



IREX  
ProMedia/Serbia  
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Quarterly Report  
July 1, 2003 – September 30, 2003

## I. Summary

During the third quarter of 2003, IREX ProMedia/Serbia continued to support the free and independent press. Scheduled activities during July, August and September promoted IREX's ultimate goal of helping the Serbian media provide citizens with balanced and unbiased news and information necessary to participate in democratic and free market institutions.

### Program highlights for the period include:

- **IREX-Led Privatization Consulting Team Begins Work.** Serbia's Privatization Law requires that broadcast stations transition from publicly-owned outlets to commercial enterprises, and to date, there has been considerable confusion about the process, in particular among municipal broadcasters located outside Belgrade. In an effort to introduce a coordinated approach to bring change to this large segment of the independent media sector, IREX initiated a privatization consulting team, which was formally established in June and is chaired by IREX economics advisor Goran Cetinic. The nine-person team has already organized meetings to formulate the bylaws for municipal media privatization and is advising RTV Kikinda in northern Serbia on forming a new regional television station. As a result of the team's early efforts, government officials have requested it to create a blueprint for the privatization process. In addition to this task, the team will serve as a liaison between the government and municipal broadcasters and provide consulting services such as property valuations upon request. The team consists of a senior television manager, a representative from the Ministry of Privatization, senior auditors, leading privatization experts, a broadcast engineer, and a professor of economics. Their work is breaking new ground and will play a pivotal role in preparing some of the largest radio and television stations outside Belgrade for the commercial market.
- **Summer School for Radio Journalism Held in Kotor.** Fifty students and professionals in radio journalism participated in IREX's Kotor Summer School for Radio, which lasted for five full weeks with one course per week between July 28 and August 29. Journalists and editors from the main private and state radio stations across Serbia attended either an introductory or an advanced course on investigative radio reporting led by ANEM Training Center instructors. Students from the journalism department at the University of Belgrade attended courses devoted to developing basic radio skills in production and writing. During the final week, owners, managers, and senior news editors from radio stations in Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Montenegro attended a regional workshop during which IREX consultant advisor Richard McClear and IREX radio advisor Dusan Masic facilitated discussions on opportunities for regional cooperation such as cross-border reporting, investigative journalism, networking, and information exchanges, particularly on the issues of organized crime, corruption, and trafficking in women. Workshop participants also shared their views on the legal framework for broadcasting in their respective countries and how European integration may impact the region's broadcasting sector.
- **TV B92 Ratings Increase with Launch of Fall Program Schedule** Following the introduction of the new fall program schedule, TV B92 ratings for the entire Serbian population have risen over 70% during daytime viewing hours and 125% during prime time. Although the overall ratings of Serbian television broadcasters have risen in general, none of them has been on par with the increase experienced by TV B92. The TV station was not only able to realize its goal of gaining new viewers, but it managed to keep its existing urban-area audience. Included in the successful fall lineup are two local programs that B92 is producing with support from IREX, *Mile in Transition* and *Stop the Crime*. The first program is a prime-time satirical series on transitional issues facing Serbia; the latter is a digest program dealing with the fight against organized crime in the country.

## II. Media and Political Environment

This quarter began with a hardening of attitudes in an already tense and testy relationship between the independent media and government authorities in Serbia. The government's chief spin doctor, Vladimir Beba Popovic, resigned from his post as Secretary of Communication under combined domestic and international pressure, but too late to ease the strain that his high-profile lawsuits against leading journalists and media organizations had caused between the government and the media.

Despite Popovic's resignation, the ruling coalition in Serbia chose to defy local media and international organizations' pressure to dismiss three members of the already discredited Broadcast Agency Council or to re-elect all nine members of this important regulatory body. In an unusual development reminiscent of the Milosevic era, Dutch Foreign Minister and OSCE chairman Jan de Hoop Scheffer felt compelled to vent his disappointment publicly over the decision by the Serbian Parliament to keep the three disputed members in place. In an ominous development, the personal automobile belonging to Radisav Rodic, controversial businessman and owner of two Serbian high-circulation dailies, Kurir and Glas javnosti, was blown-up, Mafia-style, in the center of Belgrade. Rodic hinted darkly that his unsettled financial business with the ruling political party of Prime Minister Zoran Zivkovic might have had something to do with this attack.

The government announced it was forging ahead with the plan to publish a "white book" of articles about slain Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic, accusing the media of fomenting a "lynch mob" atmosphere directed against government officials. A leading official in the political party of Serbian Interior Minister Dusan Mihajlovic defended numerous legal complaints by highly placed government officials against the media as a "vestige of democracy," explaining that in some countries journalists received death sentences for "lying."

One of the accusations against the government is that Operation Saber, launched by authorities after the state of emergency, is believed to have resulted in the torture and other ill treatments of those the operation sought to detain. At the end of April, the Ministry of Internal Affairs announced that more than 10,000 people had been detained, of who some 4,500 remained in custody. Charges have since been filed against 44 suspects and trials are set to begin in October.

The numerous political scandals over the summer involving Serbia's ruling coalition are also a subject of contention. As opposition leaders such as G-17's Mladjan Dinkic went on the offensive, leveling corruption charges at high government officials, the Government was forced to back off its strategy of blaming the press for impugning its credibility. In August Serbia's ruling coalition found itself on the defensive, trying to fend off critics better informed and more dangerous than journalists: former government executives who joined opposition ranks, armed with insider information about the secrets of a corrupt administration. In a break with recent practice during August, the brunt of the government's counterattack was borne by the opposition, not by the press. A well-documented stream of revelations and classified information from government sources poured into the mainstream press and the government was powerless to stop it. Instead, it seemed at times to be self-destructing, as officials began pointing accusing fingers at each other in futile attempts to avoid being smeared along with everyone else in the ruling coalition. Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Zivkovic showed himself to be far less adept at handling dissent and rebellion within coalition ranks than his predecessor Djindjic, who'd maintained firm discipline throughout his rule.

Under concerted pressure from multiple sides, in August the government stayed busy staving off attacks and put aside solving problems concerning its relations with the media. As a consequence, the European Union decided to temporarily suspend its planned assistance to the now discredited Broadcast Agency Council, and the head of Belgrade's popular radio station 202 resigned in protest. In another development, Belgrade political weekly Reporter was back on the newsstands.

The new development in the print media market sees the popularity rising of Kurir, a daily tabloid that promotes an anti-democratic approach and is rumored to be financed by Legija. This reactionary newspaper is sold at a discount rate of ten dinars, an extremely low price even for the Serbian market (half the price of its competitors). The newspaper is published by the company that also owns Glas Javnosti and it is quickly taking over the older tabloid's readership. Glas Javnosti has lost around 35% of its readers to Kurir in only three months and at the same time Kurir has a daily circulation between

one hundred thousand and one hundred and sixty thousand readers. It is also worrying to see that Kurir has not reached its sales peak and appears to be maintaining this upward sales trend.

Within the print media it has also been observed that the once steady and political central NIN Magazine is becoming extremely critical of the present Government and could arguably be offering a more nationalistic and anti-reformist stance. These trends during the traditionally quiet months of summer do suggest that attitudes are hardening in Serbia and that the reformist zeal is being weakened by a growth in nationalistic rhetoric.

In preparation for the November 2003 Presidential elections, the ruling coalition has managed to somewhat consolidate its ranks by shoring up enough support for a joint DOS candidate to run in the Serbian Presidential elections scheduled for November 16. Dragoljub Micunovic, the present Speaker of Serbia & Montenegro's Parliament and President of the Democratic Center (DC) party, has agreed to stand for DOS in a controversial election that will be boycotted by the majority of opposition parties. He will square off against the Serb nationalist Radical party candidate Tomislav Nikolic, in a contest that most political observers agree is almost certainly bound to fail, as the ruling coalition has refused to amend the election law and suspend the clause requiring a 50 percent majority of voters to participate in the first round of the ballot. This same census provision is the reason Serbian Presidential elections failed the last two times around, in the fall of 2002, when Democratic Party of Serbia's Vojislav Kostunica and G17' Miroljub Labus were the key contenders.

Voter turnout did not reach the required fifty percent of the electorate in 2002, and this time Kostunica and Labus have opted out of the presidential race. Instead, they publicly demanded for immediate Parliamentary elections, claiming that the Serbian Government has lost all popular support and credibility and is using the Presidential ballot as a strategy to deflect voters' attention from the scandals and corruption that beset DOS. Indeed, public opinion surveys support that conclusion, as two thirds of the electorate agrees that only parliamentary elections will present a way out of the present Serbian political impasse.

Politicians' frivolous lawsuits and libel charges against journalists are continuing to be standard practice in Serbia. Meanwhile Television B92 pulled off a spectacular coup by winning exclusive broadcast rights for Serbia & Montenegro of the extremely popular European soccer tournament, the Premier's League. This has caused much false speculation and gossip in the national newspapers about how B92 secured the rights, with many editorials protesting that RTS, the national broadcaster should have been given the rights. B92's Editor in Chief, Veran Matic is very excited about the commercial spin-offs from presenting the League and televising live the top European teams that have to play against Partisans at their home ground in Belgrade. As B92 has the rights for the Serbia and Montenegro territory all the main broadcasters around the world have to take the feed from B92's live coverage of the local matches. It is certainly putting B92 on the international broadcaster's map and giving it very positive exposure.

## **I. Program Activities**

Program activities are presented in order according to the approved October 2002 – March 2004 workplan.

### **Intermediate Result 1**

#### **Journalists Provide Citizens with Objective, Fact-Based, Useful Information**

##### **1.1 Journalists Follow Recognized and Accepted Professional Standards for Reporting**

###### 1.1.1 Journalism Training

###### **A. Radio Training**

In July and August, IREX conducted the annual Kotor Summer School in conjunction with the ANEM Training Center. The summer school ran for a full five weeks this year, with fifty participants in attendance. The school has established itself as the main training center for radio journalists from Serbia during the summer. Again, IREX succeeded in its aim of bringing together journalists and editors from the main radio stations in Serbia, including representatives from the main private and

state radio stations across the region. Overall, the summer school met our expectations in all segments.

Each course lasted one week and ANEM Training Center provided the trainers for the investigative training sessions. Assisted by Rich McClear during the final week, IREX hosted a regional workshop for owners, managers and senior news editors from both public and private radio in Croatia, BiH, Montenegro, Serbia and Vojvodina. This was the first time that key managers from radio stations across the network joined together as part of the ProMedia II project. The topics covered included regional co-operation, cross-border reporting, investigative journalism, networking and the exchange of reports (especially on issues of organized crime, corruption, and sex trafficking), legal framework for broadcasters, joining the European Union and the implications for the region's broadcasters.

#### Investigative radio reporting, introductory level

Trainers: Svetlana Lukic and Danica Vucenic of B92/ANEM.

Guests: Dejan Milemkovic, YUCOM; Nebojsa Samardzic, ANEM; Svetlana Vukovic, B92 investigative reporter

#### Participants:

Multiradio -	Ovidiu Lupsor
Radio BOOM 93	Vlada Jevic
Radio Soko Banja	Bratislav Majkic
Radio Kraljevo	Alen Smigic
Radio Pirot	Ljubisa Stojanovic
Radio Sombor	Tivadar Farago
Radio Subotica	Aleksandar Golcevski
Radio Kragujevac	Slobodanka Smigic
Radio Jagodina	Nebojsa Tatomir
Radio Smederevo	Dragan Pavlovic

Dejan Milenkovic and Nebojsa Samardzic presented the newest legal chapters in the Broadcast and Public Information laws, important to all journalists. They also introduced discussions about journalists' responsibilities and duties and the latest trends in Europe in media regulations. Svetlana Vukovic stressed the importance of interesting and professional radio story telling, drama structure, use of archive material, effects and music and the dangers of these elements overtaking a story itself.

#### Investigative radio reporting, advanced level

Trainers: Svetlana Lukic and Danica Vucenic of B92/ANEM.

Guests: Nenad Lj. Stefanovic, investigative reporter VREME; Svetlana Vukovic, B92 investigative reporter.

#### Participants:

Radio Beograd I program:	Miroslav Nesic Natasa Cukovic Natasa Acimovic Nenad Milutinovic
Radio Beograd II program	Tamara Vucenovic Olivera Rajic
Radio 202	Klara Brbaklic Vesna Dobrosavljevic
Radio City, Nis Radio 021	Zorica Milenkovic Slobodan Krajinovic

Participants in these courses were more experienced than the first course. Svetlana Vukovic stressed the importance of interesting and professional radio story telling, drama structure, use of archive material, effects and music and the dangers of these elements overtaking the story itself. Nenad Stefanovic talked about all the steps in the process of investigative reporting, especially about sourcing and how sources can potentially manipulate journalists' judgments.

In September, IREX developed a syllabus for a new radio course designed to improve the practical skills of the Faculty of Political Science students who are keen to work in the radio industry. This course covers all major areas of radio news production, both in the public and commercial sectors, and presents the latest programming and journalism standards to post-graduate students. The five best students in the course will be offered one-month placements in leading radio stations in Serbia. University of Belgrade representatives have been very positive about the program and we have included some of their suggestions. They agree that there should be a new team of trainers and lecturers established to implement this very practical course. The objective is to create a team comprising individuals from both the University and ANEM Training Center and the course shall run from January 2004.

#### B. Television News Training

In July, IREX consultant Graham Ironside, along with the IREX Television Technical Advisor trained staff at TV Pozega, located in the Zlatibor region of Central Serbia. IREX and INVISION have previously advised the station on newsroom issues and news program production, and the goal of this refresher course was to assess the knowledge gained and implemented from the previous training and to build further skills as needed. IREX assisted the station's staff to improve the quality of their news presentation, story selection, news package development and editing process. The station's employees also learned ways in which to develop stories ideas and prepare for filming before the actual program production, and were receptive to the new system developed with the assistance of the IREX consultant. They now understand that forward planning and organization is essential for the creation a good news program. IREX also focused on the reorganization of the newsroom and helped the station institute an organizational plan that was initially established during the previous training effort. In a positive shift in attitude and interest, the manager of the station began to attend and actively participate in the morning editorial meetings, which include an evaluation of the previous day's program. IREX will continue to monitor the station and provide occasional follow-up training.

During the quarter IREX technical adviser Sanjin Perisic began developing a video to be used by IREX trainers when working with television stations throughout Serbia. The project is under the supervision of IREX broadcast adviser Russell Peasgood. The purpose of the training video is to provide a visual manual of good and bad practices in all areas of TV news and current affairs production. The video will demonstrate basic camera work, present different techniques for recording interviews, and provide guidelines for how to package a program based on the subject. The tape will be ready for use in early Fall.

In August, the INVISION team conducted a two-week digital editing workshop. The six participants in this training session were from stations recently added to the IREX partner-client list – Sremska TV, TV Cacak, NTV- Nis, TV Apolo and TV Zajecar. TV Zajecar, a station selected for its commitment to local factual programming and its young skillful staff, sent two picture editors to the workshop. IREX technical adviser Sanjin Perisic assisted Dragomir Radovanovic with this training as part of his ongoing professional development to become a local technical trainer. The participants in the training workshop came from different backgrounds in terms of education and professional experience; most lacked basic knowledge on how to operate different formats of equipment and were not familiar with the modern principles of picture and sound editing, let alone the concepts of modern news coverage. The participants' editors-in-chief had expressed the need to have their picture editors trained in both linear and non-linear editing, taking into consideration both the type of equipment presently available at local TV stations as well as the technological trend towards the new computerized, digital technology.

For two weeks in September, IREX provided on-the-job training to camera operators at TV Apolo in Novi Sad in order to prepare them for practical work in the field. As part of the training, the cameramen were required to record different kinds of sequences that help tell a news story for television. This including teaching cameramen, tape editors and journalists the visual importance of their stories and improving the visual impact of their filmed sequences. We are moving the station away from recording a series of interviews and improving the quality of their journalism. After practical training sessions, the production teams were encouraged to go out on location and record alone without IREX suggestions. After editing and analyzing the material, they went out to film the same sequences once again, this time making sure that the techniques they had learned were being implemented. At the end of the training period IREX staff helped the camera operators practice stand ups with journalists.

Also in September, IREX consultant Graham Moreland and IREX technical advisor Sanjin Perisic visited TV Zajecar to provide training on all aspects of news production. IREX Consultant, Bob Bairstow, also visited the station during this time to provide marketing and sales training (see activity IR 4.2.1 below).

During the first week of the training, the IREX trainers went over issues related to the theory and practice of television journalism along with some practical work with the camera and tape editing. The cameramen and the picture editors who had already had INVISION technical training in the past, had clearly absorbed all the best ideas and proved themselves capable of producing high quality work. However, it was clear to the IREX staff that the journalists, recruited mostly from radio, had little idea of the production of television news, and little respect for the technical or creative skills and experience of their 'technician' colleagues.

The strategy of the trainers was therefore to deal comprehensively with the practical problems of newsgathering and the need for creative visual thinking in the production of news packages. Heavy emphasis was placed on the vital need for everyone involved in the production processes to plan ahead, to plan together, and to drive up on-screen standards to consistently high levels.

The IREX trainers ran constant 'critical analysis' sessions, in which the participants examined every aspect of every package and program to spot their shortcomings and to understand how to avoid repeating such mistakes. The superior knowledge of those already trained quickly won over the majority of journalists, with the result that the second week of training – the production of real, new, news packages – was extremely successful. In four full days, the teams produced a total of 14 packages, 12 of them edited and completed for transmission and two remaining to be completed for transmission at the weekend. They far outshone comparable packages on other news programs transmitted in the region and would have been excellent items in any similar program anywhere.

The quality of camerawork and editing was truly outstanding; the journalists realized the need to rely on their colleagues' skills in order to serve the viewer successfully. The skills of writing to pictures – much derided in this part of the world – left them in no doubt about the power of pictures and natural sound in the medium of television news. Thus they discovered for themselves the pleasure and satisfaction of creating lively visual reports, clearly explained by intelligent voice-over scripts. IREX staff is confident that given half a change and some support, RTZ will become a station of good quality news and current affairs.

#### C. Print Media Training

During the quarter IREX staff did preparatory work for an early September print training seminar on business journalism for non-business reporters and consulted with "Danas" on the new IREX-assisted business section in the national circulation newspaper. The objective of the new section is to help improve business coverage in Serbia and increase the quality of specialist reporting with a new home for economic based stories.

IREX media consultant Francis Mdlwonga conducted three two-day courses for 30 journalists at the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (IJAS) in Belgrade. IJAS is an IREX partner organization and is currently very active in the field of professional education and training, having organized several workshops, seminars, and training sessions for journalists in the past year. The courses taught by Mdlwonga at IJAS were designed to teach the participating journalists, none of whom had economic and business-related reporting experience, how to accurately report on business news. During the course they learned the essentials of business journalism, as well as how to write reports about financial markets, corporations and other business-related issues. By using theoretical and practical applications, the participants completed exercises in editing and writing news reports from a business point of view, e.g., the effects a plane crash or an auto recall would have on the financial markets. Mdlwonga saw significant improvement in the writing skills of the journalists, many of whom expressed their gratitude saying this training program had opened new professional vistas for them to report on business and financial issues.

#### D. General Media/Journalism Training

IREX business consultant Christopher Condon held a consultancy at Beta News agency to evaluate what skills and systems the agency had adopted since his last visit. In terms of managing its

responsibilities and delivering high quality news coverage, BETA's business/economic section has made noticeable progress over the last six months since his past visit. Condon predicted that if the business/economic section takes seriously the need to provide at least a limited but consistent supply of features and analysis, the value of this section to the overall Beta product will continue to increase. He also worked with the English-language publication section to provide ideas and motivate the staff to sell more subscriptions. Condon recommended ideas of potential groups of new subscribers and ways to develop a relationship with these organizations.

IREX also organized a special one-day lecture by New York Times reporter David Binder, on accuracy in media. Journalists from media organizations in Belgrade attended this evening event and B92 Television televised part of the lecture. The two-hour event was hosted by NUNS, the Independent Journalist's Association of Serbia, at its facilities in Belgrade.

#### 1.1.2 Small Grants to Improve Journalism and for Investigative Projects

Vreme's Investigative Training Center maintained its core activity thanks to support provided by IREX's annual grant. Eight students per month are selected to work with some of Serbia's most experienced investigative journalists. During each month the students are introduced to investigative principles and techniques. This includes seeking sources, interview techniques, using archives and maintaining records. The students are then sent on various short assignments, from which they are evaluated. The training staff then assigns each student to part of a special feature produced by Vreme. The students write the story but it is edited and managed by the magazines investigative team. The students get a bi-line on the investigative story and can then use this valuable experience in their search for full-time work. IREX can report that seven students have found full-time work following this short course, whilst others have gone on to train as journalists at University.

#### 1.1.3 Focus Group Research

No activity during this quarter.

#### 1.1.4 Journalism Support Website

The AMEN Website is supported by an annual IREX grant. The website continues to produce and present stories that can be shared and aired by all association member stations.

#### 1.1.5 Media Monitoring

No activity during this quarter.

#### 1.1.6 Obtaining Professional Books and Magazines

No activity during this quarter.

### **1.2 Facilities, Equipment, and Technical Skills for Gathering, Producing and Distributing News are Modern**

#### 1.2.1 Technical Consulting Service

No activity in this quarter

#### 1.2.2 Small Grants to Support Technical Training and Technical Upgrades

No activity in this quarter

### **1.3 Journalists Reintegrate with their Peers Inside and Outside Serbia**

#### 1.3.1 Media Partnerships

No activity during this quarter.

#### 1.3.2 Study Tours

No activity during this quarter.

## **Intermediate Result 2**

### **The Physical and Institutional Infrastructure Supports the Efficient Production and Dissemination of News and Information**

## **2.1 Physical Infrastructure Supports the Broadcast of Independent Media**

### 2.1.1 Assessing and Rebuilding Broadcast Infrastructure

A. Adopting Technical Solutions That Provide Competitive Product (Studio and Broadcast Equipment)  
No activity during this quarter.

B. Developing Fast and Efficient Production Process (TV Production Equipment)  
No activity during this quarter

C. Equipment Projects for Radio Stations  
No activity during this quarter.

### 2.1.2 Grant Support to RTV B92 and ANEM

A. Satellite Interconnection between the Hub and the Affiliates.  
IREX continues to provide funds for the satellite connection that allows B92 to relay programs to other ANEM radio and television stations and ensures that B92 news, acquired programs, sports coverage and special documentaries are shared and presented to as wide an audience as possible in Serbia.

B. Entertainment Programming  
Activity completed

### 2.1.3 RTV B92 Studio Construction and National Rollout

Dejan Misovic, the IREX construction project consultant, continued to hold weekly meetings with Izolacija (the supervisory company), the supervisory board and B92 officials to assure the project remains on target. His monthly reports during the quarter indicated that there is nothing extraordinary concerning the project or the timeline, all is on track.

Site visits by IREX staff in August found that as many as 80-100 workers were engaged on the project at a single time. There was visible progress of wall completion, climate control installation, general wiring, window installation and major plumbing and cable progress. B92 filed for final legal approval of completed works and expected to receive it in late September/early October.

B92 feels the entire project may be running seven days behind schedule, but by November 1 the project should be 95% finished with the remaining 5% confined to inside work and detail. The IREX construction advisor will prepare a letter outlining the protections IREX has against contractors or sub contractors leaving the site prior to completion. All construction material is now on site and in possession of B92. This leverage is seen as a strong deterrent to any contractor leaving the site unfinished since they will only be paid for work that has been certified as complete.

To date IREX has spent \$944,584 which leaves \$299,992 remaining or 25% of the total IREX obligation. In addition B92 holds 200,000 Euro in barter and an additional 70,000 Euro in additional works to be paid by B92.

During the quarter, B92 filed an appeal with municipal officials concerning the construction permit granted to the GTC House company, which started construction of a trade center building on the property bordering the east of the B92 project. The GTC permit apparently allows a street and a loading dock directly adjacent to the B92 building. It is feared that this may present noise problems and a loss of parking.

## **2.2 Print Media have Access to Adequate Printing and Distribution Networks**

### 2.2.1 Assist in the Improvement of Printing Systems and Distribution Networks

No activity in this quarter.

## **2.3 Independent Media have Technical Access to News Agency Services**

### 2.3.1 Support for Independent News Agencies

IREX maintained support for the BETA regional website in its annual grant to the news agency. The regional service provided for news reports from across the Balkans and included reports from ethnic minorities in Serbia. This grant expired in September.

### **Intermediate Result 3**

#### **Legal and Regulatory Framework Supports Free Speech**

##### **3.1 Media Licensing and Frequency Allocation is Fair and Apolitical**

###### 3.1.1 Consulting on the New Broadcast and Telecommunications Laws

No activity during this quarter.

##### **3.2 Independent Associations and NGOs Support and Protect the Rights of Journalists and Media Outlets**

###### 3.2.1 Support Serbian Indigenous Legal Defense Capacity

No activity during this quarter.

###### 3.2.2 Public Service Announcements

No activity during this quarter.

##### **3.3 Media Privatize in a Fair and Transparent Manner**

###### 3.3.1 Consultation on Privatization and Sponsoring Privatization Workshops

In an effort to introduce a coordinated approach to bring change to this large segment of the independent media sector, IREX established a nine-person privatization consulting team comprising a senior television manager, a representative from the Ministry of Privatization, senior auditors, leading privatization experts, a broadcast engineer, and a professor of economics. As a result of their early efforts, government officials asked the team to help create a blueprint for the privatization process. In addition to this task, the team will serve as a liaison between the government and municipal broadcasters and provide consulting services such as property valuations upon request.

The team's July activities involved examining the privatization problems of municipal broadcasters outside of Belgrade. The two main areas of assistance were: 1) monitoring the media privatization process, identifying main problems, initiating solutions and maintaining communication with local media, and 2) providing consulting advice for specific problems of individual media at their request.

In September, the privatization team met formally for the first time to review the draft privatization guidelines drawn up by the Ministry of Culture and Media. The main issue under discussion was the percentage of ownership that should be offered to the private sector – the Ministry proposed one-third, while most members of the privatization team lobbied for 70%. Following much debate, it was agreed that the representatives of the Ministry would put together a new draft for wider discussion in the larger Serbian towns such as Nis, Kragujevac and Kraljevo. It was also agreed that IREX would organize discussions with other media not yet covered by the Ministry and that their ideas would be considered for the guidelines.

The following program of activity on privatization was proposed and agreed upon by the privatization team:

- Privatization Council monthly meetings (September 2003 – March 2004)
- Roundtable discussion on new regulation from the Ministry on how to apply the privatization law (October 2003)
- Conference on problems of media privatization in Serbia (December 2003)
- Baseline study (face-to-face interviews) on 60 media outlets on economic, political and privatization problems to be kept as a database for privatization consultation (September/October 2003)
- Roundtable discussion on the progress of applying the privatization law and privatization process in the media (March 2004)

- Consultations for individual media outlets on privatization problems and value assessment assistance (September 2003 – March 2004)

## **Intermediate Result 4**

### **Publishers and Station Managers Effectively Manage Media Enterprises**

#### **4.1 Media Outlets Utilize Strategic and Business Plans that Contribute to Efficient Management**

##### 4.1.1 Training to Improve Strategic Planning

IREX Serbia conducted another round of television management consultancy in September. To ensure maximum impact and to help facilitate change, a team of two IREX consultants work together to provide a complementary approach, offering significant improvements in the professional skills of television managers in Serbia. Graeme Moorland, a sales and marketing consultant, and Bob Bairstow, a program scheduling and promotions consultant, worked with the Invision team at the following stations: Television Cacak, Gradska TV, TV Nis and Apolo TV in Novi Sad. Moorland and Bairstow examined results of previous consultancies and analyzed the improvements made in audience figures, viewer satisfaction, production developments and income, then worked with the management team at each station to make further adaptations to their program schedules in order to increase viewership and loyalty to their stations. Promotional materials were developed in conjunction with the sales teams, who also refocused their efforts in line with changing reactions by the competition and fluctuations in the market conditions. New techniques for marketing, selling and promoting were introduced and the management teams set new benchmarks for the coming months.

##### 4.1.2 Business Consulting Service

IREX Broadcast Adviser Dusan Masic visited Radio 021 in Novi Sad to work with the management and sales team on the relationship between program planning and marketing. The visit was a follow up to the radio training provided by IREX consultant Bud Stiker in June. In addition to the business consulting, Masic worked with the producer on the automated music software, Selecter, and the music policy of the station.

RTV B92 will soon move to its new building which will give B92 management the opportunity to not only reorganize its programming, but to reunite its radio and TV news teams as well. IREX has worked with Sandra Savic, who is in charge of the reorganization, to help her to develop different models so that the radio journalists can be better organized and subsequently produce programs that are more relevant to the station's audience. IREX is currently working on establishing a joint news desk for radio and TV, a joint news-planning department, and news teams for its main news programs (Kaziprst, Dnevnik u 9h and Dnevnik u 17h). There has been a lot of resistance from news editors in the radio and TV sections, but Sandra is determined to make the changes. October radio research results will be crucial in future programming and management decisions.

##### 4.1.3 Developing Marketing and Sales

Wes Burd and Patricia Torres-Burd, IREX business consultants, visited B92 in July to help the station develop an on- and off-air program promotion strategy. Burd has worked with the station on business and sales issues on an on-going basis during the past year. On this occasion, Torres-Burd joined him to work with the program and promotion teams to stream-line the production and scheduling of program and news promotions. The consultants found that there was a lack of information sharing between the promotion and programming departments on the program schedule and the timing grid (i.e., length of programs and amount of time for breaks in between), and stressed the importance of having the departments in sync with each other at all stages of the promotion scheduling and production processes. The consultants gave advice on ways to identify a select group of programs to promote and how to develop a promotion style according to the genre of the program. B92 employees were very open to a more aggressive and unified approach to promoting the news, as it is the foundation and image of the station. During the consultancy, B92 staff finalized the station's fall program schedule and developed a creative and effective promotion strategy.

##### 4.1.4 Small Demonstration Projects in Management

No significant activity this quarter.

#### **4.2 Effective Use of Market Research and Ratings to Increase Audience Share**

After performing a competitive bid to identify a market research firm to conduct surveys of the TV, radio, and print sectors in Serbia, IREX selected the Strategic Marketing and Media Research Institute (SMRRI) Group of Belgrade. IREX awarded SMMRI the contract based on its years of experience in providing market research data and its ability to offer a large coverage area, a user-friendly software system for interpreting data, competitive fees, and a quicker delivery time than its competitors. IREX will use the market research results to help media outlets develop more effective marketing and editorial strategies and monitor trends. IREX consultants have put together the list of towns for the first SMMRI research and are working on questions to be included in the questioner for this research.

#### 4.2.1 Market and Audience Research

The fourth round of consultancies in programming/scheduling and marketing/sales was conducted this past month by IREX consultants Robert Bairstow and Graeme Moreland. The training consisted of an initial on-site assessment of TV Zajecar, a new station added to the training list, and follow-up sessions at NTV Nis, TV Kragujevac, and TV Apolo. The follow-up visits to the three stations showed mixed results as far as achievements gained since the consultants' last visit in April. The majority of stations have made some progress on their programming and scheduling, however they are still struggling to increase commercial revenue due in part to the effects of privatization. At TV Zajecar, Bairstow and Moreland found the young team to be very receptive to and interested in learning new ways to use scheduling/programming ideas to increase revenue. The station has successfully obtained the rights to rebroadcast TV B92 programming, which will help attract new viewers to the station.

Following the introduction of the new fall program schedule, TV B92 ratings for the entire Serbian population have risen over 70% during daytime viewing hours and 125% during prime time. Although the overall ratings of Serbian television broadcasters have risen in general, none of them has been on par with the increase experienced by TV B92. The TV station was not only able to realize its goal of gaining new viewers, but it managed to keep its existing urban-area audience. Included in the successful fall lineup are two local programs that B92 is producing with support from IREX, *Mile in Transition* and *Stop the Crime*. The first program is a prime-time satirical series on transitional issues facing Serbia; the latter is a digest program dealing with the fight against organized crime in the country.

### **4.3 Supporting Institutions Function in the Business Interests of Independent Media**

Support for the ANEM Hub and legal office continued through this quarter. This was important as association members continued to face problems with issues surrounding the new privatization legislation and related to the depressed economy.

#### 4.3.1 Small Grants and Consulting to Help Media Associations

IREX Serbia continued its support for the Association of Private Media (APM). This annual grant includes financial support for the association's regional co-operation program, which aims to bring managers of local publications together in support of common publishing and distribution laws and tariffs. In addition the IREX grant also supports APM's direct lobbying with the Serbian Government over adverse tax rules that hinder the development of magazines and newspapers.

### **Intermediate Result 5**

#### **Covering the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY)**

To date, the Hague coverage project has hosted a total of 50 different Serbian reporters, representing 11 top media outlets in Serbia for a combined total of 3,963 reporter days and over 2000 hours of live TV coverage. In addition, there has been an 80% savings by renting a house for visiting journalists as compared to hotel per diem rates for The Hague.

In the last quarter the IREX Hague House has had to work around many changes due to Milosevic's illness and the closing of the tribunal during the month of August. It was announced in September that the trial would now be conducted only three days a week due to the declining health of Milosevic. Despite these recessions, there have still been important events that have occurred such as the guilty plea in August by Miodrag Jokic, a retired Yugoslav Navy Commander on trial for war-crimes for the deadly shelling of Dubrovnik in 1991. The 68-year-old general formerly surrendered to the Tribunal in November 2001 and originally pleaded not guilty to the charges against him. The shelling is one of the many events listed in the indictment against the former Yugoslav president, Slobodan Milosevic.

In September, the UN Security Council renewed Carla Del Ponte's mandate at the ICTY for another 4-year term. Del Ponte reiterated the difficult challenge ahead and stressed the need for cooperation from all governments in the regions to allow the Officer of the Prosecutor to perform its work bringing to justice the most important cases involving the most senior leaders before the 2004 deadline. She cited three priorities: Complete all investigations by 2004, ensure the surrender of all remaining fugitives, and facilitate and support the objectives of the judges to finalize all trials in 2008 and appeals in 2010.

From an operational standpoint things are going well. This quarter the IREX Hague Project received cost share from Press Now for \$10,841 USD, the third agreement with the Dutch-based organization. In addition, with the help of Media Advisor Ljiljana Smajlovic, the Norwegian People's Aid donated funds of 3,000 USD to cover the rent of the Hague house during the month of September.

Also in September, the high power amplifier (HPA) was finally repaired and the satellite van was returned to full operational service. The HPA is one of the components required for proper functioning of the IREX satellite van, an integrated broadcast facility with a series of interacting components allowing it to transmit satellite uplink signals. The van is maintained by B92 broadcast technicians and used to send live reports back to the B92 studio in Belgrade. Over the course of The Hague project, the HPA has failed and required repair several times, forcing IREX to rent a replacement uplink van to ensure uninterrupted coverage of the trials at the ICTY. The rental rate for an uplink van is \$1700/day and repairs often take two to three weeks. In anticipation of future possible breakdowns and thus future interruptions to the live broadcast service, IREX is in negotiations to purchase a back up amplifier. Given the sensitive nature of the equipment, the HPA is prone to occasional breakdowns because of the high level of daily usage required by the Serbian journalists in The Hague. Having two HPAs available will allow IREX to avoid the high cost of renting a replacement uplink when repairs or maintenance are required, and enable the Serbian journalists to provide continuous coverage of the ICTY.

#### **IREX Hague House Occupancy**

From July 1 to September 30, 2003, the following journalists reported from The Hague on a rotating basis:

- |     |                    |                    |
|-----|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1.  | Nenad Stefanovic   | Vreme              |
| 2.  | Ljiljana Smajlovic | NIN                |
| 3.  | Brkic Bojan        | RTS                |
| 4.  | Radosa Milutinovic | BETA               |
| 5.  | Ljubica Gojic      | B 92               |
| 6.  | Zlatko Cobovic     | FoNet              |
| 7.  | Ivan Nikolic       | Danas              |
| 8.  | Filip Jasnic       | B 92               |
| 9.  | Srdjan Rsumovic    | B 92               |
| 10. | Nenad Stefanovic   | Vreme              |
| 11. | Ljubia Bradovic    | Nezavisna Svetlost |

\*Please note the Tribunal was in recess during the month of August.

#### **IV. OTHER**

##### **Subaward Overview**

The table below summarizes the subawards, totaling 407,672.37 USD, awarded during the third quarter of 2003.

<b>Recipient</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Amount (USD)</b>
<b>Strategic Marketing</b>	Radio, TV, and Print Market Research Oct 03 - Jan 04	81,000
<b>RTV Kragujevac</b>	Purchase of Camera Production of TV Series on Property Nationalization after WWII	17,680
<b>Radio Luna</b>	Purchase Radio Broadcast Mixer	5,500

<b>RTV B92</b>	Purchase of BBC Programming - Stop the Crime	14,700
<b>FoNet</b>	Create an Online Photo Archive	20,705
<b>RTV B92</b>	Power Supply Upgrade	59,280.37
<b>Media Art Services International</b>	Articles on Media Legislation	2,880
<b>ANEM</b>	Satellite Uplink	122,800
<b>TV Cacak</b>	Environmental Programming & Equipment	10,940
<b>Zemunaska Hronika</b>	Publish Summer Edition and Weekly Editions on Investigative Stories	8,600
<b>APM</b>	Operational Costs	15,530
<b>Media Center</b>	Summer 2003 Journalism Training	35,190
<b>BETA</b>	Sporting Event Reporting and Equipment	12,867