



24th February 2006

SRG SSR idée suisse

Programming Charter

Preamble

The quality of its programming is paramount for SRG SSR idée suisse. It attaches particular importance to the credibility and relevance of its programming, the basis of which are high journalistic standards and a marked sense of responsibility on the part of its staff. As the national broadcaster, it sees itself as an open and creative enterprise, which exists to serve the general public. Its programming plays an important role in informing debate and in defining the cultural identity of Switzerland.

SRG SSR fulfils its remit freely and independently, within an ethical and legal framework, and in doing so it respects the characteristics of the nation.

In a Switzerland that is undergoing constant change, SRG SSR is committed to the exchange of information and opinions through free and open discussion.

In this way, SRG SSR fulfils its responsibilities to society.

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SRG SSR undertakes to use its programming to promote national cohesion. It views Switzerland as a whole, devoting the necessary attention to all issues which foster mutual trust and understanding among Switzerland's different linguistic communities.

SRG SSR sees itself as a creative and innovative enterprise, and this is reflected in the range of services it offers. Creativity is and must be one of its key guiding principles, and one that allows all units of the enterprise to flourish.

This Programming Charter lays out SRG SSR's intentions in black and white. It applies to all SRG SSR broadcast services and any other journalistic content published by the corporation. It is binding on all employees within SRG SSR and its Enterprise units.

The Programming Charter at a glance

- Serving the public
- Freedom and responsibility
- Integrity and independence
- Committed to the truth
- Impartial, objective, and reflecting diversity of opinion
- Transparency and informing debate
- Fairness, safeguarding privacy, human dignity, protection for those who need it
- Consideration for the audience
- Accountability and answerability
- Concluding remarks

The Programming Charter in detail

1. Serving the public

With our service offering and in our daily work we will, to the best of our ability, do our utmost to fulfil our remit as it is laid down in the Swiss constitution, in law and in our own broadcasting charter. In doing so, we will measure ourselves according to the highest professional and ethical standards. We will take the needs of our audience into account.

2. Freedom and responsibility

We will make active use of our rights and freedoms (freedom of information and opinion, artistic freedom), and we will defend our independence. We know our legal and ethical obligations and the responsibility to society that they imply. We will make every effort to reconcile our rights and responsibilities.

3. Integrity and independence

We are independent of partisan interests of all types. We make our decisions independently and we will not allow ourselves to be influenced politically, financially or by any other means. We will not bow to pressure. Our decisions are independent of personal interests or inclinations and we will not be corrupted.

4. Commitment to the truth

We will make every effort to get as close as possible to the truth in all of our news and current affairs programming. We will endeavour to take into account all facts that are relevant to understanding the matter at hand. We will promulgate information only if it comes from reliable sources. We will as soon as possible correct any errors or inaccuracies. We will reject any form of manipulation or

distortion of the truth by means of pictures, sound or text. We will gather our information by legally permissible and ethically correct means.

5. Impartial, objective, and reflecting diversity of opinion

We will be open to all views and presentations of facts that are important to inform debate, and we will not favour the positions or interests of any party. Any position that we ourselves take will be based on our own, considered assessment. In our programming, we will only allow comment from competent individuals with the appropriate background and authority.

6. Transparency and informing the debate

We will establish absolute transparency with regard to the nature, conditions and results of our work. We will always make our intentions clear and will make comment recognisable as such. This transparency is essential if debate is to be informed in an independent and objective way. We will foster this same transparency in the way we present the activities and interests of SRG SSR as an enterprise.

7. Fairness, safeguarding privacy, human dignity, protection for those who need it

We will treat people with fairness and respect. We will safeguard personal privacy unless there are important reasons not to do so in the public interest. We will respect human dignity in all of our programming. We will abide by the principle of "innocent until proven guilty". We will endeavour neither to discriminate against particular populations or groups of people nor to support or encourage such discrimination in any way. We will appropriately protect those who need such protection on the grounds of age, personal circumstances or for any other reason. Particular attention will be paid to the protection of children.

8. Consideration for the audience

We will show the world, and its people and their actions in all of their manifestations – even those which are unpleasant, controversial, provocative or shocking. In doing so, we will remain conscious of the differing reactions of our audience and will take due account of them.

9. Accountability and answerability

We are keenly aware of our accountability to the public. Should we make mistakes, we will admit them openly. We will make every effort to encourage a culture in which there is a willingness to learn from mistakes. We will participate in discussion about the fulfilment of our public-service remit. Our audience is entitled to have its questions and reactions handled appropriately.

10. Concluding remarks

SRG SSR and its Enterprise units are committed to this Programming Charter. The Enterprise units will supplement the Charter with their own rules and regulations governing day-to-day work. The Programming Charter lays the foundation for internal quality controls. Working processes must be designed so that they promote compliance with the Charter. The Programming Charter is a public document that will be published on the websites of SRG SSR and its Enterprise units.