public warning measure issued for retransmitting of programme services not registered with the Agency, in accordance with Article 141 of the LAAVMS. The supervision showed that the "Pet Net" operator had fully acted upon the decision issued by the Agency.

**Print Media Outlets**

The "Kolor Media Plus" Production, Trade and Services Company from Skopje, publisher of the "Ubavina I Zdravje" magazine, underwent control and administrative supervision to establish if it had implemented the public warning measure imposed against it due to failure to meet the obligation to publish an Impressum. The supervision over edition no. 149/2021 of "Ubavina I Zdravje" concluded that the outlet had acted upon the decision to undertake a public warning measure in full.

**Public Warning Measures Imposed**

At its 14th session held on 21 May 2021, the Agency Council adopted a decision to impose a public warning measure over "Antikj Media", publisher of the "Portrait" magazine, due to failure to publish certain data as part of the Impressum.

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