

RTÉ's Guiding Principles -

Implementing the Public Service Broadcasting Charter

November 2004

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Patrick J. Wright

FOREWORD

RTÉ is a non-profit making organisation owned by the Irish people and it will always strive to serve them with the best possible indigenous content giving value for money on a fully accountable basis.

This document details RTÉ's core values, identifies its goals for the next three years and outlines the actions the Integrated Business Divisions (IBDs) will undertake to achieve these goals. It is designed as a rolling plan and will evolve as the broadcasting landscape and the activities of the organisation itself evolve. In effect it charts a course for the organisation which has at its centre our commitment to always put the audience first and to meet the expectations as outlined in the Public Service Broadcasting Charter, published in June 2004 by the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources.

As an organisation RTÉ has come through very difficult years and is now well positioned to face one of the most challenging eras in the history of broadcasting - facing enormous technological developments coupled with a highly competitive market place. The restructured organisation has, with the combined support and commitment of the Authority, Executive and staff, achieved the necessary efficiencies to allow it to take advantages of future opportunities by meeting the goals outlined in this document.

As Ireland's Public Service Broadcaster RTÉ will facilitate the telling of the stories of Ireland, its history, heritage and people; provide a comprehensive and impartial News and Current Affairs service; nurture and contribute to Ireland's rich cultural life; bring the country together on major occasions and recognise and support the special importance of regions and communities. And RTÉ will bring international stories to Ireland.

RTÉ, while remaining flexible enough to adapt to a constantly changing environment, will be shaped but not restricted by its past. It will:

- ◆ secure the future of Public Service Broadcasting by ensuring that its output meets the how, when, why and where its audiences use the media
- ◆ nurture our democracy
- ◆ help to create the future, and not simply respond to it
- ◆ be on top of developments in new technologies and services
- ◆ in all output areas continue to define Ireland while remaining an integral and core part of the nation.

RTÉ will remain the broadcaster that brings Irish people together in times of celebration and tragedy and provides free to air services offering programming of interest and relevance to all in the community.

Patrick J. Wright

Chairman



RTÉ MATTERS

RTÉ matters to Irish people, whether they live on the island or elsewhere, and to the many people world-wide who are interested in Ireland and its people, history and culture.

- ◆ RTÉ Radio reaches over 1.5 million or 50% of adults every day (source: JNLR Jan-Dec 2003)
- ◆ 45% of all peak-time adult television viewers are watching RTÉ Television (source: Nielsen Media Research: Jan-Jun 2004)
- ◆ RTÉ Guide is the best selling Irish Magazine - 415,000 adults read it every week (source: JNRS Jan-Dec 2003)
- ◆ 90% of households that use teletext use RTÉ Aertel (source: Nielsen Media Research)
- ◆ rte.ie had an average of 6.9 million page impressions every month during 2003 (source: RTÉ)
- ◆ Over half a million individuals tune into the RTÉ Television News at nine o'clock, each week night (source: Nielsen Media Research, Jan-Dec 2003)
- ◆ The Top 10 national weekday programmes are all on RTÉ Radio – six on RTÉ1 and four on RTÉ 2FM (source: JNLR Jan-Dec 2003)
- ◆ 9 of the top 10 most watched TV programmes in Ireland in 2003, were RTÉ Television programmes (source: JNLR Jan-Dec 2003)
- ◆ Over 157,000 people attended performances by the RTÉ Performing Groups during 2003 (source: RTÉ)

People interact with RTÉ services in all locations – at home, in work or for entertainment. It is an important part of everyday life – part of the infrastructure of Irish society.

The challenges ahead

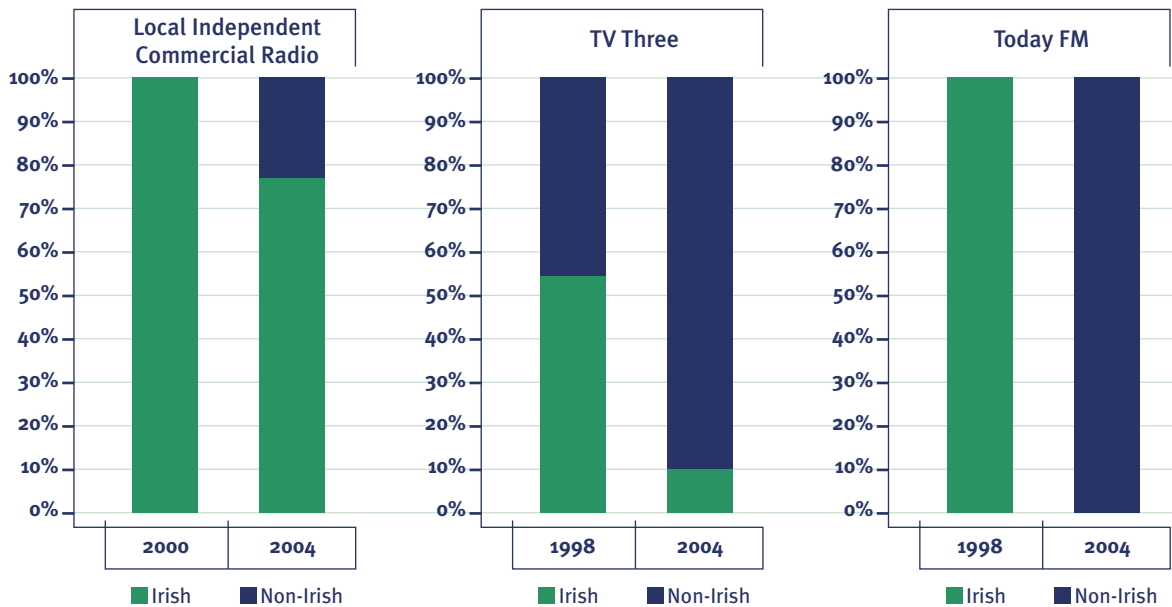
There is a complex range of challenges facing RTÉ in the coming years and we will respond to all; each challenge will be taken as an opportunity to improve what we bring to our audience – and how we bring it – while meeting our responsibilities under the Charter. Our audience itself is also changing, as are its needs, and the technology available is improving at a dramatic rate. RTÉ is publicly owned and is therefore distinct from the competition it faces; competition which itself

is increasingly concentrated in international ownership. The maintenance of an independent publicly owned Irish media organisation is at the heart of the democratic expression of Irish civic society.

There are twenty eight independent commercial radio stations licensed by the BCI – twenty six local, one regional and one national. Six of these twenty eight independent commercial stations are wholly owned by international companies, while a further three are partially owned by non-Irish shareholders. RTÉ has four radio services. RTÉ’s combined reach and share has inevitably decreased in the face of the increasing competition in recent years. The likely granting of additional licenses will only intensify this highly competitive market place.

The television marketplace in Ireland has almost 80% of homes in the multi-channel area, of which almost 450,000 homes are subscribing to a digital service via either cable or satellite. In addition, the locally licensed competition is predominantly internationally owned. The programming and technical resources available to the internationally owned media set in relief the agility, imagination and resourcefulness required of RTÉ to maintain a distinctive Irish voice in the international clamour.

Charts on ownership - radio and tv



There are five major challenges ahead and each one is addressed briefly:

- ◆ Develop and own distinctive Irish content on all media
- ◆ Be central player in digital broadcasting in Ireland
- ◆ Expand and develop revenue sources
- ◆ Use our unique brand across all divisions
- ◆ Maintain maximum structural and regulatory flexibility.

Develop and own distinctive Irish content on all media

RTÉ's ongoing audience research clearly shows that Irish people want distinctive Irish content - and they are entitled to it. RTÉ has a responsibility to 'inform, educate and entertain' and to do so in a distinctively "Irish way". This does not mean programming should have a national focus only; it does and must include an international focus. Importantly it has a very specific focus on democracy. Harvard Prof. Robert Putnam has spoken of the need to build "social capital" to counteract the decline of civic participation. Social capitalists are individuals who vote, volunteer and attend cultural events. Ireland has always been a nation of social capitalists and RTÉ believes that distinctive Irish programming will support these values on an ongoing basis.

Due to the increased Licence Fee revenues RTÉ Television spent an extra €16m on Irish programming in 2003. It plans to increase that amount in coming years. RTÉ Radio programming has always been almost 100% home produced and this will be maintained - but by introducing material from independent producers there will be an expansion of the range of material broadcast.

Be a central player in digital broadcasting in Ireland

The developments in technology over recent years means that the existing way of transmitting services, analogue, must be replaced by digital transmission. The Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources is responsible for developing Ireland's policy for the distribution of digital broadcast signals and doing so against the backdrop of uneven success of certain distribution platforms in other countries and the failure to establish Digital Terrestrial Television in Ireland in the late 1990s. Ireland's digital broadcasting future is of prime significance to RTÉ's own development and will be a focus for the organisation's risk analysis.

RTÉ is anxious to work closely with the Department to play a full part in the development of this policy and to highlight the pressing need for agreement in this regard. Specifically the organisation:

- ◆ is committed to the distribution of content across all existing and emerging delivery channels – terrestrial, satellite, cable/MMDS, Internet and telecommunications networks
- ◆ will work to optimise the availability of its content in a digital environment on a universal and, technology permitting, free-to-air basis, or at no additional access cost on non-broadcast platforms
- ◆ will facilitate the development of policy through full participation in any Digital Working Group which may be set up to represent the interests and expertise of Government, Broadcasters, Regulators and Platform Operators in Ireland

- ◆ has offered to use its existing infrastructure to facilitate a DTT pilot/ demonstration for the distribution of indigenous television services
- ◆ will work with others to examine the possibility of, and business models, for Free-to-Air Satellite distribution within Ireland
- ◆ will work with all service providers to maintain our presence on all platforms.

Expand and develop revenue sources

RTÉ is a dual funded organisation – and in 2003 50% of its revenue was from public funding (via the Licence Fee) and 50% from commercial sources. This is, RTÉ believes, a minimum level of public funding required as due to economic realities in a country the size of Ireland commercial funding would not have the capacity to deliver the required content of the Public Service Broadcaster. In order to carry out its functions effectively and independently RTÉ needs to be at a distance from a majority reliance on commercial funding. This, in no way, lessens the obligation on RTÉ to work as effectively and efficiently as its competitors.

RTÉ's Annual Report, 2003 details the way in which the Licence Fee was allocated and spent during the year. It shows that no Licence Fee revenue was used to acquire programmes or to suppress commercial income in any way – allegations that have frequently been made but which are not true. Commercial revenue is of critical importance to RTÉ and it would not make sense to reduce it for any purpose. Some RTÉ services, e.g. RTÉ 2fm and the RTÉ Guide, make a profit that is used to support our Public Service Broadcasting activities including the production of indigenous programmes.

RTÉ's main commercial revenue generators are:

- ◆ Advertising and sponsorship
- ◆ Network and facilities
- ◆ Circulation and events
- ◆ Content and merchandising.

They are all highly competitive – and RTÉ is focussed on the maintenance and development of income sources in each category. For example in advertising and sponsorship RTÉ:

- ◆ has established new business units responsible for addressing new streams of revenue
- ◆ is committed to responding to, and in as far as possible anticipating, the changing demands of the marketplace
- ◆ offers cross-media strategies to facilitate advertisers who want to co-ordinate their messages across a number of media – television, radio, print and on-line.

Similar measures are being taken in relation to all revenue generators. There is no complacency in relation to the need to develop income sources; even though RTÉ is a not for profit organisation it is anxious to enhance the amount of revenue to maximise the investment in indigenous programming.

Use a unique brand across all divisions

RTÉ means different things to different people and this can vary over time. For example, it may mean a large service such as Television, Radio, News or it may mean something more specific e.g. the RTÉ Guide, the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra or a particular programme.

The one common point is that **the public owns all of these RTÉ services** including:

- ◆ two television channels
- ◆ four radio channels
- ◆ a publishing division comprising the RTÉ Guide and rte.ie with websites for programmes, News and Sports services etc.
- ◆ performing groups – orchestras, choirs, string quartet
- ◆ transmission network service - bringing signals throughout Ireland
- ◆ regional offices and correspondents
- ◆ library and archives.

In addition RTÉ, at the behest of Government, has established a third national television service TG4 which has operated autonomously under the aegis of RTÉ for 8 years on the basis that it will be established as an independent service.

RTÉ believes it is important that the full extent, breadth and range of the services it offers is clear to everyone and that is why, since 2003, all services have been prefixed with 'RTÉ'. The organisation will be building more and more links between its services which will enhance the experience for the viewer / listener and benefit the cost-effectiveness of the organisation.

Maintain maximum structural and regulatory flexibility

A. Structural flexibility

The central way in which RTÉ will maintain maximum structural flexibility is through the further development and enhancement of its Performance Management System (PMS), which commenced in 2003.

The starting point for RTÉ's PMS is the set of **Core Values** which clarify the role and responsibilities of the organisation to the Irish people.

The guiding principles for the organisation, which ensure it will meet its Charter responsibilities, are crystallised through the defined **Goals** – for RTÉ as a whole and for individual IBDs. The principles will ensure the flexibility RTÉ needs to continue to connect with our audiences in the multiplicity of ways which will provide the range and standard of services they want and deserve.

The **Actions** spell out the steps the organisation proposes to follow to achieve the goals – with the actions focussing on outputs, not on activities.



The **outcomes** can be qualitative and / or quantitative – and are frequently but not always measurable.

Once the desired outcomes are clear they are used to agree annual Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for senior management, including members of the Executive Board. Over the next three years the process of agreeing objectives will be cascaded down the organisation and become an integral part of each staff member’s responsibilities.

B. Regulatory Flexibility

RTÉ’s principal governing legislation is the Broadcasting Act 1960, as amended, which sets out the organisation’s principle duties, responsibilities and accounting requirements.

RTÉ is also subject to legislative and regulatory requirements under other statutory provisions including:

- ◆ the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland (BCI), arising from provisions of the 2001 Broadcasting Act in relation to Advertising Codes and the Broadcasting Complaints’ Commission
- ◆ ComReg in relation to RTÉ’s subsidiary company RTÉNL’s provision of analogue transmission services for national television and radio
- ◆ EU and national competition rules
- ◆ the *Television without Frontiers* Directive, *Cable & Wireless* Directive and *Copyright* Directive in relation to transnational broadcasting and the re-transmission of broadcast signals

- ◆ Government Codes and legal provisions in respect of Corporate Governance.

But the regulatory landscape is changing as Government has indicated its intention to:

- ◆ bring all Irish originated broadcasting under a single licensing and content regulator the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI)
- ◆ change RTÉ from its existing status as a statutory corporation – perhaps into a company registered under and governed by the Companies' Act.

To maintain and enhance its position as the premier provider of independent quality programming and News and Current Affairs, RTÉ will work closely with Government and other key stakeholders to give best effect to proposed legislative changes through:

- ◆ Researching and identifying an appropriate company model which best reflects governance and performance requirements of a Public Service Broadcaster while safeguarding the editorial independence by maintaining a vital distance from and independence of the Government of the day.
- ◆ Working closely with Government and key stakeholders to ensure that the statutory establishment of the proposed Broadcasting Authority of Ireland takes account of the appropriate balance of the legitimate interests of public and private broadcasting
- ◆ Contribute to the process of establishing a regulatory framework for broadcasting which seeks to stimulate a vibrant Irish broadcast sector that can adapt to the pace of change in a world of converged media and distribution.



THE ROLE OF IRELAND'S PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTER

As Ireland's Public Service Broadcasting organisation RTÉ is owned by and is accountable to the public, which it exists to serve. Every individual must feel a connection with RTÉ and believe s/he gets value and output of interest and relevance from RTÉ.

RTÉ believes its role is multifaceted and constantly evolving as Irish society evolves. It is committed to operating in a fair, effective and transparent way and accounting, to all its stakeholders, for all revenue generated - both public and commercial.

Specifically it must:

- ◆ continue to be available as a free-to-air, platform neutral public service for all the residents of Ireland
- ◆ maintain its independence of all vested interests – political, social, commercial, religious and cultural
- ◆ meet its legal obligations to be fair, accurate, impartial and objective
- ◆ provide mixed, generalist schedules of programmes to serve mainstream audiences as well as programming for minority groups and interests
- ◆ improve access for people with impaired sight or hearing
- ◆ be the mainstay of programme-making in Ireland, through a combination of in-house production and work commissioned from the independent sector
- ◆ be a significant centre for employment and training in the creative, technical and editorial skills of broadcasting, broadcast journalism and programme production
- ◆ be accountable for its public funding
- ◆ be recognised at home and abroad as the national broadcasting service of Ireland - the principal source of broadcast news, information and cultural expression of and from Ireland
- ◆ provide programming that recognises regional interests and cultural diversity including language and music, and encourages understanding and tolerance
- ◆ maintain these principles in the transition to digital broadcasting to protect the public interest in the next era of broadcasting and media development.

RTÉ'S CORE VALUES

As Ireland's Public Service Broadcaster RTÉ's core values are:

Connecting with all our audiences

- ◆ always put the audience first and be a universal free-to-air service
- ◆ reflect the diverse values of the people of Ireland, specifically cultural, including language, religion and regional needs across all age groups
- ◆ provide high quality, popular programming and services including archives
- ◆ be creative in our output, with the confidence to take risks

Providing a value for money service

- ◆ provide a quality and efficient service on a value for money basis
- ◆ operate in a fair and transparent manner
- ◆ be a cost efficient organisation attracting maximum revenues to optimise output
- ◆ fulfill our role as the National Public Service Broadcaster while being flexible enough to respond to changing needs

Being Ireland's premier, independent provider of definitive News and Current Affairs material, both national and international

- ◆ be accurate and impartial in all News coverage
- ◆ provide insightful and challenging Current Affairs coverage

RTÉ's GOALS 2004 – 2007

RTÉ, shaped by its past, will be flexible enough to adapt to the future by:

- ◆ meeting the needs of its various audiences
- ◆ creating the requirements and conditions to enable all our staff and all who contribute to RTÉ and its services to embrace new skills and technologies
- ◆ operating cost effectively without comprising quality or quantity of output
- ◆ ensuring the appropriate development and use of its unique archive
- ◆ developing new talent in all aspects of our work including talents of existing staff

RTÉ will focus on holding existing and attracting new audiences by:

- ◆ providing a diverse range of high quality, popular output with a focus on home-production
- ◆ developing new and innovative programming
- ◆ producing output of interest for minority groups
- ◆ effectively using the RTÉ brand across divisions

RTÉ will position itself to optimize its role in digital broadcasting – new media and new technologies by:

- ◆ Continuing to progress the production of all our content in a digital format
- ◆ being pro-active and play a central role in the development of national policy for broadcast distribution
- ◆ developing, in consultation with Government and national, international and industry fora, a road map for digital broadcasting

RTÉ will promote Ireland's cultural heritage by:

- ◆ ensuring the production of high-quality content, in both languages
- ◆ strengthening our regional output
- ◆ celebrating our diversity as a people – including the occasions that bind us
- ◆ reflecting the dynamic nature of contemporary Ireland

RTÉ will maximise its revenues from all sources to optimise its output.

This will include:

- ◆ endeavouring to ensure efficient licence fee collection through assisting Government to identify appropriate agency / agencies to collate data, collect licence fee and enforce adherence and providing ongoing promotional support
- ◆ optimizing commercial revenue from advertising, sponsorship and other commercial activities
- ◆ developing new programme-funding strategies

RTÉ will strengthen its role in sponsorships, performances and partnerships to optimise its output across all divisions.

This will include:

- ◆ partnering community broadcasters to promote public service programming by co-operating to secure Special Broadcasting Funds
- ◆ sponsoring, at a corporate level, events which will enhance output opportunities.

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOALS

The statements on *RTÉ's Core Values* and *RTÉ's Goals* have been adopted by the Senior Management Teams in the output divisions: News and Current Affairs, Radio, Television and Publishing, and by the wholly owned subsidiary company RTÉNL – the transmission service.

Each division has identified a series of action points for the next three years to help secure realisation of the corporate goals. One division, RTÉ Performing Groups, has been the subject of a business review in mid 2004 and will be developing its actions in time for publication in the first up-date of this rolling plan. Each IBD is dealt with separately. For presentation purposes an abbreviated version of the goals is used in the templates for the IBDs – the full detail is as outlined above in **RTÉ Goals 2005 – 2007**.

RTÉ NEWS AND CURRENT AFFAIRS

Actions to achieve goals

As well as sharing RTÉ's organisational goals, RTÉ News and Current Affairs has a specific goal:

RTÉ News and Current Affairs will endeavour to maintain and develop its high quality journalism and current affairs production independent of all outside interests.

This will include:

- ◆ National, international and regional news
- ◆ Analytic investigative current affairs programming
- ◆ Special event coverage of major national occasions
- ◆ Developing a journalistic base to ensure the continuation of news in the Irish language across radio and television
- ◆ Coverage of Ireland's regions, of politics, the Oireachtas and of European Affairs
- ◆ News programming for children
- ◆ Delivering expert analysis through a range of specialist correspondents
- ◆ Providing International news coverage from an independent and Irish perspective
- ◆ Addressing Irish audiences across all available platforms including via Aertel, rte.ie and on new media platforms
- ◆ Maintaining the highest standards of journalistic
- ◆ Delivering a service that is efficient, cost-effective and adaptable
- ◆ Promoting and developing the Nuacht service across radio and television recognising the special role of Nuacht RTÉ in supporting the national standard of spoken Irish
- ◆ Enhancing the RTÉ daily Nuacht service to TG4
- ◆ Working towards the decentralisation of the broadcasting of Nuacht from Donnybrook to Baile na hAbhann
- ◆ Maximising the efficiencies and synergies that can be obtained from the merged Nuacht entity for the whole Newsroom.

RTÉ, shaped by its past, will be flexible enough to adapt to the future

GOAL meet the needs of various audiences	ACTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provision of News and Current Affairs output for all platforms and of interest to all age groups 	TARGET DATE ongoing
GOAL development of all contributors	ACTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recruiting, training and mentoring to high standards of journalism, production and teamwork. having an ongoing training and performance review strategy. identifying skills needs and establishing project groups to advance technological change. 	TARGET DATE Q 3 2004 ongoing Q 4 2004 Q 3 2004 review 2005
GOAL be cost effective without comprising quality or quantity	ACTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> continuing the development of new and innovative work practices using, to best effect, new technologies to enhance and facilitate efficient use of journalist and presentation resources controlling and monitoring the efficiency of output and production - quality control groups on output set up and reporting quarterly 	TARGET DATE ongoing ongoing Q 3 2004 ongoing
GOAL use of archive	ACTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> exploring news archive opportunities within programmes and exploring revenue potential for the News Online service – e.g. charging for the archive 	TARGET DATE Ongoing
GOAL developing new talent	ACTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> regular recruitment and training initiatives exploring placement possibilities with third level institutions Irish language training programmes for staff 	TARGET DATE Q2 2004 ongoing From 2005 Q1 2005 ongoing

RTÉ will focus on holding existing and attracting new audiences

GOAL provide diverse range of high quality, popular output	ACTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> maintaining competitiveness of existing output maintaining quality of news services researching the changing audience effectiveness and response 	TARGET DATE ongoing ongoing ongoing
GOAL develop new and innovative programming	ACTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> examining effectiveness of targeted programming – children's news / News on 2 / Newsbeat examining agenda for relevance to new audiences and adopt a strategic approach to address any deficiencies identified 	TARGET DATE Review 2004 ongoing
GOAL produce output of interest for minority groups	ACTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensuring minority groups and their interests are reflected in the News and Current Affairs programming agenda 	TARGET DATE ongoing
GOAL use the RTÉ brand across divisions	ACTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> developing a cross promotion strategy across News and Current Affairs and a promotional strategy for Radio, TV and the Press 	TARGET DATE Q4 2004 ongoing

RTÉ will position itself to optimize its role in digital broadcasting – new media and new technologies

GOAL	ACTION	TARGET DATE
production - digital process	• developing and enhancing the news service on new platforms	Q3 2004 ongoing
	• expanding the news headline service	2005 ongoing
	• providing video and radio material for RTÉ Online, digitext, phone services and new digital platforms	2006
	• examining possible opt-out content for new digital services	ongoing
	• moving to further integration of systems - new News Development Plan	Q2 2005
	• exploring the capacity of new technologies for links and transmission	Q4 2004 ongoing

RTÉ will work to project Ireland's cultural heritage

GOAL	ACTION	TARGET DATE
high-quality content, in both languages	• maintaining the competitiveness of key News and Current Affairs programmes.	ongoing
	• focusing on TV News - in light of competition from other services and undertaking a Radio programming review	ongoing
	• headline services throughout the day	end 2004
	• evaluating the potential of a breakfast service on TV	2005
	• reviewing the news strategy for RTÉ Two	report 2004
	• holding an Editorial forum on processes	2005
	• delivering an Investigative Strand	Q4 2004 ongoing
	• providing stronger Business programming	CA 04/News 05
	• reviewing Nuacht/TG4 formats	Radio 04/TV 06 2005/06
strengthen regional output	• re-investing in and refreshing regional and Irish language programming – including news content, contributors and presenters	2004 review 2005
	• strengthening the correspondent structure and output	ongoing
	• raising our profile and adding to our links structure – expanding our live capacity from the regions	2005 ongoing
	• creating further synergies between news service for RTÉ Radio 1 and RnaG	2005/2006
	• completing move of Nuacht TV service to Baile na hAbhann	Q4 2004

GOAL	ACTION	TARGET DATE
celebrate diversity	• Re-examining how we coverage of major Special events	Q2 2004
	• Electronic Voting - new format of programming	2006
	• Optimising special occasions coverage	ongoing
	• Seeking opportunities for breaking news coverage	ongoing
	• Examining the effectiveness of News/Current Affairs output in reflecting and addressing new audiences	Q2 2005/6 and 7
	• Assessing the relevance of political programming through survey and innovation:	
	review Week in Politics	Q3, 2004
pilot Parliamentary DTT proposal when feasible	2005	
study move of Oireachtas unit to city centre	2006	
reflect dynamic nature of Ireland	• reflect through comprehensive and varied coverage through all programming including Nationwide	ongoing

RTÉ will build upon its sponsorships, performances and partnerships to optimise its output across all divisions

GOAL	ACTION	TARGET DATE
partner community broadcasters to promote PS programming	• co-operating to secure Special Broadcasting Funds	2005 ongoing
	• using News output in partnership with new services	ongoing
	• giving News personalities a role in promoting our Public Service profile	ongoing
	• through Oireachtas programming	ongoing
	• serving niche audiences such as immigrants or the disabled	ongoing

RTÉ TELEVISION

Actions to achieve goals

RTÉ Television's overriding goal is :

To maintain its position as the country's leading broadcaster of television programmes while continuing to fulfill its strong public service remit.

In keeping with RTÉ's overall goals, RTÉ TV will make annual plans for all its activities under the following headings:

1. Programmes
2. Research
3. People
4. Commercial (Sales and Marketing)
5. Finance
6. Technology
7. External Associations, Partnerships and Joint Ventures

RTÉ, shaped by its past, will be flexible enough to adapt to the future

GOAL	ACTION	TARGET DATE
meet the needs of various audiences	• Provide wide range of quality popular programming that appeals to all age-groups	ongoing
	• Provide programming aimed specifically at minority groups in Ireland	ongoing
development of all contributors	• have a specific in-house commissioning round for new programme ideas	ongoing
	• set KPIs for all management that include specific objectives on staff development	Q1 2005
	• annual Training Plan for up-skilling staff	ongoing
	• ongoing performance review	Annual
	• ensure participation in management training courses and ongoing review of training needs of TV IBD management	ongoing
	• facilitate staff learning and staff development through in-house programming	ongoing
be cost effective without comprising quality or quantity	• ongoing monitoring of cost against agreed budget for all TV IBD activity, including programme production and acquisitions	ongoing
	• set annual target for each genre of programme hours against budget, and monitor	ongoing

GOAL	ACTION	TARGET DATE
use of archive	• develop archive related web access	Q4, 2004
	• establishment of Archive Project Team to produce archive based TV programming	Q1 2005
	• increase the volume of archive related programming in the schedules, particularly on RTÉ Two	Q3 2005
	• develop existing staff knowledge and understanding of archive through more regular meetings, information briefings and use of the Intranet	ongoing
	• continue digitising of archive material	2005
developing new talent	• Set KPIs that stipulate new talent development and succession planning as key	ongoing
	• Prioritise identification and development of new on-air talent	Q1 2005

RTÉ will focus on holding existing and attracting new audiences

GOAL	ACTION	TARGET DATE
provide diverse range of high quality, popular output	• conduct ongoing review of schedule to ensure programme mix delivers high quality and engages a popular audience	ongoing
	• set annual genre hours targets and share performance targets	January each year
develop new and innovative programming	• prioritise home production	ongoing
	• establish rolling plan which prioritises key areas of the schedule for programme/talent development	Q2 2004 ongoing
produce output of interest for minority groups	• review of diversity programmes pursued by other broadcasters	Q4 2004
	• promote diversity and multicultural policy to include addressing the issue of recruitment from minority groups	Q1 2005
	• ongoing review of RTÉ Television's diversity programming output	ongoing
use the RTÉ brand across divisions	• institute new, regular inter-Divisional management meetings with aim to increase cross-promotion and other opportunities	Q2 2004
	• increase level of corporate promotion airtime to 10% of total (promotion air-time) in TV IBD	Q3 2004
	• begin promotion of radio programmes on TV through presentation	Q2 2004
	• work with Publishing to develop commercial opportunities for RTÉ programme brands	ongoing
	• develop special event programming that is cross-divisional in terms of promotional opportunities	Q1 2005
	• look for more opportunities to promote Radio talent on TV	ongoing (new initiative)

RTÉ will position itself to optimize its role in digital broadcasting – new media and new technologies

GOAL	ACTION	TARGET DATE
production - digital process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop a strategy for conversion of all production to digital including the specific development of total digital editing in TV IBD 	Q4 2004
national policy for broadcast distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> play a central role in the corporate and wider debate on the future of digital 	ongoing
road map for digital broadcasting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consolidate existing and develop new partnerships with relevant cable and satellite companies 	ongoing

RTÉ will work to project Ireland's cultural heritage

GOAL	ACTION	TARGET DATE
high-quality content, in both languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> continue to use IPU commissioning rounds and newly introduced in-house rounds to maximise quality of home production 	ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> optimise acquisition strategy for the schedule 	ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> enhance quality and forward planning in schedule by developing specific programme strategy group 	Q1 2005
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure greater use of audience research to access and assess audience views 	ongoing
strengthen regional output	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop contacts with local TV companies 	ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> seek partnerships with regional independent companies to develop project applications for Special Broadcasting Fund money 	ongoing For Fund commencement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> continue development of RTÉ Cork as regional production unit 	ongoing
celebrate diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop a strategy for reflecting diversity consistently in our output 	ongoing
reflect dynamic nature of Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> implement new programming policy for RTÉ Two 	Q4 2004
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure reflection of a dynamic modern Ireland with IPU and in-house programming 	ongoing

RTÉ will maximise its revenues from all sources to optimise its output

GOAL	ACTION	TARGET DATE
support Government as it seeks to ensure efficient license fee collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> increase airtime for promotion of licence fee campaigns TV IBD Promotions Department to help plan licence fee campaigns for best effect 	<p>Q3 2004</p> <p>Q3 2004</p>
optimize commercial revenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optimize share of advertising budgets incentivise Sales salaries sales management to continue prioritisation of new business development through Business Development Strategy and Key Account Management optimise sponsorship potential, while safeguarding the integrity of output and the schedule. 	<p>ongoing</p> <p>Q4 2004</p> <p>ongoing</p> <p>ongoing</p>
develop new programme-funding strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure close liaison with RTÉ Publishing to optimise possible revenue devise new merchandising strategy prioritise early recognition of revenue potential in programme planning – both in-house and with IPU seek to maximise BCI funding for RTÉ programming, both independent and in-house develop new commercial opportunities for RTÉ programme brands 	<p>ongoing</p> <p>Q2 2004 and ongoing</p> <p>ongoing</p> <p>from establishment of BCI fund</p> <p>Q4 2004</p>

RTÉ will build upon its sponsorships, performances and partnerships to optimise its output across all divisions

GOAL	ACTION	TARGET DATE
partner community broadcasters to promote PS programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> seek Special Broadcasting Fund monies to initiate joint programming ventures with community broadcasters share RTÉ's expertise, where practical, with community schemes 	<p>when Fund commences</p> <p>ongoing</p>
sponsor events which will enhance output opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> work in co-operation with other IBDs on corporate sponsorships e.g. Ploughing Championships, RTÉ Farmleigh Proms 	<p>ongoing</p>

RTÉ RADIO

Actions to achieve goals

RTÉ Radio's specific over riding goal is:

To continue to set the standard for excellence in Irish radio and its priority is to serve the listener.

In keeping with RTÉ's overall goals, RTÉ Radio will make annual plans for all its activities under the following headings:

1. Programmes
2. Research
3. People
4. Commercial (Sales & Marketing)
5. Finance
6. Technology
7. External Associations, Partnerships & Joint-ventures

RTÉ, shaped by its past, will be flexible enough to adapt to the future

GOAL	ACTION	TARGET DATE
meet the needs of various audiences	• By researching changing lifestyles	ongoing
	• Using the most appropriate technology to serve mainstream and minority audiences in both Irish and English	ongoing
development of all contributors	• complete a Manpower Plan for RTÉ Radio expressing the skills required to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - produce and broadcast current and planned output - provide for its financial control, administration, and technical support - earn its commercial revenue. The plan will specify Radio's annual priorities for training needs, recruitment, changes in work practices and succession planning.	Q4 2004, ongoing
	• introduce an annual Human Resources Review to monitor progress and influence the on-going development of the plan	2005 - ongoing

<p>GOAL be cost effective without comprising quality or quantity</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure Line Management is supported with the information needed to achieve financial targets and manage programme costs • plan and forecast to ensure Radio's finances are on track • play a key role in the effective roll-out of corporate systems, e.g. Peoplesoft, Agresso, Transfare; • ensure programme commitments and key statistical information are tracked and reported 	<p>TARGET DATE ongoing</p> <p>ongoing</p> <p>ongoing</p> <p>ongoing</p>
<p>GOAL use of archive</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase access to the archive (subject to rights) for the general public, other broadcasters and schools and colleges • CD publication project • archive daily output from all four channels and set goals for on-air, on-line, and merchandised use of archive material 	<p>TARGET DATE ongoing</p> <p>from Q 3 2004</p> <p>ongoing</p>
<p>GOAL developing new talent</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintain an appropriate mix of in-house and independent productions • nurture and develop broadcasting talent – on air, in production and in all appropriate support services 	<p>TARGET DATE ongoing</p> <p>ongoing</p>

RTÉ will focus on holding existing and attracting new audiences

<p>GOAL provide diverse range of high quality, popular output</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plan schedule developments and production initiatives using the best available quantitative and qualitative research into audiences, demographics and changing lifestyles • collaborate with a wide range of bodies to strengthen RTÉ Radio's links with the audience and reflect the dynamic nature of Ireland and the diversity of Irish life 	<p>TARGET DATE ongoing</p> <p>ongoing</p>
<p>GOAL develop new and innovative programming</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • commission a broad spectrum of new writing and musical composition 	<p>TARGET DATE ongoing</p>
<p>GOAL produce output of interest for minority groups</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fulfil annual output commitments to serve audiences with special needs and interests 	<p>TARGET DATE ongoing</p>
<p>GOAL use the RTÉ brand across divisions</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implement long-term communications strategies aimed at RTÉ audiences working in collaboration with other IBDs and integrating new opportunities arising from the roll-out of broadband and the increasing access to the Internet 	<p>TARGET DATE ongoing</p>

RTÉ will position itself to optimize its role in digital broadcasting – new media and new technologies

GOAL production - digital process	ACTION • extend digital production process and technology to the maximum possible degree	TARGET DATE ongoing
GOAL national policy for broadcast distribution	ACTION • contribute to RTÉ's proposals/submissions for national policy on digital broadcasting	TARGET DATE Q.3 2004 and ongoing
GOAL road map for digital broadcasting	ACTION • prepare and maintain a costed plan for transition to digital audio broadcasting	TARGET DATE Q.4 2004 and ongoing

RTÉ will work to project Ireland's cultural heritage

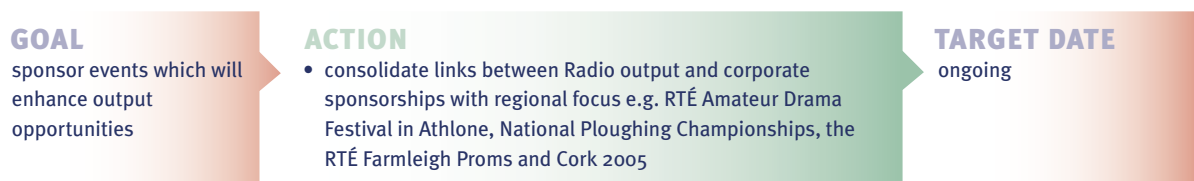
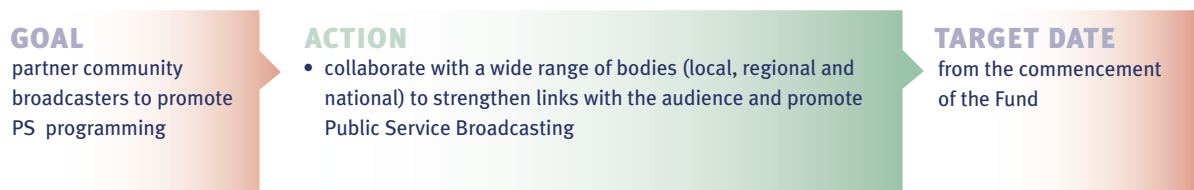
GOAL high-quality content, in both languages	ACTION • Introduce new formats in entertainment, features, drama, music and sports	TARGET DATE ongoing
GOAL strengthen regional output	ACTION • expand regional programming and increase production in regional studios	TARGET DATE ongoing
GOAL celebrate diversity	ACTION • broadcast the cultural expression of new communities in Ireland	TARGET DATE ongoing

RTÉ will maximise its revenues from all sources to optimise its output

GOAL support Government as it seeks to ensure efficient license fee collection	ACTION • provide airtime to promote campaigns for payment of TV Licence Fee	TARGET DATE ongoing
	ACTION • contribute to RTÉ's corporate support for collection of TV Licence Fee	ongoing
GOAL optimize commercial revenue	ACTION • maximise capacity to generate revenue by being informed and up to date with all technical developments including new IT sales systems, radio sales models, and the tools for listenership measurement and analysis	ongoing
	ACTION • promote RTÉ Radio as the leader in the Irish radio market	ongoing
	ACTION • expand RTÉ's cross-media sales by ongoing development of Key Account Management and multi-media products in collaboration with other RTÉ sales teams	ongoing
	ACTION • implement long-term marketing and communications strategies aimed at customers	ongoing



RTÉ will build upon its sponsorships, performances and partnerships to optimise its output across all divisions



RTÉ PUBLISHING

Actions to achieve goals

As well as sharing RTÉ’s organizational goals, RTÉ Publishing’s priority is to:

Provide RTÉ content in electronic, digital, telephonic and print formats and to meet the following IBD specific goals:

- ◆ Maintain the position of the RTÉ Guide as Ireland’s biggest-selling weekly magazine
- ◆ Enhance e-Publishing output content to provide more timely, relevant and complimentary information/content to as wide an audience as possible
- ◆ Incubate the development of new media technologies with applications to other RTÉ content and across IBDs
- ◆ Maintain print revenues to enhance services, e.g. the on-going development of e-Publishing services
- ◆ Expand and develop the e-Publishing range of products and content to optimise commercial revenue, in conjunction with all service providers
- ◆ Manage the migration of e-Publishing product/content to digital transmission platforms

RTÉ, shaped by its past, will be flexible enough to adapt to the future

GOAL	ACTION	TARGET DATE
meet the needs of various audiences	• will continue to publish the RTÉ Guide to the highest possible quality for its target readership	Ongoing
	• will provide enhanced News, Sports, Business and Entertainment information services on rte.ie	Q3 2004
	• by offering competitions/promotions of relevance and with a focus on RTÉ activities	Ongoing
development of all contributors	• to provide relevant training for all staff on an on-going basis	Q2 2005
	• create the opportunity for contributors to provide content for use across multiple media	Q3 2005

<p>GOAL be cost effective without comprising quality or quantity</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will sustain existing products and enable the necessary resources to be allocated to the research and development of new information technologies • continue to negotiate favourable revenue share terms with service providers on SMS/IVR activity and develop cross platform relationships with TV and Radio to maximise this share for RTÉ • the RTÉ Guide's circulation strategy ensures that supply is optimised to meet sales demands of all shops while maintaining print run efficiency 	<p>TARGET DATE Q3 2005 ongoing ongoing</p>
<p>GOAL use of archive</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide an inhouse search engine on the rte.ie web site • enhanced provision of live and on-demand multimedia content from e-Publishing websites 	<p>TARGET DATE Q4 2004 Q3 2004 and ongoing</p>
<p>GOAL developing new talent</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop closer journalistic ties between e-publishing and print publishing to allow cross-sectional inputting 	<p>TARGET DATE Q2 2005 and ongoing</p>

RTÉ will focus on holding existing and attracting new audiences

<p>GOAL provide diverse range of high quality, popular output</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the RTÉ Guide will continue to invest in consumer market research to help ensure it maintains its relevance amongst its target readership 	<p>TARGET DATE Q2 2005</p>
<p>GOAL develop new and innovative programming</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meet the increasing expectations of TV audiences with supplementary programme content via redesigned TV web site 	<p>TARGET DATE Q4 2005 and ongoing</p>
<p>GOAL produce output of interest for minority groups</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • features on relevant minor groups in target readership – for example older people, parents of children with disabilities 	<p>TARGET DATE ongoing</p>
<p>GOAL use the RTÉ brand across divisions</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that the RTÉ Guide content and the e-Publishing output are consistent and supportive of the RTÉ brand/mission • provide RTÉ branded content for Broadband on the Internet and the mobile phones • support cross IBD activities e.g. Ploughing Championships, Farmleigh Proms 	<p>TARGET DATE ongoing Q4. 2004 ongoing</p>

RTÉ will position itself to optimize its role in digital broadcasting – new media and new technologies

GOAL production - digital process	ACTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> publishing will provide support and will develop the infrastructure for delivery of the existing Online, Aertel, SMS and successor services 	TARGET DATE ongoing
GOAL national policy for broadcast distribution	ACTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> support RTÉ Corporate activities and commitments as appropriate 	TARGET DATE ongoing
GOAL road map for digital broadcasting	ACTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> support RTÉ Corporate activities and commitments as appropriate 	TARGET DATE ongoing

RTÉ will work to project Ireland's cultural heritage

GOAL high-quality content, in both languages	ACTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the RTÉ Guide will commence a new weekly Irish language column 	TARGET DATE Q4 2004 and ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a Text-To-Screen comment line (SMS) will be provided to Árdan, running on TG4 	Q4 2004 and ongoing
GOAL strengthen regional output	ACTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the RTÉ Guide will promote content around Cork European City of Culture 2005 in its role as the Official Guide 	TARGET DATE Q1 - Q4 2005
GOAL celebrate diversity	ACTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> endeavor to reflect a dynamic modern Ireland with coverage and availability of selected output – both from the IPU and in-house programming 	TARGET DATE ongoing
GOAL reflect dynamic nature of Ireland	ACTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that Television and Radio programmes that fulfil this goal are supported with e-publishing activities where possible 	TARGET DATE ongoing

RTÉ will maximise its revenues from all sources to optimize its output

GOAL	ACTION	TARGET DATE
support Government as it seeks to ensure efficient license fee collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide promotional space for licence fee collection campaigns 	ongoing
optimize commercial revenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop new commercial and sponsorship opportunities for existing sites work with other IBD sales management to continue the develop KAM and optimise sponsorship potential across all platforms by maintaining RTÉ Guide circulation, provide advertisers with a large and diverse readership associated with Ireland's largest selling weekly magazine by continually improving our e-Publishing range of products, provide potential advertisers with a far-reaching verifiable audience online extend current CMS system for delivery of commercially syndicated content to new platforms develop a commercial search engine and Permission e-mail facility 	<p>ongoing</p> <p>ongoing</p> <p>ongoing</p> <p>Q2 2005 and ongoing</p> <p>Q3 2004 and ongoing</p> <p>Q4 2004 and Ongoing</p>
develop new programme-funding strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explore new technology markets for programme related content explore and develop all existing website opportunities and assess commercial viability of new micro-site development to continually build on the relationship with the major service providers to develop and formulate new revenue sources 	<p>ongoing</p> <p>Q2 2005</p> <p>ongoing</p>

RTÉ will build upon its sponsorships, performances and partnerships to optimize its output across all divisions

GOAL	ACTION	TARGET DATE
partner community broadcasters to promote PS programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not applicable at this time 	
sponsor events which will enhance output opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the RTÉ Guide will promote content around Cork European City of Culture 2005 in its role as the Official Guide work with other IBDs in joint sponsorships and in a supportive role to optimise RTÉ output e.g. Off the Rails show based on the television programme 	<p>Q1 - Q4 2005</p> <p>ongoing</p>

RTÉ TRANSMISSION NETWORK LTD (RTÉNL)

Actions to achieve goals

RTÉ, shaped by its past, will be flexible enough to adapt to the future

<p>GOAL meet the needs of various audiences</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implement dynamic web based 'system availability' site, including availability statistical information and current system issues 	<p>TARGET DATE Q4 2004 and ongoing</p>
<p>GOAL development of all contributors</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide the training necessary to enable staff to perform their duties most effectively and achieve personal and career development goals • encourage staff to identify personal, departmental and organisational training and development needs • to provide the necessary resources to meet the needs 	<p>TARGET DATE ongoing Q2 2004 and ongoing ongoing</p>
<p>GOAL be cost effective without comprising quality or quantity</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • benchmark products and services against national and international competitors • process analysis and reengineering to better facilitate customer and business needs • adapt technology and business systems to improve control and efficiency • control and monitor costs and expenditure 	<p>TARGET DATE Q2 2004 and ongoing Q2 2004 and ongoing Q3 2004 and ongoing ongoing</p>
<p>GOAL developing new talent</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • facilitating appropriate training and development opportunities for staff 	<p>TARGET DATE ongoing</p>

RTÉ will focus on holding existing and attracting new audiences

<p>GOAL provide diverse range of high quality, popular output</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adapt and encourage best engineering practice to ensure reliable high quality reception of TV and Radio content 	<p>TARGET DATE ongoing</p>
<p>GOAL use the RTÉ brand across divisions</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adopt and implement RTÉ brand definition and guidelines 	<p>TARGET DATE Q2 2004</p>

RTÉ will position itself to optimise its role in digital broadcasting – new media and new technologies

<p>GOAL production - digital process</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participate in discussions and developments in TV and Radio to ensure seamless integration of adapted technologies and systems with transmission • be at the forefront of new technologies and methods of programme delivery that can be used in the development of new audiences and direct interactivity with these audiences 	<p>TARGET DATE Q1 2004 and ongoing</p> <p>ongoing</p>
<p>GOAL national policy for broadcast distribution</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contribute to the wider debate on the future of digital broadcasting and appropriate technologies • apply the extensive experience within RTÉNL in the area of broadcast distribution to contribute to a national policy • use the extensive array of industry relationships both national and international to ensure the national policy benefits from as broad a range of knowledge and experiences as possible 	<p>TARGET DATE ongoing</p> <p>ongoing</p> <p>ongoing</p>
<p>GOAL road map for digital broadcasting</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue to provide experienced personnel to represent Irish and RTÉ interests at events such as the 2004 Regional Radiocommunication Conference • Contribute to the wider debate on the future of digital broadcasting and appropriate technologies • contribute to the development of a road map for digital broadcasting by participating in international and industry fora and hopefully in a Government sponsored forum 	<p>TARGET DATE ongoing</p> <p>ongoing</p> <p>ongoing</p>

RTÉ will work to project Ireland's cultural heritage

<p>GOAL strengthen regional output</p>	<p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTÉNL is currently reviewing options for a replacement project for the ten year old microwave radio link system that is used to interconnect Donnybrook, main transmitter sites, local and regional studios. To date no decision on the technology or type of system to be adapted (fibre optic, microwave, laser, satellite, combination) has been made. In-house and external provision of the service is being examined to find the most effective, efficient and economic solution that facilitates the fluid and evolving requirements of the overall service including increased local regional participation 	<p>TARGET DATE Q4 2006</p>
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RTÉ will maximise its revenues from all sources to optimise its output

GOAL

optimize commercial revenue

ACTION

- Develop dynamic infrastructure product portfolio with customer electronic access
- Amend work practices and site access procedures to accommodate the requirements of all our customers as well as requirements of our business (health and safety, insurance, etc.)
- Enhance the product portfolio to offer more services to our customers (broadcast engineering, rigging, frequency planning, structural engineering, etc.).
- Appropriately exploit RTÉNL broadcasting assets for commercial gain.
- Extend and develop relationships with existing and new broadcasters insofar as is possible within the restrictions imposed by the regulator (ComReg)

TARGET DATE

Q3 2005
 Q4 2004
 Q3 2004 Ongoing
 Q1 2004 Ongoing
 ongoing

RTÉ – LEGAL BASIS AND KEY OBLIGATIONS

Legal position of RTÉ

RTÉ is a statutory corporation, also known as a public corporation; it is formed and regulated as a corporation under specific legislation - the Broadcasting Authority Acts, 1960 to 2001.

Like a company formed under the Companies Acts, RTÉ:

- ◆ has power to sue and be sued
- ◆ exists in perpetuity
- ◆ has the power to acquire and sell property
- ◆ the normal day to day powers for doing business associated with corporate bodies
- ◆ is subject to the laws of the land and must comply with, for example Employment, Finance, Equality and Health and Safety legislation

However, RTÉ has no shareholders and there are no profits to be made or distributed – it is a not-for-profit organisation.

The broadcasting legislation imposes obligations and duties on RTÉ - both to the public and to the State. These are principally in relation to:

- (a) the execution of public policy, i.e. provision of a broadcasting service for the benefit of the public, and
- (b) the prudent expenditure of public money, the Licence Fee, collected by the State and paid to RTÉ.

Unusually, one word, “Authority”, is used both to describe the corporation officially named “Radio Telefís Éireann” and the governing board of the corporation.

RTÉ Authority

The RTÉ Authority is the board of the organisation known as RTÉ and it:

- ◆ can have between seven and nine members appointed by Government; (recent Authorities have included a member elected by staff)
- ◆ acts entirely free of Government influence or direction
- ◆ has one of its members appointed as Chairman by the Government.

The members of the Authority are in a similar position to directors of a board. So the essential duty they owe RTÉ is to act as fiduciaries towards it - a fiduciary is obliged to act in good faith in the interests of the organisation as a whole, so members of the Authority are the promoters and guardians of Public Service Broadcasting.

The Authority makes whatever relevant decisions are necessary for the operation of RTÉ as the Public Service Broadcaster and to provide such directions to the Director-General and other employees. Under legislation the Authority must appoint a person to be chief executive officer of RTÉ, to be known as the “Director-General”. The consent of the relevant Minister is necessary before the Authority appoints or removes the Director-General or alters his/her remuneration or his/her terms and conditions of holding office. The Director-General acts as the Editor-in-Chief, Executive Head of the organisation and Chair of the Executive Board.

Basic Functions and Obligations of RTÉ

The basic function of the organisation is the obligation to establish and maintain a national television and radio service. RTÉ has many subsidiary powers including the right to:

- ◆ operate broadcasting equipment
- ◆ transmit RTÉ’s broadcast services by electronic means
- ◆ make contracts, agreements and arrangements
- ◆ acquire and make use of copyrights
- ◆ collect news and information
- ◆ publish magazines and books and to sell recordings of TV and Radio programmes.

Under legislation RTÉ must:

- ◆ have the character of a public service
- ◆ be a free-to-air service
- ◆ be made available, in so far as it is reasonably practicable, to the whole community on the island of Ireland and it has all the powers necessary for these purposes.

Among specific programming responsibilities RTÉ must:

- ◆ provide a comprehensive range of programmes in the Irish and English languages
- ◆ provide programmes of news and current affairs in the Irish and English languages, including programmes that provide coverage of proceedings in the Houses of the Oireachtas and the European Parliament
- ◆ reflect the cultural diversity of the whole island of Ireland
- ◆ include both on television and radio programmes that entertain, inform and educate, provide coverage of sporting, religious and cultural activities
- ◆ cater for the expectations of the community generally as well as members of the community with special or minority interests
- ◆ encourage or facilitate or assist contemporary cultural expression

All programmes must respect human dignity.

Broadcast Obligations - Objectivity, Impartiality, Fairness and Privacy

Under legislation RTÉ is obliged to ensure that:

- ◆ all news broadcast must be reported and presented in an objective and impartial manner and without any expression of RTÉ's own views
- ◆ the broadcast treatment of current affairs must be fair to all interests concerned and that the broadcast matter be presented in an objective and impartial manner and without any expression of RTÉ's own views
- ◆ any material published, distributed or sold by RTÉ which relates to news or current affairs must be presented in an objective and impartial manner.

The obligation in respect of the broadcast treatment of current affairs does not apply to any proposal concerning policy as regard broadcasting, which is of public controversy or the subject of current public debate and which is being considered by the Government or the Minister. In other words RTÉ may express its own views on such matters.

Importantly RTÉ must ensure it does not:

- ◆ promote, or incite to, crime or anything that tends to undermine the authority of the State. (This would have been a significant issue during the period when civil unrest was common in Northern Ireland)
- ◆ unreasonably encroach on the privacy of an individual. This does not apply to the print media but does apply to the commercial broadcasters as well as RTÉ

The main functions and responsibilities of RTÉ as the Public Service Broadcaster are outlined in legislation – particularly in Section 16 of the 1960 Act, as amended and Section 28 (1) and (2) of the 2001 Act. (See Appendix 1).

Independent Productions

One of RTÉ's more recently assigned programming responsibilities is to broadcast television programmes made by Independent Producers i.e. non-RTÉ television programme producers. There is an amount of money, from the Licence Fee, set aside each year for this purpose – into an account known as the Independent Television Programmes Account. Monies in this account are used by RTÉ to:

- ◆ commission the making of television programmes made by non-RTÉ producers
- ◆ procure proposals for such programmes
- ◆ assist the completion of such programmes.

The amount of money to be paid into the Account was set at IR£20m (€25.39m) in the 2001 Act and it is adjusted annually, depending on changes in the Consumer Price Index. For the year 2003 the amount to be paid into the Account was €27.733m; the amount actually spent on Independent Productions by RTÉ exceeded this sum by €18.171m.

RTÉ provides an annual report to the Minister on this work and s/he has copies of the report laid before the Houses of the Oireachtas.

During 2003 RTÉ Radio developed a pilot project on Independent Productions for Radio and this will be reported on in the 2004 RTÉ Annual Report.

The future

The Government intends to publish new broadcasting legislation in the near future and has indicated it will change RTÉ from its existing status as a statutory corporation – perhaps into a company registered under and governed by the Companies Acts. RTÉ is committed to working closely with Government to give best effect to changes in the interest of Public Service Broadcasting.



APPENDIX 1

Extracts from Broadcasting Acts

1. Text of section 16 (1) and (2), Broadcasting Authority Acts, 1960 – 2001 (as amended)

Section 16(1)

The Authority shall establish and maintain a national television and sound broadcasting service and may establish and maintain broadcasting services of a local, community or regional character and shall have all such powers as are necessary for or incidental to those purposes.

Section 16(2)

In particular and without prejudice to the generality of subsection (1) of this section, the Authority shall have the following powers:

- (a) to establish, maintain and operate broadcasting stations and to acquire, install and operate apparatus for wireless telegraphy;
- (b) subject to any regulations under the Wireless Telegraphy Act, 1926, which are for the time being in force, to provide for the distribution by means of wired broadcast relay stations of programmes broadcast by the Authority and such other programmes as the Authority may decide;
- (bb) to provide, in addition to the broadcasting services referred to in subsection (1) of this section, broadcasting services which are of a special interest to only certain members of the community and which are made available on a subscription or pay-per-view basis (within the meaning of the Broadcasting Act, 2001);
- (bbb) to transmit by electronic means (other than by means of broadcasting) such of the programme schedules of the broadcasting services referred to in subsection (1) of this section or paragraph (bb) of this subsection, with such alterations or adaptations as are appropriate, as it thinks fit;
- (c) to originate programmes and procure programmes from any source;
- (d) to make contracts, agreements and arrangements incidental or conducive to the objects of the Authority;
- (e) to acquire and make use of copyrights, patents, licences, privileges and concessions;
- (f) to collect news and information and to subscribe to news services and such other services as may be conducive to the objects of the Authority;
- (g) to subscribe to such international associations, and to such educational, musical and dramatic bodies and such other bodies promoting entertainment or culture, as may be conducive to the objects of the Authority;

- (i) to organise, provide and subsidise concerts and other entertainments in connection with the broadcasting service or for any purpose incidental thereto and, in relation to any such concert or entertainment, to provide or procure accommodation and, if desired, to make charges for admission;
- (j) to prepare, publish and distribute, with or without charge, such magazines, books, papers and other printed matter as may seem to the Authority to be conducive or incidental to its objects;
- (l) to arrange with other broadcasting authorities for the distribution, receipt, exchange and relay of programmes (whether live or recorded);
- (m) to compile, publish and distribute, with or without charge, recorded aural and visual material;
- (n) subject to the consent of the Minister, to provide services for and on behalf of Ministers of State.

Section 28 (1) and (2), Broadcasting Act, 2001 - Provisions in Relation to the Authority

Section 28(1)

The national television and sound broadcasting service required to be maintained by the Authority under section 16 of the Act of 1960 shall have the character of a public service, continue to be a free-to-air service and be made available, in so far as it is reasonably practicable, to the whole community on the island of Ireland and the Authority shall have all such powers as are necessary for or incidental to that purpose.

Section 28(2)

Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (1), the Authority shall ensure that the programme schedules of the broadcasting service referred to in that subsection –

- (a) provide a comprehensive range of programmes in the Irish and English languages that reflect the cultural diversity of the whole island of Ireland and include, both on television and radio (and also, where appropriate, any means of transmission referred to in section 16(2)(bbb) (inserted by this Act) of the Act of 1960) programmes that entertain, inform and educate, provide coverage of sporting, religious and cultural activities and cater for the expectations of the community generally as well as members of the community with special or minority interests and which, in every case, respect human dignity,
- (b) provide programmes of news and current affairs in the Irish and English languages, including programmes that provide coverage of proceedings in the Houses of Oireachtas and the European Parliament, and
- (c) facilitate or assist contemporary cultural expression and encourage or promote innovation and experimentation in broadcasting.

APPENDIX 2

Public Service Broadcasting Charter

A statement of principles that clarifies what is expected of RTÉ as the national public service broadcaster, including RTÉ's accountability to its audience.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Published by the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources, June 2004

Public Service Remit

- ◆ RTÉ, as the national public service broadcaster, shall reflect the democratic, social and cultural values of Irish society and the need to preserve media pluralism
- ◆ RTÉ shall, at all times, strive to reflect fairly and equally the regional, cultural and political diversity of Ireland and its peoples
- ◆ no editorial or programming bias shall be shown in terms of gender, age, disability, race, sexual orientation, religion or membership of a minority community

Regional Emphasis

- ◆ news reporting and public affairs coverage shall be undertaken from a variety of perspectives; events should not be assessed and reported upon from a Dublin perspective alone
- ◆ RTÉ programming shall reflect regional diversity and include a significant range and proportion of indigenous programming made outside the greater Dublin area

Children

- ◆ in its programming, RTÉ shall ensure that children are respected as young citizens with a valued contribution to make and a voice of their own
- ◆ RTÉ acknowledges the strong influencing powers of broadcasting, particularly on children and young people. In its programming RTÉ shall have regard to the responsibilities associated with this.

An Ghaeilge

- ◆ in reflecting the bilingual nature of Irish society, RTÉ shall actively support the use of the Irish language in everyday life through the production of suitable programming

Social Inclusion

- ◆ RTÉ programming shall be socially inclusive and shall reflect the lives and concerns of all social strata in Ireland

Physical, Sensory and Intellectual Disability

- ◆ RTÉ shall take into account the needs of those with a physical, sensory or intellectual disability. RTÉ shall take measures to increase the accessibility and relevance of programming to such audience

Gender

- ◆ in its programming and editorial content, RTÉ shall strive to resist gender stereotyping

Other

- ◆ in its programming, RTÉ shall respect the sanctity of an individual's private life, unless a compelling public interest demands otherwise

PROVISION OF SERVICES

In terms of services RTÉ commits to:

- ◆ broadcast schedules on all its channels which establish a benchmark for quality, range and diversity in broadcasting on the island of Ireland
- ◆ broadcasting schedules which include the key genre categories of local, national and international news and current affairs (including coverage of the Oireachtas), arts, business, children's programmes, drama, education, entertainment, features, history, music, religious, science, technology and sport
- ◆ sports programming that reflects the demands for national, regional, minority, amateur and local sports in Ireland today
- ◆ schedules which provide significant original content and which provide a showcase for home production. In particular, RTÉ will encourage an approach to production, which recognises originality of idea and techniques

- ◆ recognise the bilingual nature of Irish society
- ◆ recognise the special needs of children as part of the audience
- ◆ recognise the particular contribution of regional and local character
- ◆ develop content, which can be available to its audience across all delivery platforms
- ◆ national and international news of high quality journalism and impartiality as a cornerstone of its schedule. RTÉ's news coverage shall be accurate, impartial and objective: this will help set the agenda for informed democratic debate in Ireland
- ◆ programming that reflects Ireland's role in the EU and in an international context
- ◆ as Ireland's national public service broadcaster, through its programmes and its public activities, encourage and equip its audience to play an active and constructive role in their communities. In so doing, it has a responsibility to reflect the full range and diversity of cultures within Ireland
- ◆ continue to honour its commitment to independent producers and to encourage the creativity of independent productions and maintain an appropriate balance between in-house and independent productions
- ◆ maintain and develop the RTÉ website to the highest standard
- ◆ continuing to nurture its performing groups so that their music can be widely heard and appreciated through broadcast, public performance and recording
- ◆ ensuring a well managed and easily accessible audio-visual archive which can enrich the Irish national heritage
- ◆ in the case of its programming, maintain and cherish its freedom from political control or influence and from all other vested interests, whether commercial, religious, social or cultural
- ◆ measures to provide access to services in areas not currently receiving signals and will publish reports of progress in its Annual Report

In the delivery of its services, RTÉ will have regard to the manner in which it addresses the requirements of people with disability, specifically striving to meet the needs of persons who are deaf or hard of hearing and persons who are blind or partially sighted.

ACCOUNTABILITY

In terms of accountability RTE shall:

- ◆ publish, in advance, broad frameworks for its schedules with commitments as appropriate for the individual channels
- ◆ at the end of each year, report on its performance against targets set, and these reports being subject to independent review
- ◆ provide details in its annual report of the cost and revenues associated with each of its services
- ◆ keep detailed financial records in a manner that will enable the Minister for Communications, Marine and Natural Resources, or a party appointed by him, to evaluate RTE's performance in fulfilling its statutory remit
- ◆ recognise, encourage and welcome the public's expression of views on RTE's performance and shall, through its Audience Council, enhance communications and shall also ensure that all complaints are logged, acknowledged, investigated and responded to
- ◆ through its Code of Fair Trading, publicise how its activities shall operate in a broadcasting landscape which has competing interests
- ◆ pledge to deliver to its audience the highest level of value for money in return for the public investment in its programming. It shall offer value in terms of its quality schedule and the efficiency with which it conducts its business
- ◆ provide details of its Irish language programming and other Irish language services in its Annual Report
- ◆ safeguard its editorial independence through an effective Code of Ethics for employees and contractors. The Code of Ethics will contain provisions to ensure no conflict of interest exists in relation to the performance of its employees and contractors.

RTÉ's Statutory Mandate

Under the Broadcasting Authority Acts (1960 – 2001), RTÉ is required to provide a comprehensive range of programmes, in Irish and in English, which reflect the cultural diversity of the whole island of Ireland. RTÉ is specifically mandated to provide:

- ◆ programmes that entertain, inform and educate
- ◆ programmes of news and current affairs
- ◆ coverage of sporting, religious and cultural activities
- ◆ coverage of the Oireachtas and the European Parliament

In fulfilling this mandate RTÉ is required to cater for the expectations of the community generally as well as the expectations of members of the community with special or minority interests and, in every case, to respect human dignity.

RTÉ is also mandated to facilitate or assist contemporary cultural expression and to encourage or promote innovation and experimentation in broadcasting.

While RTÉ can decide whether programmes are to be produced in-house, commissioned or acquired, it has a statutory obligation to commission a prescribed value of programming from the independent production sector.

In addition to the obligations provided for in national legislation, RTÉ also has obligations set down under European legislation, most notably

- ◆ the Television Without Frontiers Directive (89/552/EEC as amended) which requires RTÉ to ensure, among other things, that at least 50% of its programming on television, excluding news, sports events and games, is reserved for European works, and,
- ◆ the Transparency Directive (80/7223/EEC as amended), which requires RTÉ, among other things, to maintain separate accounts in relation to costs and revenues associated with its public service and commercial activities.
- ◆ RTÉ recognises the importance of news and information about Ireland for the Irish abroad in maintaining contact with Ireland and preserving an Irish dimension to their identity.

About the Charter

The purpose of the Charter is to provide an understanding to the people of Ireland of what is expected of RTÉ in return for the significant public funds provided to RTÉ from the proceeds of the television licence fee.

Broadcasting law requires RTÉ's radio and television services to have the character of a public service, to be offered free-to-air and to be universally available, where practicable, to the whole community on the island of Ireland.

Building on RTÉ's statutory remit, the Charter is a statement of principles that clarifies what is expected of RTÉ as the national public service broadcaster, including RTÉ's accountability to its audience.

Changes to the Charter

The Minister for Communications, Marine and Natural Resources shall keep the Charter under review so that it continues to reflect change in the nature of Irish society along with changes in the broadcasting environment. A formal review of the Charter shall be carried out within five years

Notes

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