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OVERVIEW

This is the thirteenth quarterly report for the Internews Broadcast Media Strengthening Program in Armenia, reflecting activity and achievements between October 1 and December 31, 2003. Our activities are on schedule and have been successfully implemented during these past three months.

LOCAL EVENTS AFFECTING THE MEDIA

Events that are of significance to the mass media of Armenia for the covered period can be categorized into two main groups: [1] on-going competitions for various frequencies in the capital and regions of Armenia and [2] continuing debates over the laws *On Mass Media and Radio & Television*.

In the October – December period, frequency-licensing competitions were carried out both in Yerevan and in the regions of Armenia. For the period covered, the commission considered the proposals of the following broadcasters in October (winners in bold):

- Channel 3 (VHF) – A1+ TV, **AR TV** (Yerevan)
- Channel 63 (UHF) – Noyan Tapan, **Armnews**, A1+ (Yerevan)
- Channel 37 [UHF] - **Ankyun+3** (Alaverdi)
- Channel 32 (UHF) – **Lori**, Media Soft (Vanadzor)
- Channel 12 (UHF) – **Qamut** (Noyemberyan)
- Channel 21 (UHF) – **G.A. L. & Company** (Sevan)
- Channel 21 (UHF) – no application (Hrazdan)
- Channel 21 (UHF) – no application (Yeghegnadzor)
- Channel 2 (VHF) – **Shant**, Tsayg (Gyumri)
- Channel 28 (UHF) – **Tsayg** (Gyumri)
- Channel 29 (UHF) – **Fortuna** (Stepanavan)
- Channel 12 [VHF] – **Ijevan Studio**, Shoghardzagank (Noyemberyan)

In November, competitions were announced and decisions were made for:

- Channel 30 (UHF) in Artashat

- Channel 27 (UHF) in Gavar
- Channel 12 (VHF) in Hrazdan
- Channel 6 (VHF) – **Shirak** (Gyumri)

And in December, the commission reviewed:

- Channel 56 (UHF) – A1+, Noyan Tapan, Avetis, **Yerkir Media** (Yerevan)

A1+ and Noyan Tapan TV companies again among the competition participants still did not receive a commission majority vote. As a result of the competition conducted in December, the broadcasting ground of Armenia underwent certain changes. The newly formed *Yerkir Media* now owns a license for the 56th frequency that used to belong to *ART 13*. Officially, *Yerkir Media* is an independent organization however; it enjoys support by the Dashnaksutyun party and other Diaspora broadcasters founded by the party. Again, the commission preferred the unknown/new submission and general feeling is that A1+ and Noyan Tapan have had their last chance to get back to broadcasting.

The day before the competition, December 23, the heads of the Journalists' Union of Armenia, Media Support Internews NGO, the Association of Film Critics and Reporters of Armenia, the Association of Investigative Journalists, the Yerevan Press Club, the Committee on Protecting Freedom of Speech and the Asparez Journalists' Club wrote to TV and Radio Commission Chair Grigor Amalyan and his commission. The appeal by these seven media organizations of Armenia reminded the members that previously conducted competitions for broadcast licensing have resulted in a large public reaction as well as attracting the attention of numerous international entities. The letter stressed that the process of decision-making by the Commission should be transparent. It suggested involving five independent experts in discussing the applications for the 56th frequency – all in compliance with the R.A. law *On Television and Radio*, the regulations of the National Commission and the decision of the regulating body on the procedure for carrying out competitions which states that the Commission could involve experts in the discussion process.

That day, Grigor Amalyan, the chairman of the Commission, responded to the letter expressing gratitude to the media organizations and assuring them that, if necessary, the Commission would make use of the experts' services "to the extent of their professional resources."

Carried out in a calm atmosphere, regional competition resulted in some changes with some openings remaining unclaimed. Anna TV lost its license and the right to broadcast on the 30th UHF channel [Artashat] and consequently that position is currently open. Their decision was predicated on economic problems. Thus, the market is being adjusted and changed in both artificial and evolutionary ways.

Another noteworthy event was the adoption of the third reading of the *Law on Mass Media* in December 2003. Prior to December 13th – the day of the adoption – the law had undergone a series of changes, distinctly different from the first version. However it is worth mention that the adoption of the law was preceded by a unique confrontation between media organizations, in large part provoked by the National Press Club. The ultimate adoption of the law ended up minimizing what could have been a concerted effort by all members of the industry to improve the law and make it more media friendly. The National Press Club's alternative version of the draft law as submitted to the commission was less liberal and stipulated much less freedom

for the mass media. Overall, Internews is not displeased with the new law and hopes that subsequent work with an eye to amending certain areas of it can be accomplished through interaction via newly established synergies with the members of the National Assembly.

Internews, the Yerevan Press Club and Journalists' Union of Armenia have been constructively criticizing the law for some time. Their stance was that the law as adopted was not dangerous and did not worsen the existing situation with the mass media. In particular, the new law does not stipulate licensing of the mass media activities, which then showcase's the law among similar laws in other NIS countries. During a series of meetings with journalists, including meetings in the regions, it became clear that many journalists did not fully realize the real problems of the legislation. In the process of discussing and informing this constituency many problem areas of the draft law were clarified. Amendments suggested by the Yerevan Press Club, Internews and the Journalists' Union of Armenia were openly discussed and crafted. The adopted law is not a perfect one. However, in many respects, it contributes to the market improvement although all agree that it will require periodic changes to stay abreast of a growing industry.

One of the most positive aspects of working on the revision of the draft law was the ability to have constructive dialogue between media organizations and the mass media on the one hand and the Commission on Science and Culture at the National Assembly and the representatives of the Ministry of Justice – the initial drafters – on the other hand. This synergy cannot be minimized as a tremendous step towards citizen participation in the legislative process and Internews is proud to be a part of that movement.

Unfortunately, the fuss about this legislation overshadowed another process – making changes to the *Law on Television and Radio*. As a result, the third reading was replete with useless and negative amendments to an already inferior law. Here, the parliament displayed its devotion to the Council of Europe but the result was no change. Later in this report there is a full explanation of the Internews efforts as they concern our work in this area. Also occurring in this period was passage of the law *On Freedom of Information*.

On November 18th the court of primary jurisdiction for the Center and Nork-Marash communities of Yerevan announced its verdict on the murder of Tigran Naghdalyan, the former Chairman of the Council of Public TV and Radio Company. The four-month trial ended with a guilty verdict for all 13 defendants. The penalties imposed followed prosecutorial suggestions.

I. PROGRESS ACCORDING TO TARGETS

Internews is working under USAID Armenia's Strategic Objective 2.1: More Transparent, Accountable and Responsive Governance, specifically pursuing the following Intermediate Results:

IR 2.0: Strengthened Independent Media

IR 2.1: Increased Quality of the News

IR 2.2: Increased Quantity of the News

Internews has undertaken the following projects:

- Conducted a four-week Journalism Seminar for 12 journalists, camera operators and editors from various TV stations in Armenia.
- Conducted two on-site training sessions with the journalists and managers from AR TV [Yerevan] and Lori TV [Vanadzor].
- Produced 13 episodes of the weekly, current affairs TV show *Ditak*; 12 episodes of *Crossroads* and 13 episodes of the radio show *Aniv*.
- Conducted a seminar on “Radio Production” for journalists.
- Provided continuing support through our equipment loan-out program.
- Repaired television production equipment for stations around the country.
- Published the handbook *Elements of Journalism*.

IR 2.3: Increased Financial Viability of Media Outlets

- Made technical assistance available to TV stations.

IR 2.4: Improved Media Freedom and Advocacy

- Continued to provide legal consultations to TV and radio stations.

IR 2.5: Improved Informational Circulation

- Maintained and updated seven websites.
- Published over 60 news items about the Armenian media on the www.internews.am website.
- Published over 160 national informational pieces on <http://home.media.am>, the local news source.

II. ACTIVITY IN DETAIL

IR 2.1: Increased Quality of News

IR 2.2: Increased Quantity of News

(1.1) TRAINING FOR A STRENGTHENED INDEPENDENT MEDIA

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| A) NAME OF COURSE: | <u>TV Journalism</u> |
| B) CONDUCTED: | November 03 – November 29, Yerevan |
| C) CONSULTANT: | Don Ray (USA) |
| D) PARTICIPANTS: | 12 trainees (5 female) from 10 TV stations |

Consultants: a strength in the skills of interviewing as paramount in the value added of Don Ray as the lead trainer in this seminar. His ability to teach, through personal involvement with the field crews, how to convince even the most unwilling officials to be involved in the story, to take part in the interviews or at least to provide reporters with important information was well received.

There were five guest speakers who offered: Professional Ethics, Media Law, Script Writing for News, Internet for Journalists and Camera Operation. The segment on use of the Internet, conducted by International Media consultant Drew Sullivan, was a wonderful no-cost extension of this popular feature of the Internews training department.

Participants: eight journalists and four cameramen from ten stations were involved in this training. Positively impacting this group was the parity of professional experience each with an average of two-three years of background. The group exhibited extraordinary discipline and were good team players and made the most out of the opportunity to work through and get first-hand knowledge of the many aspects of newsroom management and operations.

Results: despite a somewhat diminished quality of production, the quantity was satisfactory. Five newscasts were produced within two weeks of practical work. The average length of a newscast was about 14 minutes normally made up of four stories and one or two voice-overs or *No Comments*. The final newscast contained 10 stories and lasted almost a half hour. This one was produced by the students to be a showcase of their abilities to the Internews staff, very much offered as a demo of their work, with an eye to continued opportunities to work with this project.

Feedback: the main trends in the feedback questionnaires were:

- Interviewing techniques and standards were a consensus choice and motivation for the participants.
- All agreed that their new knowledge and production skills would be generally applicable in everyday work.
- All ranked the training course at very good or good.
- One participant wrote: "Before going out into the field for shooting, we are never asked at our stations what the "story" was about; which aspects of the story needed more consideration; who will answer this particular question, etc.? Here at Internews we were not allowed to go out [for shooting] before answering all the mentioned questions".
- All four of the cameramen stated that they would like to get more training on lighting and sound recording. This understanding of a deficit in production value lends itself to the upcoming ENG/EFP Field Audio and Video seminar set for February. While designed with a more advanced group, the fact that this generation of operators is aware of their needs helps Internews to work to fulfill those requirements with future training work offered by this project.

Conclusions: as has been the case in past Journalism Seminars, this one had a positive impact and went a long way to influence the mindset of these young journalists. It also continued in the tradition of previous sessions by clearly identifying needed elements for subsequent trainings. And, lastly, it underscored the Internews training department's knowledge of the importance of involving local specialists to augment the work of the International trainer.

A) NAME OF COURSE: Radio Production
B) CONDUCTED: December 1 – December 12, 2003, Yerevan
C) CONSULTANTS: Bruce Gellerman (USA), Yuri Storjok (Ukraine)
D) PARTICIPANTS: 7 trainees (5 female) from 5 radio stations

Comments: While only seven of the original 11 participants received Internews' training certificates, the small group enabled the team of consultants to provide each with detailed elements of production and journalism tailored to their specific needs. Another aspect of this workshop that was enhanced by the number of students was the first time team teaching approach of a Western-based and NIS trainer. On the one hand, it was extremely interesting for participants to experience two experts with differing opinions – both of which were correct. The value added of finding that there

are two or more ways to do a story correctly was only surpassed by the division of production that generated each suggestion. Storjok is of the linear production school of thought in that there is no need to re-invent the wheel, if there is a way that has worked in the past, no need to change that now. Gellerman takes a freer and unstructured path to a project – that freedom breeds creativity.

The result: a dynamic seminar that was in the words of the participants: “interesting, intriguing and unusual”. In end the participants were able to produce a “radio hour” format [anthology style show] that ran about 20 minutes in length. And, the team trainers both admitted to learning something as well.

Feedback: students very much appreciated both consultants. One thing was certain for them: both of them were extremely qualified professionals and it was quite an experience to spend a day working with them. Knowledge was shared and judged to be generally applicable to daily requirements at their stations. The first week alone with Gellerman proved to be a good choice since elements of the western style of production for the ‘news hour’ were presented in a more structured environment.

(1.2) OTHER TRAINING EVENTS

(1.2.1) On-Site Training Courses

A) NAME OF COURSE: News Production
B) CONDUCTED: November 10-14, 2003, Vanadzor, Lori TV
C) CONSULTANTS: Harutyun Mansuryan and Levon Kalantar (Internews)
D) PARTICIPANTS: 12 station trainees

A) NAME OF COURSE: News Production
B) CONDUCTED: December 15-18, 2003, Yerevan, Ar TV
C) CONSULTANTS: Harutyun Mansuryan and Levon Kalantar (Internews)
D) PARTICIPANTS: 20 station trainees

(1.2.2) In-House Consultancies

In October, November and December, Internews Armenia conducted a series of individual consultations with students of various journalism departments at universities here in Yerevan. Staff media trainer Lilik Stepanyan is implementing the project. This training specifically focused on the Special Report television production project pioneered by this project. The students from Yerevan State Pedagogical University and Armenian-Russian (Slavonic) State University participated in the training.

Internship in NIS

For the period covered, a representative from Yerevan-based TV station Kentron attended the Pozner School of Journalism.

III. JOURNALISM COMPETITIONS

IR 2.1: Increased Quality of News

IR 2.2: Increased Quantity of News

1. Environmental Films Screening

In November Internews Armenia organized a screening of seven documentary films about the environment that were winners of the recently staged competition "The World Around Us." Internews had awarded grants of up to \$5000 for the production of these films. The films included "The Secret of Eternal Color" by Eskiz Studio about the historical and cultural significance of cochineal – a red dye used by ancient Armenian painters of miniatures. The dye is derived from specific insects and minerals that are in danger of disappearing.

Studio Armna produced two of the winning films: "Plastic," which describes the ecological problems caused by plastic waste; and "Kindred Spirits with Nature," about a person who grows exotic palm trees and cactuses and a scientist who grows a new species of trout.

"Pollution of Hrazdan River" by Zoom Productions covers the problem of river pollution and infections by focusing on the two rivers, Hrazdan and Getar that flow through Yerevan.

"Landslides in Voghjaberd" is about an Armenian village that had to be moved due to mudslides, Nikolay Grigoryan of Emergency Channel, Yerevan, produced it.

Tree cutting and the problems caused by the disappearing forests of Armenia was the subject of "Cutting Forests" by Interkap TV while the film, "The Khosrov Forest Reserve" by Bars Media presented the diverse flora and fauna of Armenia.

All the winning films were broadcast on Prometheus TV.

Internews Publications:

During the period covered by this report, Internews published the book by Bill Kovach *Elements of Journalism* making available 500 copies at no charge to interested professionals working in our industry.

IV. EQUIPMENT REPAIRS, CONSULTANCIES & LOAN OUT

IR 3.1: Increased Quantity of News

IR 3.2: Increased Financial Viability of Media Outlets

Internews' equipment was used to produce television programs by the following organizations:

Cameras: 11 organizations/journalists used Internews' cameras 101 times

Editing Suites: 2 organizations/journalists used Internews' edit suites seven times (35 hours)

Internet: one organization used Internews' Internet computer four times

Dubbing: 14 organizations/journalists used Internews' dubbing equipment 75 times (95 hours)

Internews also continues to provide students from various schools of camera operation and filmmaking with an opportunity to produce videos and films through the no-fee for use system of facilities & mentoring access at our MRC.

V. PROGRAM ACQUISITION AND DISTRIBUTION

IR 2.3: Increased Financial Sustainability of Media Outlets

During this reporting period, Internews dubbed and distributed programs produced by different studios and organizations to the following TV stations:

Station	Location
Hrazdan TV	Hrazdan
Hachin	Nor Hachin
Zangak	Martuni
Last	Goris
Shant	Yerevan
Anna TV	Artashat
Ankyun +3	Alaverdi
Kamut	Noyemberyan
Sosi	Kapan
Sisian yev menk	Sisian
ALT TV	Armavir
Kyavar	Gavar
Tashirk	Tashir
Interkap	Vanadzor
Ashtarak TV	Ashtarak
Lusalik	Charentsavan
Fortuna TV	Stepanavan
Abovyan TV	Abovian
Tsayg	Gyumri

VI. PARTICIPATORY CO-PRODUCTION

IR 2.1: Increased Quality of News

IR 2.2: Increased Quantity of News

IR 2.3: Increased Financial Sustainability of Media Outlets

Perekrestok (Crossroads)

Internews produced and distributed 12 episodes of the weekly Trans-Caucasus [tri-lateral] news exchange program *Perekrestok (Crossroads)* in cooperation with Internews offices in Georgia and Azerbaijan. The following stations broadcast *Perekrestok* in Armenia:

Station	City
Hrazdan TV	Hrazdan
ALT TV	Armavir
Hachin	Nor Hachin
Kyavar	Gavar
Zangak	Martuni

Tashirk	Tashir
Last	Goris
Interkap	Vanadzor
Shant	Gyumri
Shant	Yerevan
Anna TV	Artashat
Armine	Sevan
Lusalik	Charentsavan
Ankyun +3	Alaverdi
Fortuna TV	Stepanavan
Kamut	Noyemberyan
Lanj	Abovian
Dzagedzor	Kapan

Program themes during this period were:

- Armentel is deprived of Monopoly – up to the minute report of the national hearings held to review this provider of telephony service.
- A Portrait Painter – A painter who has dedicated himself to recovering the local traditions of creating tapestry.
- Karahunj Village – A village that is famous for its mulberry vodka, distilled by women, as well as for other displays of a thriving matriarchy.
- Success and Problems of Local Producers – The following a company producing dried fruits and then presenting their goods at the Armprodexpo Exhibition.
- The Clatter of the Hammer – A feature on sculptor Bogdan Hovhannisyan
- Margahovit Village – Gold mines, treasures and a story about values.
- Reforms in the Education System – an in depth look at the future of this institution and how it must change to meet the challenges of this growing country.
- The Chess Champion of Europe – The champion, age 10, is fanatically infatuated with soccer, which works as his muse for chess.
- Vahramaberd – a village of Don Juans and art critics.
- Verdict of the October 27 Case – a review of the courts verdict and its effect on the people of Armenia.
- Playing Duduk without Duduk – a music piece entirely Armenian in style and effect.
- The Inventive, Practical and Hard-working Residents of Vardablur Village – a profile of this archetypal village.

Internews produced and broadcast 13 episodes of the half-hour weekly program *Ditak*. Journalists and camera operators from ten TV stations, as well as freelancers, participated in the program's production. The topics covered include:

- Poverty – a discussion of the Millennium Development Goals view on methods to decrease poverty in Armenia.
- Privatization - covering privatization issues in this episode the producers looked at mining in the northern regions. In one profile, the owner of a mining factory does not fulfill his responsibilities.
- Mail Communication – a look at the mail system in Armenia. What it needs, how it can be improved and work within the legislature and legal framework might serve

the people. The producers will reexamine this issue should the expected government monopoly be awarded for national postal service.

- Jobs and Unemployment – according to the data of the National Statistics Service, 32% of the population is unemployed while the Republican Agency of Jobs and Employment claims 9%. *Ditak* hosted the head of the Republican Employment Center.
- Drug Abuse – covered the issues connected with fighting drug abuse in Armenia.
- Real Estate – this show featured issues connected with the R.A. real estate market. The commercial manager of one of the member-organizations of Realtors' Armenian Association was hosted in the studio.
- Armenia - 2020 – The project *Armenia 2020* attempts to 'see' the development scenarios for Armenia. The three main scenarios of this program were examined.
- Soldiers' Families – showcasing the problems of the relatives of soldiers that were killed in the army and/or during the war.
- Happiness – We observed happiness from the point of view of the current social situation of children and families.
- Disaster Zone - covered the issues of the earthquake zone of disaster. Since 1988, four primary programs for recovery have been implemented. But not one was completed. The in-studio guest was RA Minister of Urban Planning who attempted to clarify the issues connected with the construction work and apartment distribution in the disaster zone.
- Physics - issues connected with the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Yerevan Science and Research Institute of Physics. Professor Edward Laziev discussed the past and the present of physics in Armenia.
- The Disabled – a look at the laws *On Social Protection of the Disabled* and *On Labor and Employment*.
- How the Year is Marked - journalists Susan Sargsyan and Hrachya Papinyan joined the host to discuss the "ups and downs" of 2003.

The following stations broadcast *Ditak* on the weekly basis:

Station	City
Hrazdan TV	Hrazdan
ALT-TV	Armavir
Hachin TV	Nor Hachin
Kyavar	Gavar
Zangak	Martuni
Tashirk	Tashir
Last	Goris
Interkap	Vanadzor
Lori	Vanadzor
Shant	Yerevan
Anna	Artashat
Armine	Sevan
Lusalik	Charentsavan
Ankyun + 3	Alaverdi
Kamut	Noyemberyan
Abovian	Abovian
Sisian yev Menk	Sisian
Fortuna 6+6	Stepanavan
Dzagedzor TV	Kapan
Tsayg TV	Gyumri

Aniv (The Wheel)

This quarter, Internews-affiliated Yerevan freelancers and correspondents from regional radio stations in Vanadzor and Gyumri produced 13 episodes of *Aniv*. They reported on the following themes:

- Gas Tariffs – the Hayrusgazard Company has submitted an application to the state commission on natural monopolies about reviewing the tariffs. *Aniv* tried to find out why the tariffs for gas kept increasing if, according to a contract with the Russian party, it wasn't slated to change for a year, in the process trying to reveal what the government could or might do to prevent or "tone down" the increases.
- Lotteries – Throughout the last year, the number of organizations involved in lottery business has increased 200%. *Aniv* looked at the reason for this expansion
- The Minimum Consumer Index – *Aniv* attempted to discover what is the least amount of money needed survive for a month in Armenia.
- A General Fee for Medical Services – As of November 1, a new system of general fees was introduced in the Yerevan hospitals. The system addresses the treatment of 25 illnesses classified as requiring urgent attention. *Aniv* wanted to find out what were the potential consequences of the system. One interesting note was that persons under 18 were exempted from the fees while pensioners were not.
- The Future of Armenia - How do people view the future of Armenia? What are our country's goals? Which road shall we take to get there? Four possible scenarios of development for Armenia were presented for discussion on this *Aniv* program.
- Drinking Water - By the end of October, more than 200 people had been infected from the drinking water in Yerevan. The pipes and the reservoir were supposedly

decontaminated but the reason for the infection was never discovered. Water supply of the city is in a near fatal state and such problems may well occur in the future again. *Aniv* asked the questions about water safety: who is controlling it and how and what are they doing? What are the consumer rights of the people?

- Municipal Transport - About half of the mini-buses transporting passengers in the capital have no “right” to work. The recent crash that took six lives brought this issue to the forefront. Did the unreported or “black” income of the mini-buses businesses prevail over legal rights and obligations? Why is the government turning a blind eye to this visible problem? Could it be that many politicians and high-ranking government officials are behind the businesses that offer these services?
- Heating - Most winter expenses are for heating. This winter only 148 buildings will be provided with centralized heating in Yerevan. The heating supply system from Soviet times has numerous disadvantages and alternative options currently being tested are not being implemented at this time.
- A Price Rise? - Will the prices for gas, electric power and water increase next year or not? With the year almost over the answer is not clear. *Aniv* once again covers the issues of the rising cost of living in an attempt understand why the decisions are delayed. It turns out that it’s more political than otherwise.
- October 27 Court Decision – the case is completed but the question remained the same: were there any other organizers apart from those on trial? Do we know any more today than we did on October 28, 1999? What did the 4-year investigation and court procedure reveal?
- About the Army - Armenia has adopted a law on alternative military service. Who will take advantage of the possibilities of the new law and how? Is it possible that the law may endanger the strength of our army? What progress was made through the years and what problems are still not solved?
- The Flu Epidemic - few flu shots are offered in Armenia. Instead, there are many excuses offered in connection with the lab research of the virus. This year it was particularly bad. Schools and kindergartens in Armenia were closed to prevent the spread of the disease. However, in the end it was to no avail.
- A Year End Review – a summary of the year’s events and a review on their impact in the coming year for the people of Armenia.

All of the *Aniv* radio programs are available 24 hours a day in archived format and can be found at <http://home.internews.am/aniv/2002.htm>.

The following radio stations broadcast *Aniv* on the weekly basis:

Station	City
Ardzagank	Yerevan
Shant	Gyumri
Interkap	Vanadzor

Khndir

The *Khndir* production team finished the post-production for the feature story examining illegal construction in Yerevan. The piece on the ecology of the Khosrov forest is currently in post-production. Also, the production team started location shooting for the program dealing with the on-going problem of prostitution.

VII. LEGAL SUPPORT

IR 2.4: Improved Media Freedom and Advocacy

1. Media Law

Members of the Internews Legal Department participated in a meeting of an OSCE hosted working group to discuss media related legal issues and to identify and clarify joint steps that might be taken to further changes in legislation. They also gave legal consultations to Noyemi [a production house in Gyumri] regarding their interest in submitting an application for a broadcast license.

The Legal Department participated in the series of round tables with journalists in the Kapan, Gyumri and Vanadzor regions on the draft law on Mass Information with for the purpose of discussing the problems with the draft law and looking for a more countrywide system of suggestions. There was participation in an international conference, in Moscow, on Legal Aspects of Broadcast Licensing, which was jointly organized by Media Law and Policy Institute in cooperation with the Russian Union of Journalists within the framework of a TACIS project of the European Union. Licensing issues were discussed in the context of a European experience. Internews attorneys met with a lawyer from the Media Law and Policy Institute and discussed possible ways for future cooperation.

Research was completed for the materials on broadcast legislation and a concept paper on the state of the broadcast regulation was started. Comments and suggestions on the draft Law on Mass Information were submitted to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science, Education, Culture and Youth, as well as the Ministry of Justice. Suggestions were aimed at the removal of draft law provisions regarding the regulation of the activities foreign media entities. Other suggestions were made regarding the accreditation process, prohibitions to on-line publications and other areas of concern to mass media.

As a result of numerous working meetings and negotiations with Internews and Yerevan Press Club representatives with the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Science, Education, Culture and Youth, as well as the deputy Minister of Justice, the draft law was substantially changed. It was gratifying that the overwhelming majority of those areas Internews' felt were the most crucial were those taken into account by the committee. In particular, the article requiring the implementation of activities of foreign media entities only as a commercial activity which was removed from the draft law and the article concerning the issue of data was amended so as to exclude online media.

Comments and suggestions were prepared and submitted to the appropriate Parliamentary Committee regarding the Changes and Amendments to the draft Law on Television and Radio. This had contained extremely problematic provisions with respect to program sponsorship rules, revocation of the broadcast license as well as criteria of evaluating financial standing of the broadcast license applicants. Suggestions with appropriate wording were made on all of the above-mentioned provisions as prepared by the legal department.

Media law class was conducted for seminar "TV Journalism". Participants were introduced to the basics of Armenian media legislation, as well as some of the

relevant international experiences on limitations on freedom of speech, including defamation laws and state secret protection. This of course is an on-going aspect of all of our seminars and training sessions.

The work on the preparation of legal documentation, including the Charter for the registration of Association of National Broadcasters was completed. This Internews organized group is moving forward on schedule. Participation took place in the Freedom of Information annual award ceremony, devoted to Human Rights Day as well as a seminar on "Copyright in Armenia" organized by the NGO "ArmAuthor".

The team continued their work on a paper on Broadcast Legislative Concept with the analysis of the relevant Armenian laws and concepts to be incorporated into the legislation regulating the broadcasting industry. And finally, the work on the Legal Handbook 2003 has been finished. Changes have been made in the electronic database of the Internews' website with regard to broadcast related legal acts to reflect the recent amendments in media related legislation.

And in an on-going effort, the legal team gave consultations to A1+ on advertising and licensing issues.

VII. INTERNET CLEARINGHOUSE

IR 2.5: Improved Circulation of Information

Internews continues to maintain and update its websites on a daily basis, including the links from our main sites to related Internews sites. At this time, 80% of the stations in the country are able to access this information on the Internews' website for use in their news production as a no-fee news agency service.

Internews has updated its website with over 60 news blocks containing Armenian media-related information. Internews also posted information on different news programs (*Ditak*, *Perekrestok* and *Aniv*) on the web and on the media.am regional news exchange site.

XI. Participation in Workshops, Conferences and Round Table Meetings

- In October, production manager Harutyun Mansuryan participated in the NAB conference in London along with the representatives of three radio stations in Yerevan.
- In October, staff attorney Lusine Abovyan participated in the international conference *Broadcasting Licensing* organized by the Russian Union of Journalists at Media Law and policy Institute in Moscow.
- In November, production manager Harutyun Mansuryan attended a conference on Armenia-Diaspora mass media cooperation in Tsaghkadzor.
- In November, radio producer Narine Safaryan participated in a seminar organized by *Media Diversity* on the relations of NGOs and the mass media.
- In December, Lusine Abovyan, staff attorney, participated in a seminar on the problems of copyright law at the Armenian Academy of Sciences.
- In December, Managing Director Nouneh Sarkissyan and Technical Director Konstantin Geodakyan participated in the conference *Logic of Success* organized by Internews Russia.

- In December, Managing Director Nouneh Sarkissyan participated in the conference *Strategy against Terrorism in South Caucasus* in Sofia (Bulgaria), organized and sponsored by the Naumann Foundation.
- In December, website editor Gegham Vardanyan participated in the *War and Peace Reporting* workshop in Romania.