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In the year 2000 the establishment and strengthening of the control bodies to the State Telecommunications Commission continued. After a period of training for the personnel, since the middle of the year the 4 new regional hub stations in Bourgas, Plovdiv, Blagoevgrad and Vratza started their independent work on the monitoring of telecommunications operators in their respective regions.

## **1. RADIO FREQUENCY SPECTRUM MONITORING**

Uninterrupted monitoring of the radio frequency spectrum was carried out in Sofia and Varna, where the State Telecommunications Commission has based its fixed monitoring stations. The Commission still faces certain difficulties with the technical facilities, in the other cities and towns in the country surveillance is carried out periodically, and in response to signals and complaints.

During the year one mobile monitoring station and four specialized control receivers were purchased. In that way the number of the mobile stations was doubled. The equipment in three other mobile stations shall also be upgraded.

For the purposes of an integral national monitoring system, which shall monitor the radio frequency spectrum on the territory of Bulgaria, it is necessary in the coming years to construct at least two more fixed monitoring stations in the cities with enhanced telecommunications traffic (Plovdiv and Bourgas) and to increase the number of the mobile monitoring stations.

In the year 2000 systematic measurements were carried out on the occupation of the radio frequency spectrum in the VHF ranges for radio broadcasting and of the television channels occupation in all cities - regional centers and in the cities along the Western and Eastern borders of the country. The signal levels of the local and remote radio- and TV-transmitters and the levels of transborder interferences were checked.

The results of these measurements show the availability of free radio frequencies and television channels. This fact is considered in decision making for allocation of radio frequency spectrum in the respective cities or regions .

The planned checks of the VHF transmitters led to a substantial reduction in the number of violations, no mutual complaints from the operators and a perceptibly higher quality in signal transmission.

The frequency ranges of the air traffic and the mobile networks are under continuous control, where conformity of the licensed operators to the licence terms and conditions are monitored. Rectification of the breaches on behalf of non-licensed operators has been performed.

## **2. MONITORING OF THE RADIO AND TELEVISION PROGRAMME TRANSMISSION**

During the year the State Telecommunications Commission has taken some further steps in the sphere of radio and television program transmission effected over microwave lines, including monitoring for observance of the compliance with the BTC monopoly. Even the first checks showed violations in that respect and the finalisation of the transmission checks performed on the cable operators continued to remain as one of the priority tasks for 2001. Measures were planned aimed at remedy of the situation, which will include review of the licences granted to all radio and cable operators in the part treating program transmission over microwave lines, for compliance with the requirements as in Art.10 and Art.11 from the Transitional and Final Provisions of the Telecommunications Act.

In compliance with the conditions of Chapter Thirteen from the Telecommunications Act, inspection checks for monitoring and sanctions of the offenders have been carried out of all operators and natural persons, for which reports of breaches have been received, as a result of which 78 administrative penalty acts have been served, and 64 punitive decrees have been issued.

### **3. CONTROL OF THE MARKET FOR RADIO EQUIPMENT AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS TERMINAL DEVICES**

One of the most common offences to the Telecommunications Act is the supply and use of terminal devices and radio equipment, without prior type approval. In order to solve this problem, the Commission has taken the following decisions:

- letters of notice were forwarded to the operating import and distribution companies of terminal equipment in the country, containing detailed representation of the terms and conditions laid down in the Telecommunications Act;
- unwarranted inspection checks were carried out in companies and retail outlets, and any terminal devices lacking type approval have been registered and confiscated, administrative penalty acts have been served and punitive decrees issued.

These checks came to test the interaction between the monitoring bodies of the State Telecommunications Commission and the Regional Departments of the Ministry of the Interior (Police), in compliance with the Instruction for interaction with the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Transport and Communications treating the practical implementation of control in telecommunications. Joint checks were conducted initiated by both parties and the results were good.

Upon request by the Ministry of the Interior a large number of expertise investigations have been carried on radio equipment and decoding cards for satellite programs, confiscated by the responsible authorities.

Despite the measures mentioned above, the State Telecommunications Commission has made an assessment that the success in exercising control over

the terminal equipment is not sufficient. The collaboration of all related government bodies will be sought to discontinue the import of such devices and limit their supply in the country.

#### **4. JUSTIFICATION OF COMPLAINTS**

In 2000 the State Telecommunications Commission initiated checks and carried out measures in response to 175 complaints dealing with radio frequency spectrum interference, harmful emissions by transmitter radio equipment, mutual interference by radio equipment located on the same site, non-licensed cable operators and low quality of programs, transmitted by cable; as well as for technical problems in the subscriber telephone extensions.

In many cases the complaints are related to the performance of non-licensed activity, usually involving non-regulated use of radio frequencies. Sometimes the checks establish ill-intentioned activity by competing companies, such as intentional emission of interference or cable network disconnection. In all cases where evidence of violations to the Telecommunications Act was established, the State Telecommunications Commission has taken measures for elimination of the interference and discontinuation of the illegal activities.

