

Audience council.

96.—(1) A corporation shall establish for the purposes of this section, a committee, which committee shall be known, and is in this section referred to, as an audience council.

(2) An audience council shall consist of 15 members appointed by its corporation.

(3) The members of the board of a corporation shall appoint one of their number to serve as a member of its audience council.

(4) In appointing the members of its audience council, a corporation shall endeavour to ensure that the audience council is representative of the viewing and listening public and, in particular, of Gael-tacht communities and persons with a sight or hearing disability.

(5) In appointing the members of its audience council TG4 shall endeavour to ensure that the members of the audience council are able to communicate proficiently in the Irish language.

(6) A corporation shall from time to time appoint, as occasion requires, a member of its audience council to be chairperson of it.

(7) The membership of an audience council shall be appointed for such periods, not exceeding 5 years, as the corporation may think fit and a member of the audience council appointed for a period of less than 5 years shall be eligible for re-appointment for the remainder of the period of 5 years from the beginning of his or her appointment, or for any shorter period.

(8) A member of an audience council may at any time, by notice in writing to the corporation, resign his or her membership. The membership of any member of the audience council may at any time be terminated by notice in writing given to him or her by the corporation.

(9) A corporation shall give to its audience council the use of such resources and information as the council requires for the proper performance of its functions.

(10) The principal function of an audience council shall be to represent to the board of its corporation the views and interests of the general public with regard to public service broadcasting by the corporation.

(11) An audience council may require its corporation to conduct, or arrange to be conducted, as far as is reasonably practicable, a survey of children and young persons, for the purpose of ascertaining the views and interests of children and young persons in respect of public service broadcasting by the corporation.

(12) An audience council may require its corporation to conduct, or arrange to be conducted, as far as is reasonably practicable, a survey of elderly persons, for the purpose of ascertaining the views and interests of elderly persons in respect of public service broadcasting by the corporation.

(13) In order to exercise its function under *subsection (10)*, an audience council may—

(a) hold public meetings, and

(b) require that its corporation provide the equivalent of up to one hour of television programme material and in respect of RTÉ one hour of sound broadcasting programme material in each year, and that the corporation shall broadcast same, at such times as are agreed between the corporation and the audience council.

(14) The quorum for a meeting of an audience council shall be 8.

(15) Subject to this section an audience council shall have the power to regulate its own procedure and practice by rules made under this section.

(16) An audience council shall, not later than 30 June in each year, make an annual report to the Minister, the board of its corporation and the Authority, of its proceedings during the preceding financial year. An audience council may, and if requested to do so by the Minister shall, make special reports to the Minister during any year.

(17) At least once in each year the director general of the corporation concerned shall meet with the audience council of the corporation.

(18) At least once in each year an audience council shall meet with the board of its corporation.

(19) A corporation may pay to each member of its audience council such out-of-pocket expenses as such member may reasonably incur in the performance of his or her functions.