

Annual Report & Accounts 1990

BROADCASTING AUTHORITY

MALTA

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and Accounts
1990**

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AUTHORITY
MALTA**



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and Accounts
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**Broadcasting Authority
Malta**

THE AUTHORITY

In a relaxed moment before tackling some hot issue



*The Chairman, Mr Laurence Mizzi (middle) is flanked by:
l. to r. Mr Antoine Ellul (Chief Executive), Board Members: Mr Joseph Sammut, Prof. Kenneth Wain,
Mr Joseph J. Camilleri, Dr. Austin Sammut and Board Secretary, Mr Harry Zammit Cordina.*

BROADCASTING AUTHORITY



L-AWTORITA' TAX-XANDIR

MALTA

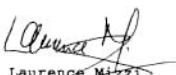
H.E. Dr. V. Tabone, M.D., D.O. (Oxon),
D.O.M.S.(Lond.), D.M.J., F.R.C.S.(Edin.),
President of the Republic of Malta,
The Palace,
Valletta.

17 July, 1991

Dear Mr President,

In accordance with Section 13(4) and (5) of Chapter 165 of the Laws of Malta, we have pleasure in enclosing the Broadcasting Authority's Annual Report and Accounts for the financial year ended 31st December 1990.

Yours sincerely,


Laurence Mizzi
Chairman


A.J. Ellul
Chief Executive

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Introductory

With this Annual Report the Broadcasting Authority commemorates the 29th year of its foundation, the beginning of a decade and the first signs of a new epoch in the history of local broadcasting.

During 1990 – twenty-nine years after the enactment of the Broadcasting Ordinance – the broadcasting structure provided ample evidence that the system needed overhauling as it was inhibiting the development of new services. The Authority had repeatedly made the call for change insisting that the management of broadcasting and the country's telecommunications system are separate issues requiring separate and specialised handling. The Telemalta Corporation could no longer remain responsible for both.

Good broadcasting depends on talent – the talents of people who produce the programmes and for which there is no substitute – but it also depends on the way in which broadcasting is organised because the output of individuals is often conditioned by the structure of the organisation in which they work.

The Authority has been firmly of the opinion that the Broadcasting Ordinance, which was devised to meet the needs of the 1960s, would not be adequate to meet the demands of the 1990s. Government's proposals therefore contained in the White Paper for broadcasting and the ensuing legislation will create a new framework for broadcasting in Malta.

The White Paper

Ever since radio and television started operating in Malta, the public has been provided with programmes from a single source subject to a fluctuating degree of direct or indirect state regulation. The White Paper on broadcasting issued by Government in September 1990 ushers in a new era where radio frequency and TV channel scarcity is a thing of the past; where state regulation is no longer necessary or desirable and where the individual can have direct access to the management of a radio service.

The White Paper set out Government's proposals for establishing pluralism in broadcasting. Subsequent legislation will facilitate the development of new radio services at the national and community levels. The Government is to assign to the Authority ten frequencies in the VHF/FM band for eventual allocation to licensees and contractors who might wish to operate

a nationwide sound broadcasting radio service. One of these services is to be operated by a state-owned company; the other nine will be privately owned.

The White Paper's commitment to the principle of pluralism is further demonstrated through the introduction of Community Radio. This is an entirely new concept for Malta and represents the most local form of broadcasting which, with a service radius of 2.5 kilometres, should cater for communities living in small towns or the larger villages.

Television as such remains largely unaffected by the proposals contained in the White Paper except for the fact that a multi-channel cable television service is to be introduced. The service will carry a new community channel which will be operated by the Broadcasting Authority and an educational channel which will be provided by the Education Department in consultation with the Authority. Xandir Malta will be hived-off from the Telemalta Corporation and will be absorbed by a proposed new limited liability company – Public Broadcasting Services Ltd. – which will assume responsibility for the running of the state's broadcasting services.

The Broadcasting Authority emerges from the White Paper with greatly enhanced responsibilities coupled with a wider range of powers to help it cope with the problems which might develop in the expanded broadcasting situation.

Reactions

There can be no doubt that the framework of broadcasting existing up to the end of the year under review needed changing. One has only to look at the antiquated language of the Broadcasting Ordinance (modelled on the UK ITA Act of 1954) to realise that this outmoded legislation needed to be replaced by a new law which should be clearer, more up-to-date and better able to accommodate rapid change.

The White Paper on Broadcasting offers a framework for regulating expansion, competition and wider choice. The Authority welcomes this both as an endorsement of the importance of broadcasting in the scale of national values and for the opportunities it brings to viewers, listeners and to those who are responsible for the programmes.

The Authority shared Government's objectives, put forward in the White Paper, but questioned whether all the particular proposals, subsequently translated in legislative form, will be workable and will achieve the desired results. The main ones with which the Authority anticipated

difficulties were the licensing of stations to companies owned by political interests and the Government's approach to the Constitutional requirements of balance and impartiality.

The Authority expressed the opinion in its response to the White Paper that the issue of control and ownership of these services is clearly of considerable significance. This point was raised mainly in connection with the fact that no exclusions were contemplated and, therefore, the control of services at national level by political or religious bodies was a distinct possibility. The Authority believes that the purpose of the new broadcasting structure should be to create opportunities for new services and to provide new outlets for expression and communication and not to originate platforms for particular interest groups or lobbies.

The preservation of due impartiality in matters of political or industrial controversy or relating to current public policy is of vital importance. The Constitution requires the Authority to ensure, so far as possible, that this principle is observed in "such sound and television broadcasting services as may be provided in Malta" and this was interpreted to apply to the programme output of each and every broadcasting service operating locally.

In declaring the Government's aim to liberalise the broadcasting sector, particularly in so far as radio services are concerned, the White Paper further proposed that as a result of this "total liberalisation of the citizen's access to and use of this medium" the Constitutional obligations on impartiality and the fair apportionment of facilities will be fully covered.

The Authority insisted on its interpretation and subsequently made it known that, in its considered opinion, every station operator will be required to secure impartiality and fair apportionment of facilities in the coverage of matters of political or industrial controversy or relating to current public policy. This does not rule out the possibility of a slant in a particular Station's editorial policy provided that over the programmes as a whole or over a series of items on a specific set of issues, impartiality is preserved.*

The full text of the Authority's response to the Government's White Paper on Broadcasting is reproduced at Appendix I of this Report.

* Note: With reference to this matter, the Broadcasting Act, 1991 which was brought into force on 1 June 1991, provides in Section 13(2) that "except in the case of public broadcasting services the Authority shall be able to consider the general output of programmes provided by the various broadcasting licensees and contractors, together as a whole."



The Broadcasting Authority – Its New Role and Functions

The Broadcasting Authority was founded on the 29 September 1961 through the enactment of the Broadcasting Ordinance. Its position as provider of broadcasting services and as the sole regulatory body in this sector was later entrenched in Malta's Constitution.

The Authority is a permanent body of not less than four nor more than six persons other than the Chairman who hold office for a period of not more than five years on a single appointment. The independence of the Authority is ensured in the Constitutional provisions on Broadcasting by means of safeguards built into the method of appointment and removal of members and through other means designed to allow the Authority freedom of action in carrying out its Constitutional function.

The role and functions of the Authority as these emerge from existing and proposed legislation are broadly two-fold:

1. to select and appoint broadcasting licensees and contractors who will operate radio (at national and community levels) and television services throughout Malta, and
2. to monitor the performance of the Stations in terms of Constitutional requirements, the provisions of the law and of the relevant broadcasting licences and contracts.

Once Government decided that broadcasting systems - at this stage limited to radio - are to be opened up to private interests, procedures will need to be adopted to ensure that those interests are appointed on a basis which is fair, both to the interests concerned in that it provides open and equal competition among those who want to broadcast, and to the public who are entitled to know that those eventually selected are most likely to provide services of high quality.

The second part of the Authority's function lies in monitoring the activities of the franchised stations. The purpose of monitoring is to ensure that the legal requirements and the terms of the licence and the contractual obligations are observed.

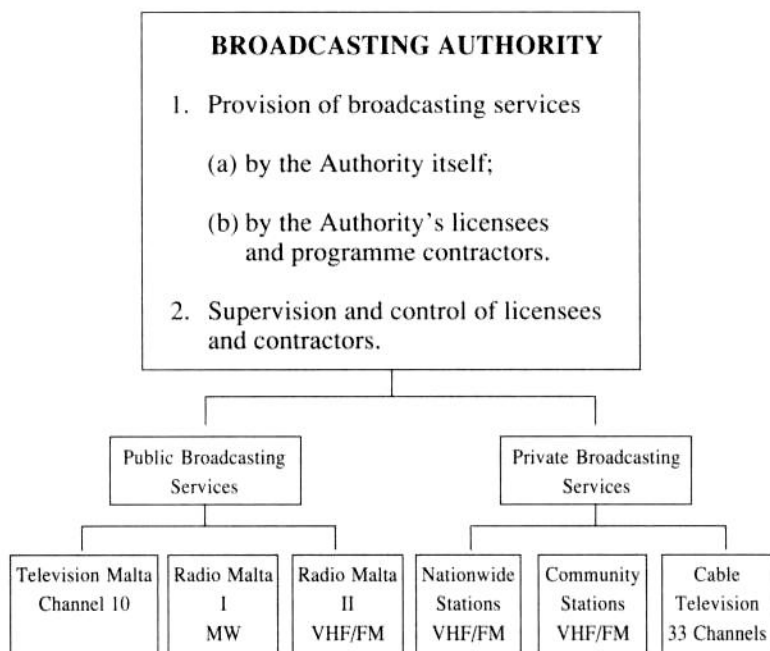
It is too soon to say how, precisely, the Authority's monitoring duties will be carried out. In most cases this will probably take the form of retrospective

action enforced through a range of measures which will include the formal reprimand, financial penalty or, in the last resort, the shortening of the licence period or the outright revocation of the right to broadcast.

Apart from its two main functions - to provide Broadcasting Services and monitor their performance - the Authority itself can also provide such services. In fact the Government has already made it known that with the introduction, in the near future, of a Cable Television Service the Broadcasting Authority will be expected to operate a Community Channel for access by, amongst others, interested groups or individuals.

It will be seen from the foregoing that the role and functions of the Authority are varied and extensive. After 29 years of existence the Authority, which was always at the centre of broadcasting activities, may be said to represent the beginning of a new era in Maltese broadcasting.

The following diagram setting out the future structure of broadcasting services in Malta will explain the position more succinctly:-



NOTES:

1. The Government, through its Wireless Telegraphy Branch, retains the right to provide broadcasting services.
2. "Voice of the Mediterranean", an overseas broadcasting service on Short wave, transmits as a result of inter-Governmental arrangements.
3. In issuing licences, the Authority is guided by a set of considerations including:
 - (a) that no situation of monopoly is allowed;
 - (b) that a mixed system of public/private stations is the best method to ensure the realisation of the principles of freedom of expression and pluralism;
 - (c) that a broad range of such services is available and that programme services are varied, appealing to a variety of tastes and interests.

At the end of the year under review the persons shouldering these responsibilities and acting as the nation's trustees for broadcasting were:

Mr Laurence Mizzi, S.Th.Dip. - *Chairman*

Mr Joseph J. Camilleri, B.A. M.A., A.I.E. (Lond.) - *Members*

Dr Austin Sammut, B.A. (Hons.), LL.D.

Mr Joseph Sammut

Prof Kenneth Wain, B.A. (Hons.) (Lond.), M.A., Dip. Ed. (Lond.),
Ph.D. (Lond.)

The Chairman and members of the Authority were confirmed in office for a period of three years with effect from 22 July 1990. Their appointment, notified in the Government Gazette, was made by the President of Malta acting on the advice of the Prime Minister in accordance with the provisions of Section 118(2) of the Constitution.

During the course of the year, certain quarters repeated earlier claims that members of the Authority are nominated by, and therefore serve the interests of, the two main political parties. This claim has been repeatedly publicly rebutted and members of the Authority again affirm that their appointment is in a personal capacity and carries no obligation to representation of political or other interests. Furthermore, once appointed, members of the Authority act exclusively in the interests of the public and not in the interest of Government or of any political party with which they may, as private individuals, happen to be in sympathy.

Although the Authority is justifiably proud of its independence, it is not insensitive to criticism. Parliament receives an annual report on the Authority's activities and the Authority will also willingly provide material information to Ministers who wish to reply to parliamentary questions about broadcasting related activities. The public's right to information is also acknowledged through the issue of press releases about all aspects of activities in which the Authority is engaged. The principle of accountability will continue to guide the Authority in its future tasks.

The Authority has a staff of thirteen, of whom four are seconded Civil Servants. The Chief Executive is instrumental in the formulation of the Authority's policies and coordinates its staff and activities.

The establishment of the Authority at the end of the year was as follows:-

Managerial	1
Administrative	2
Programme Services	4
Secretarial	3
Others	3
	<hr/>
	13
	<hr/>

The Authority is also assisted by two Legal Advisers.

44 Meetings of the Authority were held during 1990. Apart from these regular sessions, the Authority held several meetings with the management and news personnel of Xandir Malta. The Authority also met with representatives of the political parties and with the Parliamentary Secretary responsible for Broadcasting with whom it clarified certain aspects of the White Paper on Broadcasting.



Broadcasting and Politics

The system of broadcasting in Malta allows the politician direct access, under various forms, to radio and television broadcasts. This active participation in programming is to be considered apart from the appearance of Ministers and of other Members of Parliament in discussion programmes or in the news bulletins.

Ministerial Broadcasts

When a Minister or a Parliamentary Secretary wishes to explain legislation or administrative policies approved by Parliament, or to seek public cooperation in matters of general interest, he may broadcast a statement to which, in the ordinary way, there is no right of reply.

However, if the broadcast exceeds these limits, the Authority reserves the right to authorise a reply should this be requested by an interested party and the claim established to the Authority's satisfaction.

The Authority is also guided in such matters by Court pronouncements delivered over the years in cases relating to such broadcasts and, particularly, by a judgement given in 1976 by the Court of Appeal. This established the principle that in matters of controversy the public has the right to a diversity of sources of information.

There were seven Ministerial Broadcasts during the nine-month period April to December 1990. The adjusted airtime allocation was 180 minutes (240 minutes is allowed for such broadcasts over a full 12-month period) of which 146 minutes were made use of. Three of these broadcasts were the subject of claims for the right to reply, this right having been sought in two cases by the Malta Labour Party and in the other case by the Public Transport Association. The political movement *Alternattiva Demokratika* also requested the right to reply to two of these broadcasts.

After careful consideration and guided by the criteria mentioned above, the Authority granted eight minutes and six minutes airtime to the Malta Labour Party to reply to Minister Guido De Marco's statement on Malta's application for entry in the European Community and to the same Minister's broadcast on the administration of the Law Courts. The Public Transport Association was also offered but refused to make use of six minutes airtime to reply to Parliamentary Secretary Francis Zammit Dimech's talk in connection with a bus strike staged in November 1990.

The Association claimed that the time offered to it was not sufficient and requested equal time. This was not acceded to by the Authority which also rejected two claims put forward by *Alternattiva Demokratika* to reply to the broadcasts delivered by Minister De Marco about the EEC and by Parliamentary Secretary Zammit Dimech in connection with the bus strike. In both cases the Authority felt that the claims were unjustified.

Details of the seven Ministerial broadcasts are given below:

	<i>Date</i>	<i>Minister</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Duration</i>
1.*	July 16	Deputy Prime Minister	Malta's application for entry in the EC	22'30"
2.	August 28	Minister of Finance	10% levy on Expenditure	9'37"
3.	October 30	Minister of Social Policy	Employment and Training Corporation	43'43"
4.*	November 13	Deputy Prime Minister	The Law Courts	26'00"
5.*	November 20	Parliamentary Secretary for Transport & Telecommunications	Public Transport	26'15"
6.	November 22	Minister of Finance	Government Stocks	10'27"
7.	November 29	Parliamentary Secretary for the Environment	The Environment	7'30"

*Indicates the broadcasts for which the right of reply was claimed.

Towards the end of the year the Authority was reviewing the present system of Ministerial Broadcasts which has been in operation since 1963. A preliminary study was made of the BBC practice in this sector of programming. However, further consideration of the matter was postponed pending the enactment of the new broadcasting legislation.

The guidelines for Ministerial broadcasts are reproduced at Appendix III.

Anniversary Messages

Apart from these Ministerial Broadcasts, it has become customary for Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries to deliver, on television and radio, brief messages to commemorate dates of particular international significance. The following 11 broadcasts were delivered during the course of the year:

	<i>Date</i>	<i>Minister</i>	<i>Subject</i>
1.	March 7	The Minister for Social Policy	Women's Day
2.	May 5	The Prime Minister	Europe Day
3.	May 17	The Parliamentary Secretary for Transport & Telecommunications	World Telecommunications Day
4.	May 31	The Minister for Social Policy	World Anti-Smoking Day
5.	June 5	The Parliamentary Secretary for the Environment	World Environment Day
6.	June 25	The Minister for Social Policy	World Anti-Drugs Day
7.	July 2	The Parliamentary Secretary for Tourism	European Tourism Year
8.	September 27	The Parliamentary Secretary for Tourism	World Tourism Day
9.	October 16	The Minister of Agriculture & Fisheries	World Food Day
10.	November 8	The Minister of Education	European Heritage Day
11.	November 30	The Minister for Social Policy	World AIDS Day

Party Political Broadcasts

The arrangements for party political broadcasts are based on parliamentary representation and this practice had been followed for the past 29 years. Although several attempts were made over the years by parties without parliamentary representation to gain access to the Authority's political broadcasts scheme, it was only during the course of the year that the matter was again brought up for review. The *Partit Demokratiku* (PDM) pleaded its case for inclusion in the annual series of broadcasts and the Authority, conscious of the 1987 Constitutional Amendments which emphasised voting strength vis-a-vis the allocation of seats in the House of Representatives, decided to study and review the whole matter.

The Authority was assisted in its deliberations by the advice of a specialist panel consisting of its Legal Adviser, Professor J.M. Micallef and Professor Ian Refalo, Head of the University's Department of Public Law.

During the course of this review, the Authority and its advisers were assisted by a telex enquiry which the European Broadcasting Union offered to conduct among its member organisations. The questionnaire circulated to EBU members requested the following information in connection with party political broadcasts outside the contest of elections:

- (a) Does your organisation transmit party political broadcasts throughout the year besides those which normally take place at election time?
- (b) If so, what are the main criteria for the allocation of time to the parties?

This enquiry elicited response from 16 countries ranging from Portugal to Turkey and from the United Kingdom to Jordan. The enquiry revealed that several countries in the European broadcasting region do not have party political broadcasts other than those organised at election time. The countries falling within this category include Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Jordan, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey. Those countries which carry political broadcasts throughout the year - Cyprus, Finland, France, Monaco, Netherlands, Portugal and the UK - base their airtime allocation mainly on parliamentary strength.

This survey and the report of the specialist panel were completed in September 1990. Taking these as a basis and following further consideration, the Authority decided to leave the present arrangements for airtime allocation undisturbed at least during the course of the present legislature.

Details of political broadcasts for the period January to May 1990 are shown in the previous Annual report. As from October 1990, and for the subsequent 12-month period, the arrangements for party political broadcasts were as follows:

<i>Programme</i>	<i>Nationalist Party</i>	<i>Malta Labour Party</i>	<i>Alternattiva Demokratika</i>
Press Conferences	2 x 60'	2 x 60'	
Debates	3 x 60'	3 x 60'	
Party Productions	2 x 15' 1 x 10'	1 x 15' 1 x 10'	1 x 10'
Interviews with Party Leaders	1 x 30'	1 x 30'	
Annual General Party Conference	1 x 20'	1 x 15'	

This scheme allocated 770 minutes of airtime – 20 minutes more than in the previous year - for use by the parties mainly on the now familiar pattern. However, this year's series allowed the scheduling of a number of broadcasts at the parties' discretion rather than on fixed dates and offered time for interviews with the two principal party leaders.

The Authority's policy in regard to political broadcasting is based on the belief that for the proper functioning of a representative and democratic government, it is essential that the general public should be kept fully informed of the position and the policies of the various parties. As with other access programmes, the Authority offers time and gives all qualifying parties the opportunity of speaking directly to a wide audience. Such time is made available within the restrictions of the law and subject to the regulations (vide Appendix IV) previously announced with the Scheme. Otherwise, the programme content is entirely under the parties' editorial control.

Party political broadcasts have, at times, been the subject of controversy both as regards the quantity and the quality of such programmes. The Authority is responsible for balancing the wish of the political parties to increase their means of communicating with the public with the often expressed desire of a section of the public that these broadcasts should not be too frequent.

While political parties, as others, can legitimately make representations to the Authority about the allocation of programme time, the Authority hopes that the parties will recognise that too much political broadcasting is likely to produce diminishing returns rather than rewards.

Broadcasting Parliament

Television and radio access to Parliament is mainly limited to direct coverage of the Budget Speech by the Minister of Finance, the reply by the Leader of the Opposition and the winding up by the Prime Minister.

This series of broadcasts is then followed by a number of others - some transmitted direct and others in deferred version - until all debates on the budget including those on the Appropriation Bill and Supplementary Estimates are exhausted. The latter process takes about five days and monopolises the early evening hours on television at a period of the year when most people are either engaged in or thinking of their Christmas shopping.

The Authority has never been happy with this situation mainly because of the limitations imposed on programming choice by Malta's single television channel. Whilst the Authority recognises the advantages of television in making Parliament more real to the public, the Authority considers that the present method neither enhances Parliament's prestigious position nor attracts very many viewers.

One of the options suggested by the Authority in cordial discussions with the Speaker of the House of Representatives was the creation of a television "Hansard" from which broadcasters could edit extracts. This system which would have to be discussed and agreed between the politicians and the programme producers would encourage the latter in the exercise obligations already placed on them.

Meanwhile, Budget transmissions during 1990 continued on the usual pattern with the bulk of these broadcasts taking place from 4.45 p.m. to 7.50 p.m. between the 17-21 December.



Broadcasting and The Public

The Broadcasting Authority has a duty to discover how the public reacts to its Programme Contractor's output in various sectors of programming on both radio and television. It does so mainly through audience research which, with time-tested formulae and competent fieldwork and analysis, seeks to find out how many view and hear programmes and what people think of what they have seen and heard.

In April 1990, the Authority released selected information compiled through an audience survey commissioned to determine the state of public opinion concerning the following programme areas:

- (a) The News Service
- (b) Party Political Broadcasts
- (c) The transmission of debates from Parliament

A sample of 540 Maltese adults (aged 16 years and over) were interviewed using sampling points selected by computer so as to be representative of the different strata which make up the whole population. The interviewing and data analysis were carried out for the Authority by Malta University Services Ltd.

News

News bulletins were the most important area considered. There is no doubt about the influence which the news service has on its audience since most of those who watch or listen to the news form their opinion about current events from these bulletins. The 1990 survey revealed that:

- * TVM's main news bulletin at 8 p.m. is followed regularly by 80% of the total population of Malta and Gozo.
- * The population was divided in its assessment of the news service. 53% were satisfied although on further questioning a quarter of these would not give specific reasons for their attitude. On the other hand 43% of the population were dissatisfied with the news.

Note: Subsequent audience research shows some difference in the figures for news. The latest available data was released by the Broadcasting Authority in May 1991.

- * The main reason for overall dissatisfaction with the news was too much reporting on the local political scene.
- * When asked to say what viewers liked to see more of in the news, 29% did not offer any suggestion; 24% opted in equal proportions for current events and documented news; 11% for more international news coverage whilst another 10% expressed a desire for more news coverage of a non-political nature.

Party Political Broadcasts

These broadcasts have formed part of the local broadcast scene for almost 29 years, yet their impact or lack of it on the audience has never been evaluated. The 1990 survey provided data which showed that:

- * The Broadcasting Authority's series of party political broadcasts – made up at the time of debates, press conferences and party productions – was regularly followed by 20% of all television viewers while an average of 43% watched these broadcasts occasionally. The remaining 37% never watched party political broadcasts.
- * 68% of viewers were satisfied with the current number of such programmes. On the other hand, 23% thought there were too many whilst 9% were of the opinion that the number of such broadcasts was too little.

Parliamentary Debates

Much has already been written in this and in previous annual reports about the wholesale transmission of debates from Parliament. Various opinions and suggestions were put forward in editorials and newspaper correspondence columns but the opinion of a broad section of the general public was never tested. The following are three main points which emerged from the 1990 survey:

- * 84% of the population (aged 16 years and over) think that Budget Debates should be televised. Of these, 63% would prefer the debates to be televised in toto whilst 32% were not in favour of transmissions from Parliament being covered in full. 6% had been undecided.

- * 96% of those who thought that at least some sections of the Budget series should be carried on television were interested in following the actual Budget Speech by the Minister of Finance. This figure was reduced to 51% when the coverage was related to the debates on the individual Ministries.
- * When interviewees were asked to state their views about other possible transmissions from Parliament apart from the Budget debates, 58% simply stated “Nothing else”. 13% were in favour of activating television cameras in the House of Representatives only when issues of national importance are discussed.

In many ways, this survey has been a guiding point for the future. It was the first of its kind conducted by the Authority for many years and has helped to set the pattern for a regular and effective review of programmes in the future.

The Authority believes in the importance of audience research and is happy to note that recently enacted broadcasting legislation makes it mandatory on the Authority and on broadcasting operators to engage periodically in research projects relating to and affecting the audience. On the other hand, audience research is not a substitute for the imagination and the creative decisions of programme producers and should not be used slavishly in all forms of broadcasting. However, in programmes dealing with information or education, particularly where objectives have been set, audience research can prove very effective in determining whether the scope of the programmes has been achieved.

The Authority plans to have its own research unit in the future to help in making difficult and delicate judgements about the overall range and variety of programmes required of it by law and expected of it by the public.



News Policies and Practices

The White Paper on broadcasting published by Government in September 1990 included a section outlining Government's plans for the future of the public broadcasting services in Malta. It was very predictable that in emphasising the new role of the media, the White Paper referred to the news sector in the terms set out in the following paragraph:

"The public broadcasting media have the particular responsibility of providing news and current affairs programming which respect the constitutional requisites of adequate impartiality and balance, and which shall also be in line with journalistic principles aimed at ensuring a comprehensive and accurate information service in the interests of a democratic and pluralistic society. They should be leaders in providing quality television to the Maltese public with regard to programming, news and analysis and should be able to interpret the guidelines issued by the Broadcasting Authority in respect of news and current affairs not as rigid straightjacketing but as a flexible tool in the hands of creative journalists." (paragraph 5.18)

The public broadcasting services, both under the present set-up as a division of a public corporation and as the projected state-owned limited liability company, have many tasks to perform. They should, as one of their central purposes, bring news and information to as wide an audience as possible. The news they provide should be immediate, accurate and dispassionate. Important news from both local and foreign sources should be seen through an informed Maltese mentality to reflect Maltese values and judgements; other parts of the news should come from foreign sources to reflect events and attitudes in other countries. The information provided must ideally cover the whole range of views and opinions on any matter which is the subject of controversy.

One of the requirements for good broadcasting in future is diversity. This should help to raise standards and maintain them at a high level. However, diversity will have value if broadcasters, particularly those engaged in news and current affairs programmes, are not independent as editors. The Authority reacts with alacrity to any claim about pressure being exerted on news personnel to dictate to them what they may or may not include in news bulletins. In reality, little concrete evidence to substantiate interference claims was forthcoming. This notwithstanding, the Authority during the course of the year took the precautionary measure to write to the Secretaries of both Parliamentary Groups, the Political Parties and the two main Unions. The main purpose of this letter was to ask recipients not

to approach Xandir Malta newsroom personnel with complaints which should, instead, be directed to the Authority. The Authority, in turn, promised to investigate every case brought to its attention. It was hoped that in this manner the Authority would act as a buffer, shielding news staff from undue influences and pressures which might be brought to bear on them by politicians and others. This measure can only succeed with the cooperation of all quarters concerned.

Complaints

During the year under review, the Authority received 100 complaints - 69 less than in the previous year. The overwhelming majority of these complaints dealt with the news service and consisted of claims of lack of coverage or of inadequate or erroneous reportage. The Malta Labour Party topped the list with 32 complaints while various other bodies and organisations together sent 36 complaints during 1990. The Authority also dealt with 17 complaints from the trade unions, 9 from *Alternattiva Demokratika*, 5 from the Nationalist Party and one from the President's Office.

Complaints are examined in detail by a specially constituted sub-committee of the Authority which alternates its members every month. Some cases are referred to the full Authority for further study and decision. It is normal procedure for the Authority to copy the complainant's letter to Xandir Malta requesting a written statement from the broadcasting company's management in response to the complaint. In several cases, the Authority receives a report on the matter concerned from its own staff and also listens to or views a playback of the programme or news item in question.

The 100 complaints dealt with during the year were adjudicated as follows:

Number of complaints upheld:	16
Number of complaints partially upheld:	22
Number of complaints not upheld:	58

In four other cases, the Authority took note of the matter referred to its attention.

Political Content

The Authority has repeatedly expressed concern at the extent of political content and the manner of its coverage in the news. The statistical tables included at Appendix V of this Report reveal that 57.8% of all local news

items broadcast during 1990 dealt with either governmental or party political or trade unionistic activities or statements. This shows an 'improvement' on the previous year's performance when the comparable figure had been 60.7%. The change is even more marked when set against the figure of 62% registered in statistical data compiled for the final quarter of 1989. The difference is accounted for through a decrease in the number of news reports originating from party political and trade unionistic sources.

Despite the ameliorating situation in so far as political content is concerned, the manner of presentation of politically based news items leaves much to be desired. This comment is prompted by the fact that news coverage in this sector consists of straightforward reading of reports of political speeches or statements issued by political quarters. The feeling of drabness and monotony communicated by this method of reporting is hardly ever relieved by more attractive and professional forms of presentation best suited to the radio and television media.

These forms of presentation could include voice reports and the interview method. Instead, the viewer is presented time after time with the same shots of the audience sometimes over animated by the mere presence of a television camera which seems to bring out the performer in most of those present for the occasion.

The visual element which is so essential in communicating the message in television news reports is, at times, grossly mishandled, particularly when there is a lack of coordination between news script writers and picture editors. The Authority had occasion to draw Xandir Malta's attention to such matters during the course of the year.

The Authority's concern over political content in news bulletins was reflected by public reaction as measured by the Authority commissioned audience survey carried out in 1990. This showed conclusively that 66% of the audience sample - and this was equivalent to 170,000 persons - were of the opinion that there was too much or a lot of news reports based on political activities.

Political Bias

Television and radio are recognised as principal sources of political information and local influence. Politicians, political issues and government or party events are regularly featured in daily news bulletins. Politicians and broadcasters alike are concerned that the balance of radio and television news coverage should be fair to all sides.

One of the most important aspects of all news programmes is that they should show “due impartiality” in the coverage of political matters. This is mandatorily required of the Authority by Section 119(1) of Malta’s Constitution which lays down that “due impartiality” is to be preserved in respect of matters of political controversy.

As this is one of the statutory responsibilities of the Authority, questions on the public’s perception of political bias in news bulletins were included in the 1990 audience survey. This showed that 59% of those surveyed did not think that Xandir Malta’s news bulletins were biased in favour or against any one political party. On the other hand, 26% believed that the news showed a bias in favour of the Nationalist Party while 14% thought that the element of bias in news reports favoured the Labour Party. 1% of the respondents remained non-committal.*

News Seminar

In view of the Authority’s interest in and responsibilities towards good broadcasting practice and the training of the staff to achieve that end, a Seminar was organised in March 1990. This Seminar was meant for the Authority’s own staff engaged on monitoring duties and for personnel in Xandir Malta’s News Division.

The Seminar was spread over a two-day period with full morning and afternoon sessions during which lectures and discussions were held on subjects of direct relevance to those engaged in the selection, preparation and presentation of news services on radio and television.

Mr Laurence Mizzi, the Authority’s Chairman, inaugurated the Seminar and spoke about the techniques of news script writing. Professor Kenneth Wain, Member of the Authority, gave a talk on journalistic ethics whilst Mr J.G. Vassallo, a former Manager of the local broadcasting station’s news division, outlined the day-to-day work involved in the running of a broadcast news operation.

Investigative journalism with its positive and problematic aspects was explored by Mr Evarist Bartolo, an experienced journalist and editor of a local party paper. Mr Lewis Portelli, the Director of Information, spoke about access to information from Official sources. The Seminar was

** Note:* More recent audience research figures showed that the number of those who did not perceive any political bias in news bulletins rose to 70%. The remaining 30% who detected signs of bias were distributed as follows:- bias in favour of Nationalist Party 24%; bias in favour of Malta Labour Party 6%.

concluded by the Authority's Chief Executive who spoke about the interpretation of the Broadcasting Authority's policies and guidelines for news.

The Seminar was a lively first experience with question and answer sessions held after each lecture. It was hoped that benefit would be gained by this event if participants attended with an open mind and were prepared to put into practice the essential elements of good broadcasting which the lecturers spoke enthusiastically about.

News Policies

Much has been written already about the principles of news value and their subjective nature. The Authority's news policies, particularly its declaration of 19 May 1989 (reproduced in the Authority's Report for 1989) are intended to be flexible enough and to avoid unnecessary rigidity while stressing the clear lines of demarcation between that which is and which is not acceptable in terms of professional journalistic standards.

With the coming up of pluralism in broadcasting, news services will increase and this, together with the introduction of new technology, will shorten deadlines which in effect means that pressures on reporters and editors will increase. The Authority, during the course of the year, started discussions with Xandir Malta with a view to increasing the number of news outlets on television. The main object of this move is to offer the public an alternative to its principal rendezvous with the news at 8.00 p.m., thus hopefully releasing some of the pressure on this main bulletin. The other object is to make sure, as much as possible, that news is carried and adequately reported upon on the day it happens. This is essentially the Broadcasting media's main advantage over its counterpart in the print sector. Further discussions on this matter were still pending at the end of the year.*

* *Note:* The second full news bulletin on television started transmission on 3 June, 1991.



Overseas Contacts

The gradual transformation of the European Broadcasting scene during the 1980s has essentially been characterised by the termination of monopolistic systems and their gradual replacement with a mixture of public service and commercial operations both in television and radio.

The Authority has already been keen on its overseas contacts which help it to keep in touch with developments and for this purpose it has consistently valued its membership in such international bodies as the European Broadcasting Union, the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association and the European Institute for the Media. International contacts during the year were various and, in most cases, yielded beneficial results.

UK Study Tour

The Chairman of the Authority Mr Laurence Mizzi, two members Dr Austin Sammut and Mr Joe Sammut, and the Chief Executive Mr Antoine Ellul took part in a one-week Study Tour of England and Wales. The visit was organised and funded by the UK Government through its High Commission in Malta.

The main object of the visit was to obtain first hand information on the operational aspects of regional radio and television stations. Meetings were held in the Welsh and Kent regions as well as in London where Home Office Officials were available to answer the Authority's questions on the deregulation of the broadcasting services in the UK. Meetings with the Cable Authority and the Broadcasting Standards Council were of particular relevance to Malta's developing situation in Broadcasting.

The visit to Wales prompted discussions with the Thomson Foundation's School of Journalism where preliminary arrangements made at the time led to a place being reserved for a news producer from Xandir Malta on a three-month course in Broadcast Journalism.

European Broadcasting Union

The changing European audiovisual scene was the framework within which discussions were held during the EBU General Assembly in Paris

aimed at promoting European cultural diversity. The importance of the emerging democracies in Eastern Europe and their place within the Union was considered at this session along with other business of a routine nature.

The Maltese delegates to the Assembly discussed matters of bilateral interest with their European counterparts particularly RAI, the Italian State radio and television organisation.

Conference of European and African Television Organisations of the Mediterranean Region

Contacts established in Paris led to the Authority being invited to attend a conference convened by RAI in Palermo in September 1990. The aim of this conference was to provide an opportunity for countries on the north and south shores of the Mediterranean to examine the prospects and problems that will result from cultural exchange and from the technological developments of the mass media in this region.

The Authority was represented at the Conference by the Chairman and by the Chief Executive who were RAI's guests for the two-day period of the conference.

The greater movement of people between countries in the Mediterranean basin and increased satellite broadcasting activity throughout the region were considered by the conference as a means of further dialogue and mutual awareness. However, the Maltese and other delegates insisted, and it was recognised, that for the promotion of cooperation in this area a thorough economic development must be carried out in the less developed countries of the region. For this purpose, technological know-how must be transferred to these countries from their more affluent European neighbours.

The concluding declaration issued by the Palermo Conference is reproduced at Appendix VI of this Report.

The aims of this conference were taken a step further towards implementation when a Working Party consisting of representatives from Mediterranean Broadcasting Organisations was set up and met for the first time in Geneva in December. This meeting, which was attended by the Authority's Chief Executive, planned the basis of a strategy based over attainment of short, medium and long term objectives.

Reporting Europe – 1992 and Beyond

This was the theme of a specialist conference organised in October and held in Cardiff by the Centre of Journalism Studies of the University of Wales. The Broadcasting Authority's Chief Executive was invited to attend along with representatives from 29 European countries.

The meeting discussed important and interesting topics such as: "A New Legal and Constitutional Framework for Journalism in Europe" and "The Effects of an Integrated Europe on the Mass Media".

The meeting, originally designed to concentrate on the European Community and the impact of the single market in 1991, also discussed topics far beyond the Twelve. In fact, much of its second day was taken up by a highly interesting and tense series of discussions on the situation in Eastern Europe.

"Reporting Europe" was an enriching experience from which much benefit was gained and useful contacts made.

Commonwealth Broadcasting Association

"Today, more than ever before, mass communication is going through a vast chain of changes". So said the Director-General of the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation in his opening speech at the conference of the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association held in Nicosia in October 1990.

This central theme was echoed throughout the Conference which attracted 100 delegates from 55 Commonwealth countries, amongst them Malta. Working through its Administrative Committee and Engineering Committee, the conference examined the main subjects involved in the process of public service broadcasting.

The Authority's Chairman, Mr Laurence Mizzi, and the Chief Executive, Mr Antoine Ellul, took an active part in the Conference and in the invaluable informal discussions which take place between delegates in between conference sessions. As a result of these informal contacts the Authority was invited to avail itself of a fellowship in an ITU organised telecommunications course held in Nicosia. This offer was accepted and the Authority nominated Mr Joe Bartolo, the Chief Inspector of Wireless Telegraphy, who will be working closely with the Authority in the technical sector on projects expected to emerge from future developments in local broadcasting.

The European Institute for the Media

The Authority is a member of the European Institute for the Media which was set up in 1983 by the European Cultural Foundation. Through this membership, the Authority's Chief Executive was selected for appointment as a member of the European Television and Film Forum which has as its main aim the promotion of good practice among public and private broadcasters.

The European Television and Film Forum met in Warsaw from 15-17 November 1990 and 200 delegates, including the Authority's Chief Executive, worked on various themes connected with the development of radio and television. The end of public monopolies, a great willingness to talk openly and to consider what lay beyond frontiers and changes in structure and perspective were among the points discussed. Participants came from areas which rarely met together, from advertisers to journalists, from research to viewers and from production to transmission personnel. Deregulation and the role of the free market in broadcasting were discussed at length and newcomers to this liberalisation process had the benefit of the experience met with by others where these changes have already taken place.

Further useful contacts were established by Dr Austin Sammut, Member of the Authority, who attended a Seminar in London about broadcasting in the 90s.

The Seminar reviewed subjects such as: "The light touch of the Deregulator?", "Ownership Restrictions and Freedom of Expression", "Piracy of Satellite Signals", etc.

Speakers included the Director-General of the UK Independent Broadcasting Authority, the Director of Sky Television, as well as editors and university professors.



Finance

The Authority's last Annual Report gave a detailed account of the wholly unsatisfactory position in which the Authority found itself through lack of adequate financing and neglect over the years. Further representations were made to Government particularly as part of the Authority's response to the Government's White Paper on broadcasting – vide Appendix I to this Report.

The response made it clear that it was not possible to continue operating in this hand-to-mouth fashion, and unless drastic changes were made to guarantee an acceptable level of income the Authority would not be in a position to carry out its obligations as fully as it should.

The White Paper's provisions in so far as the Authority's funding was concerned were not reassuring since they merely indicated that radio and television licensees would be required to reimburse the Authority for any enforcement and other expenses incurred on their behalf. This was not acceptable to the Authority who strongly recommended that the opportunity provided by the proposed new legislation should be taken by Government to effect a thorough overhaul of its funding position.*

The Broadcasting Authority's Auditors' Report and Financial Statements are at Appendix VIII of the Report. The Income and Expenditure Account shows a total income of Lm81,089 for the year against an expenditure of Lm82,703 leaving a deficit of Lm1,614 which, under the circumstances, would seem to be reasonable. Administrative expenses account for 74% of the total income which clearly indicates the drastic shortage of funds for investment in programming.

It is hoped that the situation will be rectified so that the Authority can enter into its new and more onerous responsibilities well equipped for the tasks ahead of it.

* Section 24 of the Broadcasting Act 1991 provides for a minimum income of Lm250,000 annually for the Authority which should be able to draw on other sources of income as well. These provisions are considered to be satisfactory, under the circumstances, by the Authority.



PICTORIAL REVIEW

**A Selection
from some of the
Television Programmes and Activities
originated by the Authority**

PARTY POLITICAL BROADCASTS



The Minister for Economic Affairs, Mr John Dalli, M.P., talks to the Press and explains the Government's economic policies.



The Opposition's turn to present its views to the public. Labour Party's Deputy Leader for Parliamentary Affairs, Dr Joe Brincat, LL.D., M.P., takes a 60-minute Press Conference.

NEWS SEMINAR



The Authority's Chairman, Mr L. Mizzi and the Chief Executive, Mr A. Ellul address journalists from Xandir Malta's newsroom in the first News Seminar organised by the Authority.



Journalists mingle together in an informal atmosphere and discuss common topics during a lunch break in between the main sessions of the News Seminar.

CIVIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGN



What did I do wrong?

How can accidents be prevented?

Do not park on pavements, others may need to use them!

NEVER leave a child alone in a car

or

Park your car in front of someone else's garage door.



Over 50 subjects have been covered.

From AIDS precautions to vandalism curtailment.

Health issues, safety hazards, traffic regulations ... and more to come.

BOOK REVIEWS



The Authority uses some of its limited funds for direct programme production. This is linked with its other function - to supervise and control. But before the Authority's staff engages in supervision they have to know how to produce!



*“Paḡna Wara l-Ohra” –
a 12-part series of programmes offered during International Literacy
Year and aimed at encouraging reading.*



APPENDICES

***Broadcasting:
A Commitment to Pluralism***

***The Broadcasting Authority's
Response to the
Government's White Paper on
Broadcasting***

1. *Introduction*

- 1.1 The Broadcasting Authority which was set up just over 29 years ago has often played a central role in local broadcasting. In 1961 it was the sole organisation responsible for providing broadcasting services in Malta. Its position was strengthened in 1964 when its existence was entrenched in the Constitution and its main functions – ensuring the preservation of due impartiality in respect of matters of political or industrial controversy or relating to current public policy and fairly apportioning facilities and time between persons belonging to different political parties - were set out. In 1966 the Authority lost its exclusivity in providing broadcasting services when Government re-acquired this function and shared it with the Authority.
- 1.2 In 1973, the Authority became directly involved in broadcasting operations when Radio Malta commenced transmissions. Activities in this sector came to an abrupt end in 1975 with the setting up of Xandir Malta as the broadcasting division within the TeleMalta Corporation which by legislation became the state agency responsible for all communication services including broadcasting.
- 1.3 Between 1975 and 1982, the Authority functioned as a supervisory body. However with a parastatal organisation as its broadcasting contractor it had little, if any, effective control. For four years, between 1982 and 1986, the Authority ceased to operate altogether as it had not been constituted. The Authority began to function normally again in 1986 when it was reconstituted. However at that time the Authority's human and financial resources had become sorely depleted.
- 1.4 In November 1987 and in April 1990 the Authority submitted recommendations to Government about the future of broadcasting in Malta. Some of these recommendations are incorporated in the government's proposals enunciated in the White Paper on broadcasting.

2 *Broadcasting in the 1990s*

- 2.1 The White Paper provides for many more radio and television services which will be available in the 1990s both via conventional means and through a range of new technologies. The latter includes satellite and cable television. Public response to the new opportunities and the actual pace of development of the new services are difficult to predict.

- 2.2 The White Paper offers a framework for the setting up of commercially funded radio services in Malta and for the re-shaping of the public broadcasting sector.
- 2.3 The Authority welcomes pluralism and liberalization in broadcasting as an endorsement of the importance of broadcasting in the society which it seeks to serve and for the opportunities they provide to viewers and listeners.
- 2.4 The challenge for the Authority, which will assume the triple role of a licensing organisation, a programme production body and an effective watch-dog, will be to ensure that viewers' and listeners' preferences are satisfied, and that broadcasting is structured in such a way as to make certain that more choice does not mean a lowering of standards.
- 2.5 The introduction of new services and more competition, welcome as they are, will place a strain on the local system both in terms of human and economic resources which are limited, perhaps the former more so than the latter.
- 2.6 The Government's aim to introduce pluralism and diversity of choice simultaneously with new technology may well result in a difficult transitional period during which a balance will need to be struck between the two. During this period, the need for some initial regulation may be necessary.

3. *Regulating Licensees*

- 3.1 Broadcasting has always been a scarce resource because of Government's monopoly policies in this field and the limited number of available frequencies. For these and other reasons, regulation of the broadcasting media has always been considered essential.
- 3.2 The Broadcasting Authority, like other regulatory organisations, works within a broad framework set by legislation.
- 3.3 The various functions and powers of the Authority will need to be redefined in the new broadcasting legislation. The numerous radio and television (terrestrial and cable) services competing for viewers and revenue will necessitate giving the Authority discretion to interpret how its duties under legislation are to be performed. At the same time the general objectives proposed in the White Paper should be expressed in legislation. This would not only assist the Authority in the selection of radio licensees but also subsequently in requiring

both television and radio licence holders to improve the quality of their output where this might be inadequate.

- 3.4 It is important that the licensing operation, initially for radio and subsequently for any available cable television channels, should not only be fair but be seen to be so. Competition in this area is difficult to predict. It is felt, however, that guiding criteria of a more specific nature than that provided in the White Paper should be included in the new Broadcasting Act.

4. *Areas of Agreement*

- 4.1 The Authority agrees with the statement made in the White Paper that:

“Broadcasting should be independent from Government editorially and, to the greatest extent possible, in economic and regulatory terms”.

It also agrees with the following:

- The listener and viewer should be placed at the centre of broadcasting policy.
- The radical changes which are now likely in Maltese broadcasting will require fundamental alterations in the regulatory system and the way in which Xandir Malta now operates.
- Competition is likely to be appreciated by listeners and viewers; however the Authority would like to see a strengthening of the local programme production sector as a safeguard for the enhancement of Maltese culture, traditions and way of life.
- Broadcasting organisations should take responsibility for their programmes, operations and decisions; subject to clear but limited requirements effectively enforced by the Authority.
- The creation of a flexible framework which allows for social, cultural and technological developments in the next fifteen years.

5. *Anticipated Difficulties and Suggestions*

- 5.1 The Authority is of the opinion that certain proposals put forward in the White Paper, if implemented as proposed, will run counter to

Constitutional requirements in broadcasting, prevent effective control and might affect public interest adversely.

5.2 Furthermore, major change can only be managed successfully if all parties concerned are made aware as early as possible and with clarity of their involvement in the new broadcasting structure. This would have been in the form of draft legislation which is to amend or replace the existing Broadcasting Ordinance.

5.3 The Authority considers it important that future broadcasting legislation takes into account that:

- Constitutional obligations on impartiality and fair apportionment of facilities are binding on “...such sound and television broadcasting services as may be provided in Malta...”

- the provision of reliable, accurate and impartial news services should only be entrusted to professional organisations adequately equipped and financed. Since this is not likely to be the case in the area of community broadcasting, these services should be excluded from transmitting news.

Public Broadcasting Services Ltd. should be regulated by contract with the Authority, which Authority should have the power to approve the appointment of the Chairman and the Chief Executive.

5.4 Whatever provision are finally decided upon, the Authority would like to point out that with the setting up of the numerous services anticipated, monitoring can only be selective; and a position in which the Authority reacts to complaints after broadcast rather than seeks to anticipate and prevent them seems likely to be the only practical one in the circumstances.

6. *The Authority's Funding*

6.1 The Authority's financing has already been a sore point and a crucial issue between the Authority and Government. The legislator's intentions on this matter are quite clear, i.e. that the Authority should be financed from Wireless Licence Fees and all revenue from this source less the expenses of collection is to accrue to the Authority. (Vide Section 12 of the Broadcasting Ordinance).

6.2 Income from Wireless Licence Fees during the current financial year was estimated at Lm1.5 million. The Authority's share of this revenue during 1990 was Lm80,000!

- 6.3 The Authority is so meagrely endowed with funds that it cannot meet its contractual obligations on programming, with the result that it is prescribing hardly any programmes and owes its contractor over Lm0.3 million. (Vide the Authority's audited accounts for 1989).
- 6.4 The indications given in paragraph 6.13 of the White Paper about funds for the Authority are not consoling. They merely indicate that station licensees will reimburse the Authority for any enforcement or other expenses incurred on their behalf. This will neither generate sufficient revenue nor will it guarantee the Authority's source of income which could wither away if the number of stations is small or if, for any reason, these cease to operate.
- 6.5 The Authority is being given new and onerous responsibilities. It must have the financial resources to enable it to carry out its tasks. The Authority's independence of action and its efficacy depend on an equitable solution to its financial difficulties.
- 6.6 The Authority strongly recommends that provision is made in the proposed broadcasting legislation which would guarantee a specific and agreed percentage of revenue from wireless receiving licences for its needs. This arrangement would be revised every three years and would be subject to an agreed minimum sum to be payable from the Consolidated Fund.

7. *Other Matters*

7.1 *Ownership and Control*

The broad principles of ownership and control as referred to in the White Paper should be laid down in legislation. Nationality requirements are also essential. It is noted that no exclusions are contemplated. The whole issue of control of ownership by political and religious bodies, etc. is clearly of considerable significance and its implications should be carefully considered.

7.2 *Party Political and other Broadcasts*

The White Paper refers to the availability of time for political parties on the Authority-run community channel on the cable network. Whether or not the Public Broadcasting Services Ltd. will carry the annual series of party political broadcasts as part of its public service output is a matter of importance which needs careful consideration by the legislator.

- 7.3 The Authority assumes, however, that General Election Broadcasts will be shown on the terrestrial television service as well as on the cable network's Community Channel. In the Authority's view this must be a "must carry" requirement stipulated as such in any eventual legislation on broadcasting.

7.4 *Relay of Foreign Broadcasting Services*

The White Paper proposed that Cable TV will carry not less than fifteen foreign terrestrial broadcasting services. It is of paramount importance that the Authority should not find itself in the position where it will be held responsible - as it certainly will be under present legislation - for the transmission of programmes of doubtful taste. The Authority suggests that as the regulating organisation it will have power to intervene if on specific stations such programming constitutes the rule rather than the exception. On the other hand this may not be necessary if the forthcoming legislation relieves the Authority from its present legal responsibilities in so far as the direct relay of foreign broadcasting services is concerned.

Radio and Television Licence Statistics for Selected Countries in the Mediterranean Region 31.12.1990

Country	Licences		Households	Population	Percentage (%)			
	Radio	Television			Households		Population	
					Radio	Television	Radio	Television
Algeria *	5,500,000	1,550,000	—	26,000,000	—	—	21.2	5.9
Cyprus *	180,000	89,900	167,300	698,800	107.6	53.7	25.8	12.9
Egypt *	15,000,000	3,860,000	—	57,700,000	—	—	26.0	6.7
France	20,000,000	19,492,065	19,674,340	58,073,553	101.7	99.1	34.4	33.6
Italy	15,080,000	14,800,000	20,646,488	57,576,429	73.0	71.7	26.2	25.9
Libya *	1,007,141	294,884	—	4,536,672	—	—	22.2	6.5
Malta	110,000	143,468	109,694	352,430	109.2	142.4	31.2	40.7
Morocco *	5,000,000	1,550,000	—	26,880,000	—	—	18.6	5.7
Spain *	12,000,000	14,870,518	11,200,000	39,887,140	107.1	132.7	30.1	37.3
Tunisia *	1,100,000	386,000	2,000,000	8,095,000	55.0	19.3	13.6	4.8

* Countries with estimated number of sets (no Licences)

Source: European Broadcasting Union

Guidelines for Ministerial Broadcasts

1. In view of their responsibilities for the care of the nation the Government should be able to broadcast from time to time Ministerial Broadcasts, which, for example, are purely factual, or explanatory of approved legislative or administrative policies or in the nature of appeals to the nation to co-operate in national policies which require the active participation of the public.
2. Such broadcasts must comply with the provisions of the Broadcasting Ordinance, 1961.
3. It will be incumbent on Ministers making such broadcasts to be as impartial as possible, and in the ordinary way there will be no question of a reply.
4. If however a reply is established to the satisfaction of the Authority, the total broadcasting time devoted to such reply or replies will not exceed the duration of the original Ministerial Broadcast. Requests for a reply should be submitted in writing to the Authority within forty-eight hours of a Ministerial Broadcast being made. This time limit will be extended automatically in the case of an intervening Saturday, Sunday or a Public Holiday.
5. Except by agreement with the Broadcasting Authority the amount of airtime which may be utilised in any one year (January to December) will not exceed 240 minutes. Ministerial Broadcasts may be on Sound only or on both Sound and Television.
6. On Television, Ministerial Broadcasts may be illustrated with graphics, photographs and/or films. It should be noted that when this facility is made use of, and if a right of reply is established, the same facility will be extended to the reply.
7. All requests for Ministerial Broadcasts are to be made direct to the Authority and reasonable notice given.
8. A script of a Ministerial Broadcast should be sent to the Authority.

9. Except by agreement with the Broadcasting Authority, Ministerial Broadcasts will not take place during periods when General Election or Referendum Broadcasts are being held.
10. Ministerial Broadcasts do not and are not intended to exhaust the possibilities of Ministers appearing on Sound or Television. Broadcasts by the Prime Minister which take the form of an "address to the nation", and are indicated as such, do not come within the category of Ministerial Broadcasts. Ministers also broadcast by invitation, in news interviews, balanced discussions, Radio and Television Press Conferences, outside broadcasts etc. Ministerial Broadcasts come into a separate category because they constitute special time placed at the disposal of Ministers which is availed of at the choice and on the initiative of the Ministers and not either of the Contractors or of the Broadcasting Authority.
11. When any dispute arises over Ministerial Broadcasts the final responsibility remains with the Authority.

Procedure Governing Party Political Broadcasts

1. ***General***
 - 1.1 This scheme of Party Political Broadcasts consists of Press Conferences, Debates, Party Productions, Interviews with party leaders and programmes connected with the parties' Annual General Council/Conference.
 - 1.2 All programmes included in this scheme are transmitted under the auspices of the Broadcasting Authority.
 - 1.3 This series of Party Political Broadcasts is made up of 20 programmes, 15 of which will be held as shown in the attached calendar. The other five broadcasts will be scheduled on dates to be selected by the parties. (Vide also paras 4.3 and 6.1).
 - 1.4 If a broadcast is not used by a party on its scheduled transmission date, that broadcast will be forfeited and an appropriate announcement made.
 - 1.5 This scheme covers the 12-month period commencing on 26th October 1990.
 - 1.6 Political Party representatives, and all those taking part in this series, must abide by the provisions of the law, any rules issued by the Authority from time to time and any order or directive given by the presiding Chairman. The Authority's decision on any points which may arise in connection with these broadcasts will be final.
 - 1.7 Neither the Broadcasting Authority nor its Contractor, the TeleMalta Corporation (Xandir Malta Division) will accept any responsibility for any interference with or breakdown of the television or radio services and cannot bind themselves to repeat any broadcasts that suffer as a result of such interference or breakdown.
 - 1.8 The Authority reserves the right to suspend indefinitely or for such time as it will consider necessary, any person from participating in any of the programmes in this scheme in the event that such person

shall have, in the Authority's view, committed a serious breach of the rules, particularly rule 1.6.

- 1.9 All programmes in this series are transmitted on television. Press Conferences, Debates and the Interview programmes are also broadcast on Radio Malta I.
- 1.10 Provided adequate notice is given, the Authority will issue a press hand-out and advance publicity on the broadcasting media will also be arranged.
- 1.11 This series of Party Political Broadcasts will automatically come to an end on the date Parliament is dissolved.
- 1.12 In selecting a subject, parties should be guided by the need to inform and educate public opinion on specific matters. Slogans will not be accepted and the choice of titles must be consistent with the spirit of this rule.
- 1.13 In all programmes under this scheme, where the Authority requires advance information about speakers and the choice of subject, the following arrangements will apply: The Party whose turn it is to choose the subject and speaker/s will supply the required information in writing to the Authority by not later than noon on Monday preceding the day of broadcast. Failure to comply with this rule will disrupt arrangements and may entail the forfeiture of the broadcast, in which case an appropriate announcement will be made. The Authority will inform the other Party in writing about the subject and speaker/s selected not later than the following day (office hours).
- 1.14 The programmes in this series are transmitted from Xandir Malta Studios after pre-recording which takes place in the presence of the Authority's Legal Adviser. Participants are to be at the Studios not later than half an hour before recording time. Unless otherwise directed by the Authority, recording will take place at 10.00 a.m. sharp on the day of broadcast. Only the participants and the Party Broadcasting Officer or his representative may attend the checking of the play-back. A programme will be re-recorded only if the Authority so decides.
- 1.15 Political parties participating in the scheme may request a tape recording of any political programme under the scheme after the programme has been broadcast. In such cases, the tape is to be provided by the requesting party. A period of seven days from the date of the broadcast is allowed for such requests.

SPECIFIC ARRANGEMENTS

2. *Press Conferences – ‘L-Istampa Tistaqsi’*

- 2.1 This section of the scheme consists of 4 programmes of 60 minutes each allocated equally to the Nationalist Party and to the Malta Labour Party.
- 2.2 Press Conferences are meant to be informative discussions in which a party representative answers questions put to him in the general public interest by the Press.
- 2.3 Questions should be brief and relevant and journalists will be allowed supplementary and counter questions. The party spokesman should also be brief and to the point.
- 2.4 The presiding Chairman nominated by the Broadcasting Authority has been delegated full discretionary powers to regulate the programme fairly and firmly.
- 2.5 After the Chairman's introductory remarks, the party spokesman will make a short statement, after which the Chairman will invite questions.
- 2.6 The spokesman for the party concerned has the option to make a concluding statement.
- 2.7 The following time schedule will regulate programmes in this section:

Chairman's Introduction	1 min.
Party spokesman's opening statement	3 mins.
Question Time	52 mins.
Party spokesman's summing up	3 mins.
Chairman's closing	1 min.

2.8 There will be three rounds of questioning as follows:

1st round: 1 minute for question and 4 minutes for reply

2nd round: 1 minute for question and 4 minutes for reply

3rd round: 30 seconds for question and 2½ minutes for reply

2.9 Press representation will be regulated in accordance with the arrangements shown in Appendix II.

2.10 The Authority reserves the right to review Press representation from time to time.

2.11 The order in which journalists will participate will be determined by ballot.

3. **Debates**

3.1 The present series of Debates is made up of 6 programmes of 60 minutes, each with four participants.

3.2 The party which selects the subject will open and wind up the debate.

3.3 All Debates in this series will be under the charge of a Chairman nominated by the Authority.

3.4 The Chairman should ensure that clarity prevails at all times and that an equal opportunity is presented to both sides. The Chairman retains full discretionary powers to act as necessary to ensure that the interests of viewers and listeners are safeguarded.

3.5 Debates will be conducted on the following lines:

	Chairman's Introduction	1 min.
<i>1st round:</i>	First Speaker (Party A)	8 mins.
	Second Speaker (Party B)	7 mins.
	Third Speaker (Party A)	7 mins.
	Fourth Speaker (Party B)	7 mins.
<i>2nd round:</i>	First Speaker (Party A)	7 mins.
	Second Speaker (Party B)	7 mins.
	Third Speaker (Party B)	7 mins.
	Fourth Speaker (Party A)	8 mins.
	Chairman's closing	1 min.

- 3.6 All those taking part in Debates must strictly follow the Chairman's instructions whose decision in the proper conduct of the debate will be final.

4. ***Party Productions***

- 4.1 The programmes in this section may, at the parties' discretion, vary from the straight talk to an elaborate television production.
- 4.2 Party Productions in this scheme consist of six programmes allocated to the Nationalist Party, the Malta Labour Party and *Alternattiva Demokratika* as follows:

<i>Nationalist Party</i>	<i>Malta Labour Party</i>	<i>Alternattiva Demokratika</i>
2 progs. of 15 mins. each	1 prog. of 15 mins.	
1 prog. of 10 mins.	1 prog. of 10 mins.	1 prog. of 10 mins.

- 4.3 Parties are allowed to schedule one 10-minute programme each on a date selected by the respective party which must give the Authority at least *three weeks notice* of its intention. (Vide Appendix I for transmission dates of other programmes in this Section).
- 4.4 Every effort will be made to slot these programmes in accordance with the parties' wishes. However, should scheduling problems or other considerations arise, the final decision will be taken by the Authority.
- 4.5 The Authority must be informed at least a week before transmission date about the nature of the broadcast, i.e. whether it is a straight talk, an interview, a debate or a production on tape or film.
- 4.6 The Authority and Xandir Malta will render no assistance in filming, in taking of stills, in putting graphic material together or in any other way. The production must be of entirely Maltese origin and all programme material must comply with the Station's technical requirements and be provided by the parties themselves. A VHS copy is to be delivered to the Authority for legal vetting at least 48 hours before the programme is due for recording.
- 4.7 Programmes in this category will be broadcast on television only. A bottom-frame caption indicating the nature of the programme will be shown 3 times during transmission.

Interviews with Party Leaders

- 5.1 This category of broadcasts is reserved for the Leaders of the Nationalist Party and the Malta Labour Party.
- 5.2 Each programme will be of 30 minutes duration and will consist of the respective party leader and an interviewer to be nominated by the opposing party.
- 5.3 The scope of these programmes is to elicit information in the general public interest and the interview must be conducted in this spirit.
- 5.4 No visual material will be allowed during these programmes.

6. Annual General Party Conferences

- 6.1 This section consists of two programmes, one of 20 minutes allocated to the Nationalist Party and one of 15 minutes allocated to the Malta Labour Party. Programmes are to be produced by the respective party in close proximity to its annual general council/conference.
- 6.2 Each programme will be connected with and descriptive of this annual party activity.
- 6.3 Programmes will be broadcast within 10 days of delivery of the closing speech by the respective party leader at the annual general council/conference.
- 6.4 Adequate notice (not less than 3 working days) is to be given to the Authority concerning the day on which programmes in this category are to be broadcast.
- 6.5 A VHS cassette copy is to be delivered to the Authority for legal vetting at least 48 hours before the programme is due for recording. In this case recording will take place at 10.00 a.m. either on the day of broadcast or on the last working day preceding the day of broadcast if this falls on a Saturday, Sunday or Public Holiday.
- 6.6 Every effort will be made to slot these programmes in accordance with the parties' wishes. However, should scheduling problems or other considerations arise, the final decision will be taken by the Authority.

Calendar of Party Political Broadcasts
1990 – 1991

<i>Date</i>			<i>Programme</i>	<i>Party</i>
1990	October	26	<i>L-Istampa Tistaqsi</i>	Nationalist Party
	November	2	<i>L-Istampa Tistaqsi</i>	Malta Labour Party
	November	16	Debate	Nationalist Party
	November	23	Debate	Malta Labour Party
1991	January	11	Party Production	Nationalist Party
	February	1	Debate	Nationalist Party
	February	8	Debate	Malta Labour Party
	February	22	Party Production	Nationalist Party
	March	1	Party Production	Malta Labour Party
	April	12	<i>L-Istampa Tistaqsi</i>	Malta Labour Party
	April	19	<i>L-Istampa Tistaqsi</i>	Nationalist Party
	May	3	Debate	Malta Labour Party
	May	10	Debate	Nationalist Party
	May	24	Interview with MLP Leader	Malta Labour Party
	May	31	Interview with NP Leader	Nationalist Party

Notes: 1. Two programmes connected with the parties' Annual General Council/Conference are not included in this schedule. Neither are included three 10-minute party productions - one for each party - which political parties are allowed to schedule at their discretion.

2. Programmes are transmitted on Fridays at 9.15 p.m.

***Press Representation
at Press Conferences***

1. **Programme due on 26th October 1990**
(Subject chosen by the Nationalist Party)
 1. *Il-Helsien*
 2. *L-Orizzont*
 3. The Times
 4. *Alternattiva*
2. **Programme due on 2nd November 1990**
(Subject chosen by the Malta Labour Party)
 1. The Democrat
 2. *In-Nazzjon Tagħna*
 3. Sunday Times
 4. *Il-Ġens*
3. **Programme due on 12th April 1991**
(Subject chosen by the Malta Labour Party)
 1. *In-Nazzjon Tagħna*
 2. *Il-Mument*
 3. The Times
 4. *Alternattiva*
4. **Programme due on 19th April 1991**
(Subject chosen by the Nationalist Party)
 1. *Il-Helsien*
 2. *It-Torċa*
 3. *Il-Ġens*
 4. Sunday Times

Political Content in the News
Table 1 – General Picture 1990

Month	Government Activities	Party Political			Unions		Total	% of Total Local News Items
		NP	MLP	Other	CMTU	GWU		
January	48	32	27	2	12	39	160	51.9
February	66	41	31	11	8	36	193	59.0
March	94	49	49	10	12	21	235	62.8
April	112	33	36	3	18	19	221	60.7
May	124	23	33	13	17	19	229	64.3
June	114	33	38	9	9	24	227	63.8
July	91	17	21	9	10	18	166	52.5
August	91	11	19	6	14	17	158	53.0
September	112	33	33	9	9	9	205	57.1
October	106	21	41	6	23	22	219	59.7
November	115	28	25	8	14	16	206	54.4
December	82	22	30	5	8	11	158	50.6
	1155	343	383	91	154	251	2377	57.8

***Table 2 – News Reports
on Ministerial Activities – 1990***

<i>Month</i>	<i>Number of Local News Items</i>	<i>Reports on Ministerial Activities</i>	<i>%</i>
January	308	48	15.6
February	327	66	20.1
March	374	94	25.1
April	364	112	30.8
May	356	124	34.8
June	356	114	32.0
July	316	91	28.8
August	298	91	30.5
September	359	112	31.2
October	367	106	28.9
November	379	115	30.3
December	312	82	26.3
	<u>4116</u>	<u>1155</u>	28.1

**Table 3 – News Reports
on Party Political Activities – 1990**

<i>Month</i>	<i>Number of Local News Items</i>	<i>Party Political</i>			<i>Total</i>	<i>%</i>
		<i>NP</i>	<i>MLP</i>	<i>Other</i>		
January	308	32	27	2	61	19.8
February	327	41	31	11	83	25.4
March	374	49	49	10	108	28.9
April	364	33	36	3	72	19.8
May	356	23	33	13	69	19.4
June	356	33	38	9	80	22.5
July	316	17	21	9	47	14.9
August	298	11	19	6	36	12.1
September	359	33	33	9	75	20.1
October	367	21	41	6	68	18.5
November	379	28	25	8	61	16.1
December	312	22	30	5	57	18.3
	<u>4116</u>	<u>343</u>	<u>383</u>	<u>91</u>	<u>817</u>	19.9

**Table 4 – News Reports
on Trade Union Activities – 1990**

<i>Month</i>	<i>Number of Local News Items</i>	<i>Unions</i>		<i>Total</i>	<i>%</i>
		<i>CMTU</i>	<i>GWU</i>		
January	308	12	39	51	16.6
February	327	8	36	44	13.5
March	374	12	21	33	8.8
April	364	18	19	37	10.2
May	356	17	19	36	10.1
June	356	9	24	33	9.3
July	316	10	18	28	8.9
August	298	14	17	31	10.4
September	359	9	9	18	5.1
October	367	23	22	45	12.3
November	379	14	16	30	7.9
December	312	8	11	19	6.1
	<u>4116</u>	<u>154</u>	<u>251</u>	<u>405</u>	9.8

***Concluding Declaration
of the Palermo Conference
of European and African
Television Organizations
of the Mediterranean
(September 1990)***

1. The growing importance of the media, not only in forming world public opinion, but also in the very development of public events and in bringing about the great historical changes of this epoch of ours;

the ever more extensive exchange of audiovisual and of the cultural industry products among countries, opening up new prospects of reciprocal knowledge but also new risks of hegemony and subordination, and enforcing the need for preserving the cultural identity of each people;

and the technological advances, which transform the means of communication and information into structurally supranational systems;

determine a marked and special responsibility for the information and communication media in the life of the international community.

2. As this century comes to a close, the Mediterranean region is experiencing a closer interdependence, not least at cultural level, among the peoples.

Millions of men and women have shifted and continue to shift from one Mediterranean shore to the other in search of work and of improving their living conditions, bringing with them their own traditions and values.

Already today Direct Broadcasting Satellites signals cover enormous areas, overcoming not only political frontiers but also barriers between language and culture.

All this hastens and facilitates dialogue between peoples and cultures, yet, nevertheless – as we encounter every day – gives rise also to problems

and legitimate concern, and also intolerance, withdrawal and reactions of rejection, suspicion and conflicts.

Thus there arises the primary need for a framework of cooperation at cultural level, which would enable this development to be channelled towards outlets of dialogue, in the general framework of the fruitful *cooperation already ensured by the EBU.*

In addition there merges the need for overcoming the historical imbalances and the inequalities in the development of the cultural industry and of the systems of information between the two shores of the Mediterranean, all the more so in a phase in which information appears as the propulsive force of the processes of change in the by now post-industrial world.

3. The representatives of the television corporations of the European and African countries giving onto the Mediterranean are engaged in operating at editorial, productive and the industrial levels so that the development of technology and the media and information markets can be directed towards objectives of dialogue and pacific cooperation.

This is why the African and European television services present in Palermo affirm their commitment:

- *to promote, within the scope of the Mediterranean region, the free circulation of information and media for dialogue between the cultures in a logic of mutual respect of the cultural and religious values of each people;*
- *to promote a pacific and constructive cohabitation of cultures inside each country, isolating the germ of intolerance and racism and contributing to the recognition of equal dignity and equal rights; in this decisive importance is assumed by the production of information and, more generally, of television and radio programmes by the European radio and television corporations addressed to non-Community people living in the European Community in a spirit of recognition and development of their cultural identity;*
- *to pursue a more balanced order of the information and communication flows between the north and south shores of the Mediterranean through the means of cooperation that enable an adequate transfer of technology and an adequate development of the television industry of all the countries of the region to be assured;*
- *to sensibilise public opinion on questions that concern the common destinies of the region, in particular on themes of the cohabitation among*

cultures, on fighting racism, of economic interdependence and of preservation of environmental and cultural resources.

4. The means of mass communication and information will thus be able to contribute to a more comprehensive prospect of cooperation between the north and south shores of the Mediterranean, a prospect inside which cooperation in the field of information and culture is called upon to perform a major role.

The European and African public television corporations present in Palermo hope that this declaration by them will contribute to the more general dialogue between the North and South of the Mediterranean and to the consolidation of cultural cooperation between them.

In this context, they hope that in any future project of cooperation in the Mediterranean area, cultural cooperation will have an important place on the agenda.

5. To promote the achievement of the aims set forth in this declaration, it has been decided to submit the establishment of a permanent working group, within the EBU, for the approval of all television organizations. This group will be able to establish links with all the television organizations and the cultural institutions of the region.

TELEVISION PROGRAMME STATISTICS*Year Ending 31st December 1990*

<i>Specification</i>	<i>Duration of Telecasts</i>	
	<i>Average Weekly Hours</i>	<i>Percentage of Total Broadcasting Time</i>
Total	68	100
News & Current Affairs		
News	6.10	8.97
Current Affairs	0.86	1.26
Discussions	0.60	0.88
Information		
Talks	0.14	0.21
Documentaries	5.79	8.51
Religious Programmes	1.83	2.69
Magazine Programmes	2.41	3.54
Sports	4.87	7.16
Cultural		
Arts & Literature	0.75	1.10
Children's Programmes		
Cartoons	3.82	5.62
Informative & Educational	1.77	2.60
Others	1.72	2.53
Media Education Centre	0.78	1.15
Entertainment		
Drama	2.73	4.01
Series	4.67	6.87
Family Comedies	2.12	3.12
Serious Music & Ballet	0.71	1.04
Pop Music	1.23	1.81
Folk Music	0.04	0.06
Variety, Shows, Quizzes, Games	3.29	4.84
Feature Films/TV Movies	5.95	8.75
Others		
Political Talks	0.39	0.57
Parliamentary Reports	0.71	1.04
Parliamentary Debates	0.68	1.00
Ministerial Talks	0.07	0.10
Advertising	2.03	2.99
Miscellaneous	11.92	17.53

Source: TeleMalta Corporation

RADIO MALTA I PROGRAMME STATISTICS
year ending 31st December 1990

<i>Specification</i>	<i>Average Weekly Hours</i>	<i>Percentage of Total Broadcasting Time</i>
Total Broadcasting Time	119	100
News & Current Affairs		
News	13.63	11.45
Current Affairs	2.33	1.96
Talks & Discussions	9.69	8.14
Information		
Documentaries	3.85	3.24
Religious Programmes	6.75	5.67
Magazine Programmes	6.50	5.46
Women's Programmes	4.31	3.62
Sports	3.31	2.78
Children's Programmes	1.50	1.26
Cultural		
Education	1.98	1.66
Arts & Literature	1.94	1.63
Entertainment		
Drama	3.00	2.52
Readings	4.37	3.67
Variety	1.37	1.15
Serious Music	4.64	3.90
Folk & Village Band Music	3.13	2.63
Light, Popular Music	40.15	33.74
Quizzes and Panel Games	0.62	0.52
Others		
Political Broadcasts	0.20	0.17
Parliamentary Reports	0.59	0.50
Parliamentary Debates	0.67	0.56
Ministerial Broadcasts	0.12	0.10
Miscellaneous	4.35	3.66

Source: TeleMalta Corporation

RADIO MALTA II PROGRAMME STATISTICS
year ending 31st December 1990

<i>Specification</i>	<i>Average Weekly Hours</i>	<i>Percentage of Total Broadcasting Time</i>
Total Broadcasting Time	119	100
News & Current Affairs		
News	6.69	5.62
Current Affairs	2.33	1.98
Talks & Discussions	11.00	9.24
Information		
Documentaries	1.29	1.08
Religious Programmes	0.50	0.42
Magazine Programmes	0.37	0.31
Women's Programmes	—	—
Sports	2.42	2.03
Children's Programmes	—	—
Cultural		
Education	0.56	0.47
Arts & Literature	0.94	0.79
Entertainment		
Drama	—	—
Readings	3.00	2.52
Variety	0.62	0.52
Serious Music	9.92	8.34
Folk & Village Band Music	—	—
Light, Popular Music	76.23	64.06
Quizzes and Panel Games	1.87	1.57
Others		
Political Broadcasts	—	—
Parliamentary Reports	—	—
Parliamentary Debates	—	—
Ministerial Broadcasts	—	—
Miscellaneous	1.25	1.05

Source: TeleMalta Corporation



***BROADCASTING AUTHORITY
REPORT AND FINANCIAL
STATEMENTS***

*For the year ended
31 December 1990*

BROADCASTING AUTHORITY
REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the year ended 31 December 1990

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**AUDITORS' REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE BROADCASTING AUTHORITY**

We have audited the financial statements set out on pages 87 to 92 in accordance with Approved Auditing Standards. We have obtained all the information and explanations which to the best of our knowledge and belief were necessary for the purpose of our audit. Proper books of account have been kept and these are in agreement with the financial statements.

In our opinion, the financial statements show a true and fair view of the state of the Authority's affairs as at 31 December 1990 and of its deficit and source and application of funds for the year then ended, and comply with the Broadcasting Ordinance, 1961.


GAUCI, MICALLEF & CO.



A correspondent of
DFK International

Partners: J. Gauci, R. Micallef

BROADCASTING AUTHORITY
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
For the year ended 31 December 1990

	Notes	1990 Lm	1989 Lm
INCOME	(2)	81,089	73,384
EXPENDITURE		<u>(82,703)</u>	<u>(73,038)</u>
DEFICIT OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE		(1,614)	(554)
PROGRAMMES SHORTFALL PROVISION	(4)	(12,534)	(15,409)
TRANSFER (TO)/FROM CAPITAL RESERVE	(5)	<u>(1,886)</u>	<u>19,700</u>
(DEFICIT)/SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR		(16,034)	3,737
ACCUMULATED DEFICIT BROUGHT FORWARD		<u>(338,865)</u>	<u>(342,602)</u>
ACCUMULATED DEFICIT CARRIED FORWARD		<u>Lm(354,899)</u>	<u>Lm(338,865)</u>

BROADCASTING AUTHORITY
BALANCE SHEET

As at 31 December 1990

	Notes	1990 Lm	1989 Lm
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible	(3)	<u>6,872</u>	<u>6,760</u>
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors and prepayments		1,788	591
Bank and cash in hand		<u>1,223</u>	<u>2,347</u>
		3,011	2,938
CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR			
Creditors and accruals		<u>(4,697)</u>	<u>(2,898)</u>
NET CURRENT (LIABILITIES)/ASSETS		<u>(1,686)</u>	<u>40</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		5,186	6,800
PROVISION FOR LIABILITIES AND CHARGES	(4)	<u>(334,779)</u>	<u>(322,245)</u>
NET LIABILITIES		Lm(329,593)	Lm(315,445)
CAPITAL AND DEFICIENCY			
Capital fund	(5)	25,306	23,420
Accumulated deficit		<u>(354,899)</u>	<u>(338,865)</u>
		Lm(329,593)	Lm(315,445)



CHAIRMAN



CHIEF EXECUTIVE

BROADCASTING AUTHORITY
STATEMENT OF SOURCE AND
APPLICATION OF FUNDS

For the year ended 31 December 1990

	1990 Lm	1989 Lm
SOURCE OF FUNDS		
(Deficit)/Surplus for the year	(16,034)	3,737
Adjustments for items not involving the movement of funds:		
Depreciation	1,774	1,779
Transfer (to)/from capital reserve	1,886	(19,700)
Provision for shortfall in programmes	12,534	15,409
Profit on disposal of fixed assets	—	(93)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
FUNDS GENERATED FROM OPERATIONS	160	1,132
FUNDS FROM OTHER SOURCES		
Proceeds from disposal of fixed assets	—	268
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	160	1,400
APPLICATION OF FUNDS		
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(1,886)	(1,115)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
NET (APPLICATION)/SOURCE OF FUNDS	<u>Lm(1,726)</u>	<u>Lm285</u>
THE NET (APPLICATION)/SOURCE OF FUNDS IS REPRESENTED BY THE FOLLOWING INCREASE/ (DECREASE) IN WORKING CAPITAL		
Debtors and prepayments	1,197	(1,216)
Creditors and accruals	(1,799)	1,692
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	(602)	476
Movement in net liquid funds:		
Bank and cash in hand	(1,124)	(191)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<u>Lm(1,726)</u>	<u>Lm285</u>

BROADCASTING AUTHORITY
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the year ended 31 December 1990

1. BASIS OF ACCOUNTING

The financial statements are prepared on the historical cost basis of accounting.

2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

a) Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is provided for on the straight line method at rates intended to write off the cost of fixed assets over their expected useful lives. The annual rates used, which are consistent with those applied in the previous year, are:

	%
Studio equipment	20
Technical equipment	25
Motor Vehicles	20
Furniture, fittings and office equipment	10 - 20

b) Programme expenditure

Twenty percent of general administrative expenses is apportioned to programme expenditure.

c) Income

Income is made up as follows:

	1990 Lm	1989 Lm
Government contributions	80,000	72,000
Licence fees from Programme Contractors	751	751
Ground rent	13	13
Bank interest	325	258
Profit on disposal of fixed assets	-	93
Commonwealth Song Contest Grant	-	269
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	Lm81,089	Lm73,384

BROADCASTING AUTHORITY
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

3. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Freehold Land Lm	Furniture Fittings & • Office Equipment Lm	Technical Equipment Lm	Studio Equipment Lm	Motor Vehicle Lm	Total Lm
<i>Cost</i>						
As at 1 January 1990	655	15,714	2,386	718	3,947	23,420
Additions	—	1,611	275	—	—	1,886
As at 31 December 1990	655	17,325	2,661	718	3,947	25,306
<i>Depreciation</i>						
As at 1 January 1990	—	10,203	1,934	576	3,947	16,660
Charge for the year	—	1,448	184	142	—	1,774
As at 31 December 1990	—	11,651	2,118	718	3,947	18,434
<i>Net book value</i>						
As at 31 December 1990	Lm 655	Lm 5,674	Lm 543	Lm —	Lm —	Lm 6,872
As at 31 December 1989	Lm 655	Lm 5,511	Lm 452	Lm 142	Lm —	Lm 6,760

The cost of fully depreciated assets as at 31 December 1990 amounted to Lm13,545 on which depreciation otherwise chargeable would have amounted to Lm1,950.

BROADCASTING AUTHORITY
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
(continued)

4. PROVISION FOR LIABILITIES AND CHARGES

The Authority is contractually obliged to spend Lm35,000 annually for the prescription and improvement of programmes on radio and television. The income of the Authority was not always sufficient to enable it to meet this commitment. Consequently, the Authority has accumulated the following shortfall:

	1990 Lm	1989 Lm
Balance as at 1 January	322,245	306,836
Shortfall for the year (page 78)	<u>12,534</u>	<u>15,409</u>
Balance as at 31 December	<u>Lm334,779</u>	<u>Lm322,245</u>

5. CAPITAL FUND

	1990 Lm	1989 Lm
Balance as at 1 January	23,420	43,120
Net additions to/(disposals of)fixed assets	<u>1,886</u>	<u>(19,700)</u>
Balance as at 31 December	<u>Lm25,306</u>	<u>Lm23,420</u>

BROADCASTING AUTHORITY
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
For the year ended 31 December 1990

	Page	1990 Lm	1989 Lm
INCOME			
Government contributions		80,000	72,000
Licence fees from Programme			
Contractors		751	751
Ground rent		13	13
Bank interest		325	258
Profit on disposal of fixed assets		–	93
Commonwealth Song Contest Grant		–	269
		<u>81,089</u>	<u>73,384</u>
EXPENDITURE			
Administrative expenses	(77)	60,237	54,347
Programme expenditure	(78)	<u>22,466</u>	<u>19,591</u>
		<u>82,703</u>	<u>73,938</u>
DEFICIT FROM INCOME OVER			
EXPENDITURE		(1,614)	(554)
PROGRAMMES SHORTFALL PROVISION		(12,534)	(15,409)
TRANSFER (TO)/FROM CAPITAL RESERVE		<u>(1,886)</u>	<u>19,700</u>
(DEFICIT)/SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR		Lm <u>(16,034)</u>	Lm <u>3,737</u>

BROADCASTING AUTHORITY
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

For the year ended 31 December 1990

	1990	1989
	Lm	Lm
Audit fee	200	200
Depreciation:		
– furniture and fittings	605	601
– office equipment	843	841
Commonwealth Song Contest expenses	–	340
Duty visits abroad	6,088	2,315
Public relations	1,131	1,348
Legal and professional fees	2,327	1,038
Repairs and maintenance	607	2,097
International organisations membership fees	2,915	2,857
Subscriptions and publications	1,109	549
Telecommunication expenses	1,318	1,996
Rent	1,550	1,550
Rentals of Radio & TV sets	210	207
Stationery	1,235	1,200
Sundry expenses	662	431
Insurances	183	199
Transport	695	583
Wages and salaries	41,022	37,753
Members' honoraria	6,000	6,000
N.I. contributions	3,037	2,830
Water and Electricity	865	650
M.B.A. Annual Reports	656	487
Staff recruitment and training	23	359
Visiting lecturers	285	–
Adaptation of office	430	202
Audience research study	1,300	1,300
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	75,296	67,933
Expenses apportioned to programmes:		
Sound Broadcasts - 5.7%	– to page 78	(4,292) (3,872)
T.V. Broadcasts - 14.3%	– to page 78	(10,767) (9,714)
	– to page 76	Lm60,237 Lm54,347
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BROADCASTING AUTHORITY
PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE

For the year ended 31 December 1990

	1990			1989
	Sound Lm	T.V. Lm	Total Lm	Total Lm
AIRTIME & STUDIO CHARGES				
Broadcasts: Script/writers expenses	–	549	549	40
Documentaries	–	1,888	1,888	42
Political Broadcasts	1,368	3,193	4,561	5,315
Other Broadcasts	–	83	83	271
	<u>1,368</u>	<u>5,713</u>	<u>7,081</u>	<u>5,668</u>
DEPRECIATION ON TECHNICAL AND STUDIO EQUIPMENT				
	98	228	326	337
APPORTIONMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES				
– from page 77	<u>4,292</u>	<u>10,767</u>	<u>15,059</u>	<u>13,586</u>
– to page 76	<u>5,758</u>	<u>16,708</u>	<u>22,466</u>	<u>19,591</u>
PROGRAMMES SHORTFALL PROVISION – to page 70				
			<u>12,534</u>	<u>15,409</u>
			<u>Lm35,000</u>	<u>Lm35,000</u>

