

GPB'S CODE OF CONDUCT

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND PRINCIPLES OF JOURNALISTIC ETHICS IN GEORGIAN PUBLIC BROADCASTER'S PROGRAMMES

2006

1. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Accuracy

News, in whatever form, must be reported based on facts and with due accuracy. Dissemination of untrue and half true information and the deception of audience are inadmissible.

We should try to witness events and gather information first hand. Where this is not possible, we should talk to first hand sources. Wherever possible, check it with other (alternative) source and, where necessary, corroborate their evidence.

We must take accurate and contemporaneous notes. We must keep all community-related records, correspondence, material and documents. When information is obtained from an anonymous source, no document or other record should identify the source.

Journalists can record conversations by using small cameras or telephones, for note-taking purposes only without obtaining consent. Electronic note-taking can ensure accuracy in our reporting, or enable us to gather evidence to defend the GPB against possible legal action or complaints. The intention of such recordings must be for note-taking and research, not for broadcast. Broadcast of such recordings is permissible only in exceptional circumstances, generally when it serves the public interests rather than those of the broadcaster.

Recommendation

We must check and verify any information, press releases and documents (particularly those researched on the Internet). Pay attention to the accuracy of dates, proper names, statistics, etc. A mistake made in one reporting may be repeated elsewhere. Where necessary get in touch with the information providers, contributors in order to check the information source and accuracy.

We should normally rely on a reputable national or international news agency. We should be reluctant to rely on a single source. Where information is unspecified and we fail to specify it, we must admit so and indicate the source. If the information has been obtained from a reliable confidential source, we should so indicate. We must avoid such general phrases as "as it is known", "as it is said", etc.

We should not distort information with excessive or incorrect stresses, omission of essential elements or various technical manipulations.

Plagiarism is the most serious infringement of professional standards. Always refer to the source when using other contributor's material.

Factual errors in news should be corrected quickly and in public. We should normally acknowledge serious factual errors and correct mistakes quickly and clearly (on air). Inaccuracy may lead to the loss of audience's trust. A timely acknowledged mistake will protect you from claims of the complaining party.

Impartiality

News, in whatever form, must be reported with due impartiality. All essentially diverse opinions relating to the subject matter should be reflected in the programmes. Incorrect interpreting of views, deliberate ignoring or under representation of any significant position are inadmissible.

Impartiality of information is the basis of objective informing of the public. Partial is a programme when it fails to reflect a wide range of opinion and explore a

range and conflict of views, knowingly or unknowingly is biased, and reflects in disguised form individual views of any person (group, organization).

Journalists should be restrained and well informed, and the material communicated thereby – informational and exhaustive. The presentation of facts and views should be balanced. Views of each party and person should be presented without a bias. Impartiality of information programmes should be achieved not only by a balanced presentation of opposing positions but rather by a full-value description of all the circumstances that serve as a basis for such positions.

In covering a public debate, we should not restrict ourselves to every argument or facet of every argument of the subject matter that are cause of the opposition of the parties. The subject matter should be thoroughly investigated in order to understand the essence of the problem and to provide the public with comprehensive and objective information. Where appropriate, we should cover the aspects of the matter of dispute, which the parties disregard or on which they have a common stand. As far as possible, we should present positions of not only the disputing parties, but also the positions of other concerned parties.

We need to ensure that the GPB's impartiality is not brought into question or that it is influenced by any ideological, political, financial, social and religious group.

Reporting and programmes should be neutral. We shall not prioritize any political, ideological or other standing. We must not express in public a view in support of any political party, association or other group of interest.

Impartiality of the GPB does not require full neutrality. Our journalists and presenters may provide professional judgments based on objective facts but shall not assess events unilaterally and express personal opinions in public.

We should never present personal views as the position of the Public Broadcaster. We must clearly state that the given view is of ours and not of the GPB.

Radio and television programme makers and other content producers should not disregard the essential information, with which they personally disagree.

Editorial independence

The GPB and its journalists should take any measure to protect editorial independence. A journalist should not disregard the fulfilment of his/her professional duty on account of its incompatibility with his/her religion, political views or world outlook/ideology. To enforce a journalist to fulfil a task, which is in conflict with his/her conscience, dignity or professional ethics, is inadmissible.

The content and character of any programme should be based on the editorial decision and should not be influenced by political, commercial or private

interests. Our audiences can be confident that our decisions are based on solid arguments and should trust in decency of the GPB programmes and services.

The GPB programmes and services should not be affected by the GPB's staff conduct or outside activity. Audience should not be given any occasion to prejudice the GPB's editorial independence, impartiality and honesty.

Every staff member of the GPB should comply with the Editorial independence and professional freedom. The Broadcaster and its staff should not be indebted to sources of information, respondents or programme participants.

Managers of some organizations sometimes try to impose conditions on us before letting our reporter to shoot. We must not surrender editorial control. Editorial independence obliges us to record the material freely, without any pressure and to ensure its impartial and accurate presentation.

The GPB should provide its journalists and producers with all the powers that are necessary for fulfilling the editorial independence of the GPB and complying with the standards prescribed by this Code.

The GPB's administration may interfere in the editorial decision-making process only in case of emergency, for example, when it directly serves to the fulfilment of legitimate purposes.

Journalistic activity is open. The Broadcaster and journalists shall provide the public with full information around the circumstances that may prejudice their editorial independence.

Language

We should report exact facts in clear and precise language. We should communicate with audience in the standard, everyday, colloquial language. Do not exaggerate facts by short-sighted use of words and phrases, do not attach to events, statements such significance that does not corresponds to the facts.

Language in information subjects should be simple and understandable to all; sentences should be properly structured and devoid of redundant, useless words. We should address audiences with laconic, short and vivid phrases. We should avoid unjustified use of foreign words, where there exists a Georgian equivalent. We should be trying to avoid the use of technicality strange to the general public (for example, medical, technical). Where such terms need to be used, we should explain their meaning in the popular language to audience.

If we do not understand the meaning of any word, or we are not sure in it, we should re-check it or use the known to us synonym of the word. We should always check the meaning and pronunciation of foreign words and correctly pronounce proper names (place-names, personal names, names of organizations, newspapers, etc.). We should avoid using vague, overladen, poorly-structured sentences. For example, do not say, "he fired a shot", "he fulfilled distribution", say "he shot", "he distributed", or instead of the sentence "The statement will be made by members of the government", say "Government members will make a statement".

We should not use such language which fails to meet the existing standards. We must, however, take into account that the language constantly develops and a specific saying or word might become either acceptable or unacceptable to the public.

Fairness and right of reply

Any information should be covered fairly. The fact, opinion and comment should be sharply demarcated.

Fairness requires the keeping of a balance and impartiality in covering events. Unsound interpretation of pinions and views should be avoided. The fact, opinion and comment should be demarcated.

A programme shall not be considered fair if:

- it fails to encompass all material facts;
- it is built on insignificant facts, while the most significant are disregarded;
- it consciously or unconsciously misleads audience;
- journalists and/or the programme presenters use such statements which are indicative of their bias.

An individual against whom serious allegations of wrongdoing have been made in a programme should be given a "right of reply", that is, given a fair opportunity to respond timely and appropriately to the allegations.

We should exactly and in detail describe to an individual allegations made against him/her so that he/she could appropriately respond to them. The response should be reflected fairly and accurately and should be normally broadcast in the same programme. There may be occasions when this is inappropriate (owing to some valid reasons). It may then be appropriate to consider whether an alternative opportunity should be offered for a reply at a subsequent date.

Accountability

We (journalists and presenters) are accountable to society as a whole. Information in journalism is considered as public good and not as a consumer product. It implies that civil responsibility requires that journalists acted within the bounds of professional ethics.

Journalist by their activity are accountable to society, profession and own selves.

Journalists should:

- actively support the observance of professional standards and act in line with them;
- meet the public interest; investigate complaints and take appropriate measures as required;
- familiarize society/audiences with journalistic techniques, especially when questions are raised;
- act within the bounds of journalistic ethics;
- attentively hear out persons making ethics-related claims.

Fair treatment of individuals participating in programmes

Broadcasters should normally be honest and fair in their dealings with potential contributors to programmes.

Where a person is invited to make a contribution to a programme, they should normally, at an appropriate stage:

- be told the nature and purpose of the programme, what the programme is about, and when and where it is likely to be first broadcast;
- be told what kind of contribution they are expected to make (live, pre-recorded, interview, discussion, etc.);
- be informed about the areas of questioning and, wherever possible, the nature of other likely contributions;
- be made aware of any significant changes to the programme as it develops which might reasonably affect their original consent to participate, and which might cause material unfairness;

- be given clear information, if offered an opportunity to preview the programme, about whether they will be able to effect any changes to it.

It may be fair to withhold all or some of this information where it is justified in the public interest or by some other specific case (for example, in case the programme is of an entertainment genre).

Broadcasters may not disclose the purpose of the programme to the respondent/invited guest where there is a clear-cut public interest and the matter concerns a serious wrongdoing and anti-social act.

Where a person approached to contribute to a programme chooses to make no comment or refuses to appear in a broadcast, the broadcast should make clear to audience the reason for refusing.

2. DIVERSITY AND BALANCE

2.1 Diversity of issues

Events should be equally covered in information programmes both at the local, regional and national level. A proper balance should be maintained when covering disputable issues.

We should provide audiences with comprehensive information on current events. We should not avoid comprehensive coverage of information on the grounds that it might insult or irritate any individual or organization.

We should investigate and cover both positive and negative events, social problems, controversial subjects, as well as the tendencies and events for which, notwithstanding their importance, the audience's demand might be low. When preparing programmes, we should prioritize what the public should know and what it demands rather than the majority of society's interests.

2.2 Diversity of opinion

To achieve a proper balance and impartiality, it is necessary that a sufficiently broad range of existing controversial subjects be covered. **We should impartially cover and fairly represent opposing viewpoints. We cannot endorse or support openly any personal views or campaigns.**

2.3 Information balance

When covering an event of interest to audience, we should equally and adequately represent the opposing views. **A balanced coverage of opposing positions does not imply the maintaining of a purely mathematical balance. It means that each opposing opinion should be allocated airtime in proportion to its significance.**

Where we fail to cover all important views in one programme, the audience should be informed that a separate programme will be scheduled for discussing

the opposing views on the subject. It is advisable that the exact date and time of the programme be indicated.

2.4 Information balance in individual programmes

In an individual programme dealing with some important, controversial subject, it is necessary that all the significant opinions be properly covered and a respective balance be achieved. **Opinions should be represented impartially so that the audience itself would be able to make a conclusion.**

In exceptional cases, the programme might be based on personal views of a specific person, on which the audience should be informed in advance.

2.5 Information balance in a series of programmes

A separate issue of a series of programmes might be dedicated to the discussion of any specific viewpoint, although a broad range of opinions should be reflected during the entire series in order to maintain the balance. Audience should be informed at the very first broadcast that in the course of the series balance will be maintained.

Where each programme of a series deals with different subjects, every broadcast should be balanced.

Where allegations are being made in an individual programme the individuals and organizations concerned should be given an opportunity to respond to allegations voiced in a subsequent programme of the series.

2.6 Information balance in news based programmes

Any material opinion on a controversial subject in a news based programme should be represented with a proper balance so that to exclude any doubts regarding bias on the part of the broadcaster.

We should be doing our best to encompass in a news based programme positions of all the parties concerned with regard to a specific subject or event.

2.7 Balance in authored programmes

Participants in an authored programme state own opinions about controversial subjects which, frequently, are biased.

Content reflecting personal views, or authored by an individual, group or organization, particularly when dealing with controversial subjects, should be clearly signposted to audiences in advance. The broadcaster should ensure that any opinion voiced in a programme, no matter how partial, be based on incontestable facts.

The allocation of equal time to each view or opinion in a series of authored programmes is not mandatory. The broadcaster shall ensure that a sufficiently broad range of views is represented in a series of authored programmes during a

year, with due regard for a frequency and duration of the series programmes, as well as the nature of the subjects to be discussed.

3. BROADCASTING DURING ELECTIONS

3.1 Election reporting rules

The broadcaster should report elections, cover participating parties and candidates fairly, impartially and in a balanced manner; when planning election programmes, consultations with political parties may, sometimes, be held, the final decision shall, however, be made by the broadcaster.

In news and other programmes any discrimination or prioritization of any candidate in elections is inadmissible. The GPB programmes should not become a tool of political propaganda for any party/candidate.

During elections the GPB should:

- allocate sufficient airtime to the reporting of election campaign in major news based programmes as well as in news based programmes reported in minority languages;
- offer audiences special election programmes – debates, discussions with the participation of politicians and experts;
- ensure civil education of the voters; provide them with comprehensive information about the significance of elections, election procedures and other election-related issues;
- frequenter and wider cover views of voters on the current events and topical issues;
- place on the website its election coverage schedule and regulations: what, how and why is covered during an election campaign?

Journalist should impartially report an election campaign. Information should be based only on facts. We should not omit wilfully or purposely any material detail of the subject. We should correct any mistake whenever detected.

We must take care when covering activities of government representatives. They try sometimes to use the air for selling their candidate.

3.2 Political parties and candidates

Any qualified candidate in elections should be equally covered during an election campaign.

For taking part in an election programme, a candidate should be chosen in consultation with the respective party, **the final decision should, however, be taken by the broadcaster.**

Broadcaster must offer the opportunity to take part in election programmes to all candidates or their representatives. However, if any party refuses or is unable to participate, the programme will nevertheless go ahead and the audience should be informed the reason of the candidate's non-attendance. When inviting, take into consideration competence of the candidates in the matters to be discussed. We should provide equal airtime and attention to the candidates participating in the programme.

During each election week, at least one programme should be dedicated to the policy, activity and candidates of a qualified election subject.

Political programme of an election subject should be covered in all news based programmes broadcast after the program presentation has been completed. Where we fail to present or properly cover the political programme on the same day (for example, the presentation took place late in the evening), we should broadcast it in the next day's news programmes.

Information about the views of the candidates or political parties we should obtain directly from them rather than from a third party. We should not promise the election subject that his/her wishes in connection with the subject-matter will be considered in the output. In reporting, we should not limit ourselves to the latest activity and statement of the parties and candidates.

3.3 Information balance in reporting elections

The reporting of elections should be properly balanced. We should balance coverage of election subjects during each election week. The provision of balance in various programmes reported during a day is not enough.

The attainment of balance in a single news based programme or during a day may not be practicable, which depends on different factors, including the activity of election subjects. However this can be balanced by other programmes broadcast during a day. Where, due to objective circumstances, the principal topic of a news programme is a single election subject, to attain a balance on the same day is not necessary. Balancing can be achieved through appropriate coverage of other election candidates, in any other day.

Balance in election programmes should be maintained over the course of election campaign as a whole. It is advisable to start any series programme with informing the audience that the balance will be attained in a definite period of time. This can, for instance, be achieved by a short survey of the previous programme and/or announcement of a future programme.

Where during an election campaign any constituency is being reported, we should name all candidates and parties nominated in this constituency (in case of a majority candidate, indicate that he/she takes part as an independent candidate) or refer to the website or other source of information where the full list can be seen.

If during an election campaign coverage is given to any single candidate, we should indicate the first name, surname and party of all his/her opponents.

Where this is impracticable, the audience should be directed to an appropriate website or other information source listing all candidates.

In case of a reasoned necessity, it is admissible to focus on individual candidates in election reporting programmes. Such a necessity arises where:

- The candidate takes part in is an event which, in the broadcaster's opinion, is significant.
- The candidate takes part in the discussion of a specific matter in any constituency. In such a case, we should list the candidates standing for election in the same constituency.

Recommendation

In some cases a balanced coverage of any individual election subject might be found unnecessary, moreover, even unethical and tactless, for instance, in the event of a commentary concerning personal tragedy or a serious accident, catastrophe taking place in the country.

3.4 Candidates in the role of a presenter or in non-political programmes

An election subject must not act as a presenter or interviewer during an election period.

Candidates and representatives in elections must not act as news presenters or interviewers in any type of programme during the election period.

Appearances by candidates in non-political programmes that were planned or scheduled before the election period may continue, but no new appearances should be arranged and broadcast during the period. Where a candidate is taking part in a non-political programme, he/she must not be given the opportunity to make political statements or otherwise use the air for attracting the electorate, when no other candidates will be given the similar opportunity.

An employee of the broadcaster, who takes parts in elections, must not appear on the air as a news presenter or a reporter.

3.5 Right of reply

Any election subject shall have the right of reply.

In covering opinions of a public figure voiced around controversial political subjects, election subjects may, within a week, use their right of reply. The broadcaster should, within two days, report answers of other election subjects if the public figure, author of the statement, concurrently takes place in the elections.

3.6 Covering voters

In preparing a programme or report on voters, the principle of impartiality and balance should be complied with. If a candidate takes part in a programme concerning his/her voters, all other candidates of a qualified election subject must be given the opportunity to participate in the programme. If any candidate refuses, the planned programme will nevertheless go ahead.

3.7 Debates

Political debates should be held objectively and impartially.

During an election campaign the broadcaster should arrange on-air debates as prescribed by law. The frequency, timing and structure of debates shall be established by the broadcaster given the effective law.

Debates should be broadcast from a specially arranged studio (with the appropriate video and graphical decoration). A debates presenter (moderator) should:

- impartially and objectively direct a discussion between representatives of the election subjects;
- allocate equal airtime to all the participants;
- allow each participant to voice personal position and answer the questions asked within the fixed timeframe;
- mute the microphone of the participant who fails to observe the time-limit.

A candidate who refuses to participate in debates will lose the right of using free airtime designated for debates. The free airtime unused by a party and candidate may not be allocated to other party and candidate, except for the cases prescribed by the Election Code of Georgia.

3.8 Airtime allocation, political advertising

The public broadcaster should air election advertisements of an election subject.

The public broadcaster is obliged to air election advertisement of a qualified election subject, at least 60 seconds per hour.

The public broadcaster is obliged to recognize as an election subject a political party or bloc:

- a) which is represented in Georgian Parliament as a faction;
- b) which during the last general elections has obtained at least 4 percent of votes of the Georgian electorate, based on a proportional system.

The public broadcaster is authorized to recognize as a qualified election subject a political party which, according to public opinion poll held throughout Georgia, based on at least 5 polls held in the election year or the results of a survey being conducted within a month before elections, enjoys no less than 4 percent of the voters' support. A discriminatory use by the public broadcaster of a sociological survey results is inadmissible.

The above-mentioned opinion polls should comply with the following requirements:

- a) should be based on the recognized science-based methodology of a representative random selection, which provides for no less than 95 percent reliability of the results, with the margin of error not exceeding 3 percent;
- b) should be made public after reliability of the public opinion poll methodology and objectivity of the results have been specified;
- c) in the existence of significant differences or changes in the public opinion poll results, a convincing science-based explanation of the differences or changes should be possible;
- d) a possibility of manipulating public opinion or of fund-raising by means of a telephone, mail and/or internet should be excluded;
- e) should be based on a transparent methodology, providing with an opportunity of independent checking of the results.

The public broadcaster should provide a qualified election subject with free air for election advertising from 18:00 to 22:30. Free election advertising of other parties and candidates should be aired from 17:30 to 23:30

The public broadcaster should during each freely aired spot broadcast election programmes of at least two parties or candidates. The succession of airing free election ads should be fixed by casting of lots or based on another fair and impartial procedure.

The broadcaster should not allocate 50 percent of the total free air and time designated for political advertising to any party or candidate.

3.9 Reporting polling day

The broadcaster is prohibited from reporting any agitation material on polling day. Prior to the closure of polling stations, the aired information should not influence the election results.

Coverage of elections on polling day and before the voting is over should be restricted to factual accounts only.

Recommendation

Prior to the closure of polling stations, we should report on such matters as, for example, the number of voters, the composition of the district and precinct commissions, the activity of observers, press conferences arranged by the Central Election Commission and parties, detected violations, excesses taking

place during a day, etc., that is all the matters, which are associated with the course of elections and do not represent agitation. A call to voters for appearing at polling stations may be broadcast.

Display of any election campaign material (posters, logos, etc.) is prohibited. During interviews at polling stations, also in the course of live broadcasts, we should ensure that no poster or any agitation detail is aired. Prior to the closure of polling stations, we should not report or broadcast positions of the voter, including those of a public figure, as well as cover a drive in support of any party or candidate. All this, we should record and show in news coverages after the polling stations have been closed.

We should cover the polling day neutrally, objectively and impartially.

The broadcaster should not manifest its attitude to any candidate or party either by its tone, action or by any visual and sound effects.

3.10 Reporting the election results

We should take special care in reporting the election results that are not based on official data.

The results of exit polls conducted on polling day are not sufficiently reliable. Therefore, we should not overestimate their significance and clearly explain to the audience that this prediction is not based on official data.

3.11 Public opinion poll

During an election campaign, the broadcaster should inform the public about the opinion poll results with regard to parties and candidates, political processes, conduct of voters, topical issues, and important public institutions.

Before the poll results are made public, election subjects should be given enough time to analyze these results and prepare own commentaries. They should be notified in advance of specific dates of the opinion polls commissioned by the broadcaster, the time and format of programmes wherein the results will be announced.

Election subjects should be given an opportunity to comment either in the programme having announced the opinion poll results or in another programme within one week after the opinion poll results have been made public.

Upon making public an opinion poll results, it should be noted that they portray only the situation existing on the day when the opinion poll was carried out

When making public an opinion poll results, the following should be indicated:

- the organization which carried out the public opinion poll;
- the commissioner or sponsor of the public opinion poll;
- the exact wording of questions used in the poll and their succession;

- the dates of the fieldwork;
- the sample size and the sampling technique;
- the area and category of those sampled;
- the number of respondents that refused to participate in the poll, refused to answer the questions or whose polling failed;
- the margin of error;
- the information about any factor that might significantly influence the poll results.

No opinion poll results may be published within 48 hours and until the polling day ends (at midnight), except the polls which determine the voter activity level.

4. ROADCASTING POLITICAL MATTERS, OF PARLIAMENT AND POLITICIANS

4.1 Using parliamentary material and broadcasting parliamentary sessions

A parliamentary report should be impartial and objectively reflect issues discussed and events developed in Parliament.

Journalists should report judgments and opinions voiced on any subject in a balanced manner.

Any information programme should necessarily cover:

- Election of a Chairperson of the legislative body;
- Election of a Prime Minister;
- Election of Government;
- Presidential impeachment procedures;
- Prime Minister's impeachment procedures;
- Special parliamentary sessions.

Broadcasts of other sessions of national significance are subject to editorial decisions.

4.2 Reporting of political parties

We should report activity of political parties impartially. Allocation of airtime to political parties depends on their political activity, which is not simply estimated by frequency of press conferences arranged by them. Accordingly, it is not necessary (save election campaigns) that parties be allocated the same airtime. However, in reporting major political parties and their judgements, the balance needs to be attained for a definite time interval (for instance, during a month).

Inviting representatives of political parties to any programme should be based on editorial decisions. The composition of the invited guests should be so selected as to ensure the reflection in the programme of positions of all the major parties. A refusal to participate on the part of any invited guest should not result in annulment of the programme. In such a case, the programme author should try to invite such a guest, whose participation will prevent imbalance in opinions, or should inform the audience of the invited guest's refusal.

4.3 Political interviews

We should inform the interviewee in advance about the nature of the programme and context which we intend to record. We should not agree all questions with the interviewee in advance. We should ask questions that our audiences would reasonable expect to hear.

5. GATHERING INFORMATION

5.1 Confidential sources of information

Protection of information sources is the professional duty of a journalist.

A journalist should not normally use anonymous sources if there is a possibility of obtaining other, open sources of information. Using an anonymous source is justified only where the information is credible, reliable and worthy and cannot be disseminated otherwise. Protecting anonymity of sources is one of the value elements of information freedom and a professional duty of a journalist.

Pursuant to the law on freedom of speech and expression, journalist's confidential source enjoys absolute privileged protection. Confidentiality breach is only permissible when it serves the legitimate public interests, for example, when the information concerns preparation of a crime. In such a case, journalist is obliged to inform the respective agencies about expected wrongdoing. Disclosure of a confidential source is also justified when the matter concerns the protection of national interests. The necessity of it may arise only when the constitutional structure of society is actually threatened.

We should name a source which does not require anonymity. When communicating information provided by an anonymous source, indicate that the source is anonymous.

We should use information obtained from such confidential source which we know and trust. Notwithstanding anonymity of the source, check credibility of the information in order to avoid dissemination of false and

biased information. To do it, we should obtain additional data in conformation of the information from two sources (where appropriate). We should refrain from airing information which lacks the credibility and accuracy elements.

If the information provided by an anonymous source contains serious allegations, we should provide audiences with only such information about the source, which will not disclose its anonymity, but the audience will be able to evaluate the information credibility. In such a case, we should disclose only those details of the source, to which he/she will agree.

An anonymous contributor should be protected by all ways and means. The source's image and voice should be disguised. It is inadmissible, for example, to show such details as his/her car plate number, residence, etc. True, the audience the employment of an anonymous contributor might make the audience think that we hide from it such information that could enable them to assess the person's qualification and credibility of his/her commentaries. There are, however, cases when information is of much value and the employment of an anonymous contributor is quite justified.

The use of an anonymous contributor in a programme should be agreed with the editorial board. Also, in order to ensure making of a right editorial decision, the confidential information provided by an anonymous source should be notified to at least one manager of news programmes.

We should not offer anonymity to a source as a condition of obtaining information. Such an offer is justified only in the case when the disclosure of such information might put the source into danger. A similar situation may also occur in relations with public officials, who shall not give out information without the anonymity protection guarantees.

A guarantor of anonymity shall be not only a journalist but the broadcasting company as a whole. Any producer or other employee, for whom the identity of the source becomes known, should protect its anonymity.

5.2 Confidential information leakage

Information leakage from governmental agencies is one of the forms of anonymous informing, being used by public servants to provide society with confidential information.

We should take care with the use of information obtained from such sources and should thoroughly check it. Such information might prove useful and even become the prime subject of news. However, we should take into account that such information may have it purpose to mislead audiences for the purpose of information is not always the telling of the truth.

5.3 Personal communication

Making records in the course of a face-to-face communication will be legitimate only when at least one of the participants of the talk is in the know that the conversation is being recorded. The disclosure of such recording will only be possible when all the conversation participants know about it. There are,

however, permissible exclusions. A recorded conversation may be aired without preliminary consent if the information concerns illegitimate, anti-social and fraudulent activity or a breach of public trust, and when the obtaining of such information is otherwise impossible.

6. PERSONAL INVIOLABILITY/PRIVACY

6.1 Privacy versus public life

Unwarranted infringement on private life in programmes and in the course of gathering information for programmes is inadmissible.

As opposed to public life, intrusion into private life of an individual is justified only in the case where the individual's personal life influences his/her public life or represents a legitimate public concern.

Legitimate public interest includes: exposing or detecting crime; exposing significantly anti-social behaviour, corruption or injustice; protecting people's health and safety; preventing people from being misled by some statement or action of an individual or organization; disclosing information that allows people to make a significantly more informed decision about matters of public importance.

The GPB journalists should clear up matters of social concern without unwarranted infringement on privacy of a contributor.

Recommendation

When preparing a material, we should take into account that ordinary citizens have more rights not to disclose details than public servants or the individuals that strive to obtain power, influence or other positions. In covering private life of a public figure, we should take into account how his/her personal life influences the discharge of official duties and meeting of liabilities.

When reporting personal life details, we should restrict to factual information only and avoid rumours. Communicate only the information that is material, accurate and represents a subject of public interest. Pay attention to information having caused such an interest in a specific person. Disclosure of details that are simply interesting but irrelevant to the topic under discussion is inadmissible.

We should not broadcast such material which portrays an individual's nude body or depicts intimate details of his/her personal life. Except individual cases, we should not air an individual's conversation without his/her consent unless it is clearly evident that the person is willingly providing his/her interview or commentaries to the reporter.

Re-use of the recorded material for other purpose or in other programme should not lead to an unwarranted infringement on personal inviolability. It concerns both the material obtained by the broadcaster as well as the material obtained from other sources.

6.2 Obtaining consent

If an individual or organization asks to stop recording or live broadcasting, because of consent about privacy, we should normally do so, unless, given a public interest, it is editorially justified to continue.

- If in preparing a programme an individual's privacy is infringed, we should normally obtain the individual's consent, unless such infringement is justified by a public interest;
- If broadcast of the recorded material interferes with an individual's privacy, we should normally obtain the individual's consent prior to the material's broadcasting, unless such infringement is justified by a public interest;
- For preparing a material at any organization, we should normally obtain its official's consent, unless such material preparation is justified by a public interest;
- If a plot is being prepared at an institution such as a school, hospital, prison or police department, we should normally obtain consent from both from responsible persons as well as from the persons present there (patients, detainees, etc.), who will be reflected in the material (unless the unwarranted plot preparation is justified). Where identification of an individual in the prepared plot is impossible, additional consent to its broadcasting is not necessary.
- Disclosure of an individual's address and other similar data without the individual's consent thereto is inadmissible.

6.3 Public places

Privacy expectation differs according to location, nature of information, specific activity or public interest.

People may also reasonably expect privacy in public places such as airports, railway stations and shopping malls. Sometimes activity or a situation is so personal that their recording or filming even in public places can be regarded as infringement of privacy (for example, a seeing off scene in a railway station or airport). We should not record in public places such personal scenes, the broadcasting of which will require a prior consent of the concerned individual, unless it is editorially justified.

6.4 Preparing material in private territory

We should secure a preliminary consent from a holder for preparing material within private territory. In case of refusal, we should leave the territory. An exception is possible if the recording serves the public interests and we have reasonable grounds to suspect that a crime or anti-social act has been committed.

6.5 Interview without prior agreement

An unexpected approaching a contributor for interviewing purposes may be treated as infringement of privacy.

Recording commentaries and interviews of a public figure in public places and their filming without warning are possible. As for the taking of an interview on a private territory, it will be subject to a preliminary arrangement. The prospective interviewee should also be agreed on recording of a telephone talk and its use in a programme. There are, although, exceptions to the rule. One of such exceptions is known as "doorstepping", which implies approaching of a contributor without warning for purposes of interviewing.

Doorstepping is the recording of an interview or telephone call for broadcast purposes without any prior warning.

We should inform a contributor during both telephone and direct doorstepping that they are being recorded and/or filmed. The contributor should not think that the camera or audio recorder is switched off.

Doorstepping is permissible where:

- a request for an interview has been refused, but given the regency of the matter the doorstepping is justified;
- there is a history of failure to respond to interview requests or refusal to be interviewed;
- the contributor cannot be physically approached;
- there is a good reason to believe that an investigation will be frustrated if the individual is approached openly

In all the above-mentioned cases, doorstepping should be justified based on public interests.

Doorstepping rules shall not, however, apply to the conduct of so-called vox-pops (sampling the views of random members of the public).

6.6 Recording without prior arrangement for entertainment programmes

Obtaining material for entertainment programmes by doorstepping is permissible unless the filmed or recorded material embarrasses, insults, or irritates anyone.

People who are doorstepped must give their consent before the material is broadcast unless their identity is disguised.

6.7 Identity of a suspect

The course of trial does not imply that the suspect is a criminal. The identity of the person under trial may be reported after careful consideration of the consequences for the person's reputation, and the public interest in the case. When the investigation identifies the suspect, his/her identity may be reported on air.

When a person has been identified as a suspect, we should accurately follow the progress of the investigation and consider reporting to audiences on significant developments and changes (stay of trial, conviction or acquittal, etc.).

6.8 Identity of an accused

A person is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. We should take into account that when a person accused of a criminal offence is identified in a broadcast, only part of the judicial process is being aired. Between the charge and the trial there may be generally a considerable lapse of time. We should be sensitive to the fact that the reporting identity of the accused might be damaging for an innocent person.

If when reporting the trial we identify the accused, we should also report the final conviction, or when the person is found innocent, we should immediately notify the audience thereof, so that the reputation of the innocent person is not damaged.

6.9 Identity of relatives of a suspect/accused

Privacy of family members or relatives of a suspect/accused shall be protected.

They have the same right of privacy as any individual. Therefore, we should not broadcast information about the family, address, etc. without consent of a suspect/accused unless there is clearly expressed public interest.

We should take account of the rights of family members of a suspect/accused and should not broadcast interviews or report takes without their consent unless it is evident that they are willingly giving interviews or commentaries.

6.10 Identity of crime victims

As a general rule, journalists do not broadcast the identity of a living crime victim, particularly in the case of a crime against the person such as sexual assault. Broadcasting the identity of a crime victim most often only adds to the person's grief, anguish and trauma.

An exception is possible if:

- the victim consent to the disclosure, in writing or on tape;
- the victim volunteers his or her story for broadcast.

An exception is also admissible if the public interest is an overriding consideration, when revealing of the identity of a victim is justified. Although, we should take care when considering the public interest, for behind it might stand a simple curiosity or even a wish of talking scandal.

When, without due legal process, an alleged victim accuses someone of a crime against his or her person, we may disclose the alleged victim's identity. However, broadcasting of the accusations is dependent on a thorough review, by the Editorial and the Law Department management, of the credibility of the person and of the evidence he or she brings forward.

6.11 Reporting suffering and distress

A journalist must always balance the public interest in full and accurate reporting against the need to be compassionate and to avoid any unjustified infringement of privacy and human dignity when reporting accidents and disasters.

Putting injured or grieving people under pressure to provide interviews is inadmissible. We should normally request interviews with people who are injured or grieving following an accident or disaster by approaching them through relatives or friends. We should not:

- put them under pressure to provide interviews;
- harass them with repeated phone calls, text messages, knocks at the door, etc.;
- stay on their property if asked to leave;
- normally follow them if they move on.

We should not interview a surviving family member unless it is completely clear that the interview is in the interest of the person and is being recorded at his/her request. The grieving or injured people should be so recorded as to avoid deepening of their grief and sorrow. We should carefully select questions. By asking rash, tactless questions, we might create excessive tension and injure their feelings.

We should not record or broadcast a material depicting an accident or personal tragedy which infringes personal inviolability, even if the event took place in public place. Filming is admissible only subject to the concerned person's consent. Where a victim is unable to express his/her consent, we should obtain it from his/her family member, and in case such member is absent on the scene, we may record the material only in the existence of a special public interest.

We should not broadcast the identity of a dead person, victim of an accident or violence until the family members have been notified thereof or if the broadcast of such information is not justified by public interests. We should not record and broadcast the reaction of relatives upon learning of their family member's decease.

We should normally only record at private funerals with the consent of the family. There must be a clear public interest if we decide to proceed against requests for privacy.

6.12 Material recorded by a hidden camera

We should be particularly cautious when employing a third person material. This may be a material recorded by a hidden camera or video supplied by different agencies or persons. The use of such material should not unreasonably infringe privacy of a person.

7. PAYMENTS

Journalist should not normally make payments to information sources.

The journalist's task is to gather information freely given. Payment of a fee will only be approved for a contribution of remarkable importance, with a clear public interest, which could not be obtained without payment.

To obtain information, the GPB does not normally:

- make payments, promise to make payments, or make payments in kind to members of Government, Parliament, judicial authority, local governments, and municipal agencies.
- make payments, promise to make payments, or make payments in kind to criminals or generally to former criminals, who are simply talking about their crimes. In general the same should apply to families or relatives of criminals or former criminals.
- make payments, promise to make payments, or make payments in kind to witnesses or presumable witness in criminal proceedings.

Witnesses, or anyone who may reasonably be expected to be called as a witness during active criminal proceedings, must not be paid, or promise of payment made, directly or indirectly, for their story, unless there is a clear public interest, such as investigating crime or serious wrongdoing, and the payment is necessary to elicit the information.

Recommendation

Where such a payment is made it will be appropriate to disclose the payment to a senior editorial figure and to audiences, where appropriate.

8. EMERGENCIES

8.1 Reporting emergencies

A programme likely to encourage or incite the public for riot must not be broadcast.

8.2 Demonstrations

Frequently protests and demonstrations are planned and conducted with media coverage in mind. Therefore, actions are arranged and held at such time and in such places where there is a high probability to be in the focus of media attention (for example, at the place of large or important public events).

In covering demonstrations and protests, we are to observe the following guidelines:

- The decision to cover a demonstration should not be communicated to anyone outside the Company.

Recommendation

The prospect of coverage may influence attendance and plans.

- Journalist must maintain their distance from organizers and demonstrators.

Recommendation

They must take care not even to appear to be in the demonstrators' good graces, nor should they allow the demonstrators or organizers to be in theirs.

- The vicinity of cameras or microphones influences persons or groups.

Recommendations

Reporting teams must differentiate between spontaneous and staged events; avoid showing the demonstrators who are clearly performing for the cameras or microphones.

- Reporting teams must not make any suggestions or requests to demonstrators which could lead to the staging of events they failed to record.
- Journalists should inquire into and report on the identity of the organizers, the purpose of the demonstration and the number of participants.

The decision to broadcast a report must be based on the importance of the event, protest or demonstration rather than on the sounds and images it provides.

8.3 Civil disorder

Reporting of riots or civil disorders should encompass impartial and as comprehensive as possible information. We should not broadcast such material that could aggravate the situation. We should assess the risk that by previewing likely prospects of disturbances we might encourage them.

It is important that:

- We offer a comprehensive and impartial view.

Recommendation

When it is difficult for reporters located on one side of a confrontation to form a clear overall view, their material should be put into a wider context for broadcast.

- The presence of cameras and microphones should not provoke violence.

Recommendation

If the presence of recording equipment is evidently inspiring a potentially dangerous situation, the reporters should cease using recording equipment and, in some circumstances, even conceal it.

- We treat estimates of involvement with due scepticism.

Recommendation

Report wide disparities and name the sources of the figures.

- The scenes of violence should not be broadcast.

Recommendation

When reporting live, we must either install a delay or cut away and record material for use in an edited report, if the level of violence or disorder becomes too graphic.

8.4 Acts of terror

We must report acts of terror quickly, accurately, fully and responsibly. Our credibility is undermined by the careless use of words which carry emotional or value judgements. Our responsibility is to remain objective and report in ways that enable our audiences to make their own assessments about who is doing what to whom.

Recommendation

When reporting an act of terror, we must take into account that any information provided by a terrorist may contain code-words, calls, etc., which may further complicate the situation.

When covering an act of terror, the following guidelines should apply:

- Any direct communication from terrorists which contains information about current or contemplated acts of terror should be reported immediately to the information programme manager or producer.

- No live or recorded broadcast of a statement by or interview with a terrorist/hostage taker or hostage may occur without authorization from the information programme manager or producer. Such authorization will only be provided in exceptional circumstances.
- Statements or demands by terrorists/hostage takers should be broadcast in summary or edited form to avoid the danger of manipulation.
- Telephone or other direct contact with hostages or terrorist/hostage takers or both should only be undertaken if, in the judgement of the information programme manager or producer, such activity does not interfere with the authorities' communications or further jeopardize the safety of hostages.
- Reporters and producers should promptly convey to the information programme manager any request made by the authorities to delay (for safety or other purposes) the broadcasting of certain information regarding the incident in progress.

8.5 Armed conflict/war

The GPB has a special responsibility to its audiences when reporting armed conflicts. At such times, large numbers of people access our services for accurate news and information. They expect us to help them make sense of events by providing context and impartial analysis and by offering a wide range of views and opinions.

Recommendation

We need to be sensitive to the emotions and fears of our audience when reporting matters involving risk to and loss of life, as well as human suffering and distress. Some will have relatives or friends directly involved.

A story of demise or injury of a relative the family should not first learn from the GPB. Broadcast of scenes depicting and atrocities is justified only in the case of clear public interest.

The following editorial principles apply to our coverage of armed conflict:

- Our reports should normally make it clear where information has come from, particularly in the face of conflicting claims.
- We should normally say if our reports are censored or monitored or if we withhold information, and explain, wherever possible, the rules under which we are operating;
- We should retain a calm tone. The tone of our reporting is as important as the reliability of our reporting.

8.6 Threats and hoaxes

If we receive a bomb warning or other credible and specific threat, whether by phone, fax, email or text message, or by other means, the first priority is to pass it on to the appropriate authorities.

When reporting such threats:

- We should not reveal security details or other sensitive information not widely in the public domain which might assist the attack;
- We do not normally report incidents which turn out to be hoaxes unless they have had a serious and evident effect, such as a major and highly visible transport disruption.

8.7 Hijacking, kidnapping, hostage taking and sieges

In cases of hijacking, kidnapping, hostage taking and sieges we must be aware that that anything we broadcast or publish may be seen or heard by the perpetrators.

When reporting such events, we should ensure:

- We do not interview a perpetrator live on air.
- We do not broadcast any video and/or audio provided by a perpetrator live on air.
- We broadcast recordings made by perpetrators, whether of staged events, violent acts or their victims, only after referral to the information service manager or producer.

When reporting stories relating to hijacking, kidnapping, hostage taking or sieges we must listen to advice from the police and other authorities about anything which, if reported, could exacerbate the situation. Occasionally they will ask us to withhold or even to include information. We will normally comply with a reasonable request, but we will not knowingly broadcast anything that is untrue.

8.8 Emergencies

When reporting emergencies, including disasters and major accidents, as well as when naming casualty figures, it is particularly important to source information.

Recommendation

Take into account that first estimates of casualty figures often turn out to be inaccurate. If different sources give different estimates we should either report the range or go for the source which carries the greatest authority and attribute the estimate accordingly.

When people have been killed, injured or are missing it is important that, as far as is reasonably practicable, next of kin do not learn this news from any of our services. We need to narrow the area of concern as quickly as possible without identifying individual victims, for example in an air crash by including details such as airline, flight number, place of departure and destination, to avoid alarming even larger number of people.

9. CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

9.1 Reporting crime

Material likely to encourage or incite the commission of a crime, or likely to lead to disorder should not be broadcast.

When preparing a crime report, consider that information freedom does not outweighs the right of privacy. Crime-related material should not contribute to frightening of the population that they might become prospective victims. We should not limit ourselves to the reporting of facts and should, as far as reasonably possible, provide audiences with full information about the committed crime; for example, report subjective causes of the crime commission (whenever known), the situation, the condition of the victim (without reporting the identity), the latest crime statistics, etc.

When reporting crime:

- We should not spread unfounded panic among people and should account for an expected response of audiences.
- We should take account of the time of reporting crime, especially of that associated with violence and its effect on the expected composition of the audience (children).
- We should not reveal much detail about a crime that could be copied;
- Do not repeat past events in the absence of significant crime-related information.

When reporting grave crime, we should comply with ethical standards, namely:

- We should avoid showing scenes of defenceless victims, corps and mutilated people, etc. Such scenes should be filmed and broadcast from a definite distance so that to prevent identification of the victims.
- We should avoid showing such details which enable identification (for example, residential house).

Recommendation

Reporting grave crimes might take several days, because crime-related details are normally revealed later on. Although, it is not necessary to broadcast them on days when no significant change has been taken place in the process. Obviously, crime is a negative and unpleasant event and needs to be reported as such. However, at the same time, be careful when using language, tone, so that to avoid over dramatizing of events by using harsh words or phrases, agitated tone, etc.

9.2 Crime reconstruction

News programmes should not normally commission crime reconstructions (staging). Revisiting the scene of a crime and/or interviewing a victim or witness do not in themselves constitute a reconstruction. Although, we may report crime reconstructions staged by the police for the purpose of further evidence.

In factual programmes, reconstructions are used for better illustrating a crime. The following guidelines should be followed:

- Reconstructions should not be used simply to attract or entertain audiences.
- It is not advisable to reconstruct such details that fail to corroborate the established fact;
- It is not advisable to use musical background or other sound effects;
- Avoid using slow motion only for the dramatizing the event;
- So reconstruct the scene of crime that its adverse effect on the victim or the victim's relatives be minimal.

It should also be obvious to the audience where a reconstruction begins and ends.

9.3 Witnessing illegal activity

A journalist having witnessed a criminal activity and willing to record it should avoid:

- Condoning, aiding or abetting criminal behaviour;
- Encouraging or provoking criminal behaviour;
- Interfering with the activity law-enforcement bodies.

9.4 Demonstration of illegal activity

Journalists should not normally demonstrate or depict criminal techniques, revealing too much detail or the ways in which the activity can be made more effective unless it justified by public interest. Illegal activities' details should not be portrayed as problem free or glamorous.

Broadcasting of facts and information urging or pushing audiences to illegal activities and disturbance is prohibited.

9.5 Dangerous offenders

When dangerous offenders, including paedophiles and sex offenders have served their sentence and been released back into the community, strong passions can be aroused in the place where they live. When reporting on paedophiles and other sex offenders or when exposing potential paedophiles or sex offenders, we can name the town or city where they live, but should generally avoid giving sensitive details or addresses. However, such information should not cause excessive tension and unjustified interference with the person's privacy. If the offender has served the sentence and is ready to become a worthy member of

society, excessive attention to his/her person will interfere with his/her integration into society.

Recommendation

We should not consider that a lawfully released person necessarily endangers society. Although, it is in society's interests to understand how harmless is the offender released from the prison.

When working on the subject, to obtain all available information concerning the character and degree of the offence committed by the offender. We should take account of opinions of the victim, the police, penitentiary system and the offender proper, as well as of all the people who know him/her in person and of the matters associated with him/her. The prepared material should contain the data contained in the criminal record of the offender, as well as all the conditions and reasons, on which bases the perpetrator has been released.

We should not overestimate facts and scare audiences. Based on the given material, provide comprehensive information so to enable audiences to form own opinions and assess the degree of the offender's harmlessness.

9.6 Families of criminals

Reporting the facts about criminals may include detailing their family circumstances, but we should avoid causing unwarranted distress to their family. Also we should not imply guilt by association without evidence.

9.7 Interviewing witnesses or potential witnesses

We must be scrupulous about our interviews with witnesses to ensure that we do not interfere in the legal process.

Recommendation

Witnesses should not normally be interviewed about their evidence once proceedings are under way and until the verdict has been reached. Witnesses sometimes claim to have been coached by a journalist. To protect ourselves against any unfair accusation we should record and keep the whole interview.

9.8 Interviews with prisoners

Prior to visiting a prison and conducting an interview with a prisoner for broadcast we should normally ask permission from the prison authorities. If a prisoner has access to public or mobile telephone and has connected you, record the conversation but not broadcast it live. An interview with a prisoner should not develop into crime propagation.

10. TAG ALONG RAIDS

A tag along raid is when we accompany police, customs officers or other public authorities on operational duties (for example, to detect drug dealers, corrupted

officials, etc.). We should only go on tag along raids when there is a clear public interest and after careful consideration of its pros and cons.

Recommendation

Undoubtedly, the reporting of the above raids serves interests of the community. However, there also exists a threat that this is done only to secure a positive response in the community. In this case it could be assumed that journalists contribute such agencies in achieving their goals. We should only go on tag along raids when there is a clear public interest.

When we accompany police, customs officers or other public authorities on operational duties, we should:

- Disguise identities of innocent persons depicted in the material, if there is a danger that a disclosure of their identity might lead an unwanted outcome.
- Disguise the filmed place by appropriate technical or graphical means so that make its identification impossible, if the depiction of the place might contribute to identification of innocent persons.

11. COVERT METHODS OF INFORMATION GATHERING

11.1 Secret recording

Covert methods of gathering information should only be employed with due regard for their legality and for the principles of personal life inviolability.

Information should be normally gathered in the open, so that the principles of personal life inviolability and fair relations with respondents/contributors are not infringed. Although, where necessary, it is admissible that secret recording be used. We should not make the use of hidden cameras an everyday practice and should resort to it only when it is justified by a clear public interest.

The employment of covert methods/secret recording is justified when:

- issues of public interest concerning serious anti-social or criminal behaviour are to be exposed;
- there is clear existing documentary or other evidence of such behaviour or of an intention to commit an offence;
- it can be shown that an open approach would be unlikely to succeed;
- the recording is necessary for evidential purposes;
- social research in the public interest is conducted, where no other methods could naturally capture the attitudes or behaviours in question, for example, how people reacts when going by a beggar in the street.
- they are necessary for preparing comedy and entertainment programmes.

In case covert methods are employed, audiences should be notified of the presence of a hidden camera and of the reasons for using it.

All proposals to record secretly must be approved in advance by the relevant senior editorial figure in the respective division. The secretly recorded material should be kept even if it is not broadcast. The gathering and broadcast of a secretly recorded material always requires two separate decisions.

- The GPB requires a higher public interest test for secretly recording in a private place where the public do not have access.
- Secret recording of medical treatments is only justified in case of a strong public interest. Secretly recorded material should not reveal identity of a patient unless the patient consents thereto or there is a clear public interest.
- The GPB requires a higher public interest test for secretly recording identifiable people in grief or under extremes of stress.
- We must not go on “fishing expeditions” – that is secretly recording on private property in search of crime or anti-social behaviour by identifiable individuals or a group when there is no clear or current evidence against them of that behaviour.
- We must never use unattended recording equipment on private property without permission of the owner, occupier or agent unless for the purpose of gaining evidence of serious crime.

When secret recording or some other deception is used for comedy and entertainment programmes:

- People who feature prominently in the recordings must give their consent before the material is broadcast. Otherwise they must be disguised.
- Anyone secretly recorded on the phone must give their consent before the call is broadcast.
- If people realize they are being secretly recorded and ask us to stop, we must do so. We must also destroy any material recorded of them, if asked to do so.

Secretly recorded material should not expose people to hurtful ridicule.

11.2 Deception, misrepresentation

Deception must not be used to gain information. GPB employees, therefore, should not misrepresent themselves or their purposes to gain it. However, there may be occasions when it serves a legitimate programme purpose for a journalist not to declare his or her profession but to seek information as an ordinary member of the public. Occasions of this sort might occur, for example, during investigation of schemes to defraud the public.

Deception concerning profession and purpose of a journalist is justified only if information is important for the public and cannot be obtained otherwise.

12. INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM

Journalistic investigations are an important way of uncovering matters of significant public interest. They must be clearly editorially justified and real evidence must exist of the issue to be exposed.

Recommendation

Investigative journalism should bear in mind the relative importance on an issue. Minor matters should not be treated when more significant topics warrant attention.

Any proposal to undertake an investigation into crime or serious anti-social behaviour must be referred to a senior editorial figure of the division or the producer. It is good practice before an investigation is commissioned and seeking editorial approval and legal advice to consider the following: (i) the background and motivation of sources, (ii) justification for using deception, undercover work or secret recording to gather further evidence; (iii) whether this is the only way to proceed; (iv) possible consequences of our actions.

Programmes of journalistic investigations may lead the audience to conclusions on the subject being examined. These must be logical conclusions derived from the facts and not from expressions of editorial opinion or unfair methods of presentation. The program should take into account all the relevant evidence available and should include recognition of the range of opinion on the matter in question.

Recommendation

The matter must be based on the most scrupulous and painstaking research in order to provide audiences with accurate, impartial and comprehensive information.

In investigative programming, in the interest of fairness, opportunity should be given for all parties directly concerned to state their case. In circumstances where research reveals the necessity to conduct interviews in which individuals are to be held accountable for their actions, while the purpose of the interview should be disclosed in broad terms in advance, information can be divulged and questions can be asked in ways that ensure candid and unrehearsed answers and obtained for the public.

Where investigations require the employment of special journalistic methods (for example, hidden cameras or microphones), prior authorization must be obtained from the respective senior officer.

A journalist must keep any material (audio, video or handwriting) being gathered for investigative programming.

13. INFORMATION PROCESSING

13.1 Presenters/hosts and interviewers

Presenters and interviewers must treat their programme interviewees or guests fairly.

Programme presenters or interviewers:

- should not be critical or demanding of some, while conciliatory and sympathetic to others;
- should refrain from personal advocacy, not only in their public statements but, as well, in their handling of discussions and their selection of questions.

13.2 Interviewees and guest commentators

The GPB should seek to select commentators whose background qualifies them to give expert opinion on the matter in question based on accurate information. Where necessary, obtain additional information about a commentator's background

In the course of interviewing or presenting a programme, bias or showing preference to any party to a discussion is inadmissible. Questions, whatever acute, should be asked courteously. We should give an interviewee the opportunity to answer the question asked. However, the interruption of an interviewee and interference in his/her answers is timely and justified when s/he infringes ethical standards or avoids the question asked and tries to use the interview for personal purposes. **We should request the interviewee to reason controversial opinions expressed in the course of an interview or discussion.**

Recommendation

Prior to recording an interview, we should look for anonymous information in connection with the matter in question in order to be able to put qualified questions, to identify biased opinions and to provide counter pleas. We should not reveal own attitude and emotions; we should mind our gesticulations, tone, vocabulary, etc. so that not be charged of bias on the part of the audience.

We should inform an interviewee about the purpose of inviting to the programme, the subjects to be discussed, and the nature of the programme; also, we should inform him/her of his/her role in the programme. Contributors sometimes try to impose conditions on us before agreeing to take part. If a contributor refuses to give an interview unless questions are rigidly agreed in advance, we must consider carefully whether it is appropriate to proceed at all.

In exceptional cases the interviewee' conditions might be complied with unless the editorial independence is infringed. If the conditions are unacceptable, we should defend own position and refrain from inviting such an interviewee.

We do not normally allow preview of the recorded material. **However, when a preview is considered for editorial, ethical or legal reasons, we must be able to demonstrate the terms under which it was offered. We should always make it clear that any changes made as a result will generally only relate to the correction of agreed factual inaccuracies.**

13.3 Editing

The editing process must result in a true reflection of what was originally seen and heard during the preparation of the programme. Incorrect reporting of matters and misleading the audience by manipulating the text, image or sound, repetition of takes or scenes taken from other material is inadmissible.

13.3.1 Editing interviews

Biased editing of interviews, distortion of a contributor's opinion and position is inadmissible. A journalist should ensure compliance of the edited material with the views and opinions expressed by a contributor/interviewee.

We should edit interviews consciously, accurately and in the right context. We should use an interviewee's answers and opinions. We should not distort his/her statements when paraphrasing. The retaining of only accurate answers in detriment of reasoned answers will be unethical and unfair.

The following are important guidelines for editing interviews:

- Questions and answers must not be edited so as to change the original meaning, or distort the sense of the original interview as a whole.
- Answers to a question given in one context must not be edited into another.
- An answer to a question must not be placed in a programme so that it purports to be an answer to a question other than that actually posed;
- An answer to a question must not be distorted and neither a new question should be added.
- The listeners and the viewers must not be misled into thinking a discussion is taking place between people when no such discussion was recorded.
- Material must not be used for another purpose or in other programme, if this infringes the principle of fair relationship with a contributor.

Where necessary, the audience must be informed about the place and conditions of taking an interview. In case the previous recording is used, clearly indicate that the record is old.

13.3.2 Use of special effects

The use of special effects in television and radio programmes should not bring into question the broadcaster's impartiality.

Take special care of the use of visual and sound effects, as well as television effects and apply rigorous judgment to ensure that they do not distort reality or have the effect of producing editorial comment.

13.3.3 Picture composition, camera angle

Pictures in news programmes should objectively reflect the past and current events.

Picture compositions might greatly influence the audience (for example, by creating a desirable attitude towards the reported material, by influencing formation of a specific opinion thereon, etc.). There are generally two methods of filming/photography: subjective or personal and objective or reporter filming photography. The use of subjective method in news reporting is not advisable for it is associated with a risk of distorting the objective reality.

Changing a camera angle may greatly influence both the significance of the object of photography as well as its presentation. We should not film a material for news programmes with an angle that could alter the real picture (especially when photographing people).

13.4 Reconstruction of events

Reconstruction of events should not mislead audiences.

Reconstructions of re-staging of events will help the audience better understand a matter or perceive an event. Reconstructions should normally be based on a substantial and variable body of evidence. In actual programmes, reconstructions should not over dramatize in a misleading or sensationalist way. The staged scenes should not be presented as a documentary. They should be differentiated from other material by the visual style of the programme (for example, slow motion or black and white images, etc.) or by the differentiating graphics so that to avoid confusing the audience.

News programmes should not generally stage reconstructions of current events. By reconstructions staged by others (e.g. the police) may be reported in the usual way.

13.5 Archive/library material

13.5.1 Archive/library material labelling

Archive/library material used in a programme should be clearly labelled.

When archive/library material is used to illustrate a current issue or event it must be clearly labelled by a graphical sign "archive" or be differentiated by other visual technique if there is any risk of misleading the audience.

Recommendation

The material, which is obviously old, should not be labelled (e.g. black and white images, outdated format, etc.).

13.5.2 Archive material depicting personal grief and drama

We should only use archive material in dramas and drama documentaries when it is justified by a clear public interest. The re-use of archive material should not cause audiences possible distress or trauma.

So far as is reasonably practicable we should inform contributors of our plans to re-use material when it may cause them possible distress, such a re-use of funeral footage. In case the use of such archive is protested, it might only be re-used in existence of a clear public interest.

Recommendation

The passage of time is an important factor when it comes to making difficult judgments about the broadcasting of graphic material. In the immediate aftermath of an event the use of more graphic material is normally justified to provide a reasonable illustration of the full horror. However, as the story unfolds it may become more difficult to justify its continued use. Then when it comes to marking the anniversary of an event or when considering it in a contemporary historical context, it may again be editorially justified to re-use it.

13.5.3 Crime library material

The use of library material relating to crimes and to victims requires care for editorial judgements.

We should:

- not use library material of one identifiable crime to illustrate another;
- avoid using the same incident to illustrate a general theme;
- take care when using library shots to illustrate any crime, which contribute to the forming or strengthening of racial, national, religion, sexual or other stereotypes;
- take care when using library shots of prisoners to illustrate a specific crime or type of crime. Individuals should not be clearly identifiable if they were not involved in the crime in question.

Recommendation

Check with the Legal Department about any proposed use of library material of a crime if court proceedings are pending or in progress.

13.6 Programme repetition

We must check programmes recorded some time before transmission or being repeated to make sure they have not been overtaken by events, such as the known death of a contributor, the charging of an offender, or significant life changes. In order to avoid misleading the audience, a repeated programme should be correspondingly labelled.

Presumably, the programme repetition in its original state might be justified. However, if we know the factual material in the programme is no longer accurate or outdated for some other reason we should inform the audience about it.

13.7 Satire

Satire should not, save rare cases, be used in newscasts. It is ambiguous enough in its effect that its use in such programmes may lead to confusion on the part of the audience about the nature and purpose of the programme. Satirical items should be so treated in presentation that their nature is easily recognized by the audience.

14. RESPECT FOR AUDIENCE

14.1 Good taste

GPB programmes should be distinguished for good taste.

Our duty is to reflect the world as it is, including all aspects of the human experience and the realities of the natural world. At the same time, we should observe the sense of proportion and respect the community's tastes, traditionally established attitudes to various matters.

When we broadcast or publish challenging material which risks offending some of our audience we must always be able to demonstrate a clear editorial purpose. Such material may include, but it not limited to, offensive language, humiliation, sexual violence and discriminatory treatment. We must be sensitive to audience expectations, particularly in relation to the protection of children, as well as clearly signposting the material

Harm and offence editorial principles:

- We observe the television watershed to ensure material that might be unsuitable for children use appropriately scheduled.
- We signpost and label challenging material to ensure our audiences have enough information on which to judge whether content is suitable for themselves or their children.
- We keep in touch with the expectations of our audiences for content and nature of broadcast material.

14.2 Audience expectations

During a day (from morning to night) our audiences, including children, expect broadcasts suitable for family watching. Therefore, when scheduling programmes, we should inform the audience about the material unsuitable to such expectations.

Recommendation

We should consider the specific programme's expected audience and age as well the content and nature of the next programme, because the audience might again watch or listen the broadcaster. For example, the children's programme "Babilina" should not followed by a programme that might prove unsuitable for children. Specific circumstances are also to be taken into account. For example, broadcasting a programme of specific nature (e.g. entertainment) on a holy day religious festival or on a tragic event anniversary might run counter to the audience expectations.

14.3 Sign posts/cautionary announcements

Should a programme contain material which may be disturbing to some segments of the audience (particularly children), cautionary announcements/sign posts before or during the programme should be used.

Sign posts should not call audiences for ceasing viewing or listening to a programme. It should ensure our audiences have enough information on which to decide whether to watch or not.

14.4 Television and the Watershed

Television scheduling decisions need to balance the protection of young people and particularly children, with the rights of all viewers, particularly those without children, to receive a full range of subject matter throughout the day. They must also be judged against the requirements of the so-called "Watershed".

Watershed is a broadcast air boundary used to distinguish between programmes intended mainly for family viewing and those programmes intended for an adult audience. **The GPB Watershed begins at 21:00 and ends at 08:00.**

After 21.00 children should not have access to rather unsuitable to them material. Consider that they might be still sitting and watching TV. Where it is impracticable, provide the appropriate sign posts.

Programmes must be clearly commissioned for broadcast before or after the Watershed. Late changes to originally agreed transmission slots, particularly any proposal to broadcast a programme before rather than after the Watershed, may result in significant re-editing.

The nature of news means that it is not always possible to avoid showing material that might distress some of our audiences before the Watershed. Wherever appropriate we should provide clear content information to signpost difficult images, particularly those that may be distressing for children. We must be particularly careful during hot news when estimating time and content is impossible. If children programmes need to be interrupted by hot news, inform the audience thereof in advance, so that our audiences are not taken by surprise. We should also resort to such a method when hot news is to be broadcast as soon as possible.

14.5 Radio and online

Radio and online do not have Watersheds. Our scheduling and publishing decisions need to be relevant to the audience expectations of each radio network and online service and informed by our knowledge of when children are particularly likely to be listening or whether online content is likely to appeal to a high proportion of children.

We need to anticipate possible problems when broadcasting “live” radio programmes, including discussions on problematic and disputable subjects. Therefore, our hosts must be careful that the programme guests and authors of calls entering the studio comply with ethical standards. It is advisable that the programme participants and outside callers, wherever appropriate, be asked before broadcast to refrain from unethical statements. The hosts working online should be able to delicately avoid and cope with any embarrassing and complicated situation.

14.6 Scheduling of programme trails

Trails for radio and television programmes that are unsuitable for children must be carefully scheduled:

- Trails scheduled next to programmes targeted at children or when children are particularly likely to be watching should be suitable for that audience.
- Trails for post-Watershed programmes must be appropriate for family viewing if shown before the Watershed.

Trails for television news should not be aired on unsuitable time, especially before during demonstrating children programmes.

14.7 Violence

Violent content should be broadcast after the Watershed.

Our audiences, particularly children, can be upset by the portrayal of both real and fictional (films, etc.) violence and so we should normally clearly label violent content. Violent scenes are particularly distressing to viewers who have experienced alike in their lives.

When real life violence, or its aftermath, is shown on television or reported on radio and online we need to strike a balance between the demands of accuracy and the dangers of desensitisation or unjustified distress. Avoid featuring of very hard details of a violent act – corpses, mutilated people, puddles of blood, etc. – for a long time or from a close distance, although neither the reality is to be escaped.

To make violence a sensation or its portrayal without any cause, simply because it has occurred is inadmissible. Before broadcasting any such material, think over well what is your aim – informing the audience or simply shocking it. Take into account that repeated demonstration of violence might spread panic among the population on the one hand, and cause apathy on the other hand.

We should take special care when demonstrating suicide scenes in dramatic works that could encourage others to copy such behaviour.

Recommendation

We should take account of the prospective effect of the violence containing material on the viewer seeing it for the first time, and of the effect that might result from successive and repeated demonstration of such a material.

We should not employ sound or visual effects to over dramatize violent behaviour.

14.8 Sex and nudity

In all GPB output explicit scenes of nudity, the portrayal of sex, or the exploration of sex issues, should be editorially justified and treated with appropriate sensitivity. Deliberation on such issues before the Watershed should be justified by the context (e.g. there is a serious educational purpose), while the explicit sex scenes must not normally be used. The broadcaster must warn the audience of programmes of such content in advance.

The explicit portrayal of sex between children and adults should not be depicted on any of our services.

14.9 Offensive language

Civility and respect for audiences oblige journalists not use carelessly such words and phrases that might offend the audience. Such language may contain swearwords, terms of racist abuse, terms of sexual and sexual abuse, pejorative terms relating to illness or disabilities, etc.

Judgments about use of offensive language are different because they depend on tone and context. Different words cause different degrees of offence in different parts of the world. So a person's age, sex, education, employment, belief, nationality, etc., all impact on whether or not they might be offended.

Sometimes language of one group (e.g. youngsters) is not to other group's (e.g. elderly people) liking. We must not include such language in programmes unless it is justified by the context, for example by the programme or report nature feature film or song text. A swearword put in the appropriate context may not cause irritation, however the audience still needs to be warned in advance.

We must not include offensive language before the watershed or on radio when children are particularly likely to be in our audience.

We must make careful judgements about the use of the most offensive language post-watershed and ensure it is clearly signposted.

14.10 Alcohol, smoking and drug abuse

We must balance the need to reflect the range of public attitudes and behaviour realistically, with the danger of encouraging potentially damaging or illegal behaviour, particularly among children.

The use of illegal drugs, the abuse of drugs, smoking and the misuse of alcohol should not be featured in programmes made primarily for children. We should demonstrate such material in pre-watershed programmes. We should also deal accurately with all aspects of illegal drug use, smoking and misuse of alcohol including their impact on human health and status. Avoid revealing too much detail of drug abuse and graphic close ups.

We should ensure that contributors to programmes, including studio debates or talk shows, do not smoke. They can be reminded of this before recording or live transmission begins.

14.11 Suicide, attempted suicide

Suicide and attempted suicide should be portrayed with great sensitivity. Care must be taken to avoid describing or showing methods in any great detail unless there is any serious cause. We should be alert to the dangers of making such behaviour attractive to the vulnerable. Both the on air and online factual reporting and fictional portrayal of suicide and attempted suicide may encourage others (e.g. people of unstable psyche, children, etc.).

14.12 Hypnotism

Although we have no evidence of harm or potential harm regarding the use of hypnosis on television or radio, we should still take steps to minimise any risk of inducing hypnosis and/or adverse reactions in susceptible viewers or listeners. In particular, a hypnotist must not broadcast his/her full verbal routine or be shown performing straight to camera. Hypnotism acts in entertainment programmes, particularly those designed to ridicule someone, should be treated with care.

14.13 Exorcism, occult and the paranormal

Judgments on any aspect of exorcism, the occult, the paranormal, divination or any related practices should not normally contain advice about health, finance, employment or relationships which could encourage people to make life changing decisions.

Demonstrations of such practices in factual programmes must be treated with due objectivity and in entertainment programmes they must be clearly labelled.

14.14 Acquired programmes

Acquired programmes must comply with the requirements established by law and this Code. We should check them prior to broadcast to ensure the content is

suitable for the proposed slot. A film classification is a guide for scheduling films for broadcasting to our audiences.

15. REPORTING DIVERSITY

15.1 Ethnic and religious minorities

GPB must reflect in its programmes representatives of all minorities and social groups living in Georgia and their real life.

The GPB aims at comprehensive and fair covering of all peoples living in Georgia and their cultures, pay respect for the right of ethnic and religious minorities and contribute to their development.

When preparing reports and programmes on ethnic and religious minorities, we should:

- treat minorities without discrimination of any kind as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, cultural or social origin, family, property, birth or other status, residence, state of health, age, as well as any other sign;
- not use such words, statements or pictures that might lead to discrimination of an individual or a part of community by any of the signs listed above;
- name ethnic and religion background of a suspect or accused individual only when its of essential significance for the plot;
- not describe such physical data which might fully erroneously link criminal behaviour to ethnic origin;
- not draw ungrounded parallels between minorities and social problems;
- differentiate activities of an individual representative of minority from those of the minority; not identify an individual with a minority as a whole;
- facilitate societal integration of minorities.

We should bear in mind that by reflecting in programmes of viewpoints and opinions of minority representatives we facilitate their integration into society and the raising of a level of tolerance in the community.

When preparing a programme on minorities, we should:

- take interviews from minority representatives and report their opinions. Otherwise they will be "objects" rather than "subjects" of the plot. Criticism of any one group in the plot is inadmissible unless members of the groups are provided with an opportunity to state own viewpoints and respond to questions asked;

- ensure invitation to a programme of a minority representative with an appropriate qualification, together with other guests;
- respond to negative statements with regard to minorities even when their authors are representatives of the administrative, political or cultural elite;
- report opinions of minority representatives not only in connection with matters related to minorities, but also in case of covering other subjects.

15.2 Negative coverage of minorities

We should not cover wrongdoings or violence committed by minority representatives in a manner that is known under the name of “media panic”. Naturally, we should not avoid negative aspects of ethnic or religious minorities, but we should not, at the same time, make them a “permanent repertory”.

We should avoid too frequent presentation of a religious or ethnic group in criminal chronicles, for this will be conducive to the establishment of a negative stereotype.

15.3 Coverage of ethnic/religious confrontation

We should cover matters related to ethnic/religious minorities objectively, comprehensively and in a respective historical context. A material prepared on such a matter should contain the background of confrontation, its causes, all parties to the conflict and neutral opinion so that to enable the audience to make out the fact of the matter.

15.4 Religious programmes

The Broadcaster should respect the fundamental human right to practice any religion or faith, propagate it and follow devotions.

When preparing programmes or plots on religious subjects, we should be know what can offend audiences. The programme authors and presenters, as well as journalists, should take account of opinion and peculiar features of religious groups existing in Georgia, What is acceptable for representatives of one religion or faith might be unacceptable for others.

Where a religion or religious denomination is the central subject of a religious programme, then the identity of religion and/or denomination must be clear to the audience. Contributors should not be allowed to undermine or denigrate the religious beliefs of others. We should not present views of a representative of a specific religion or denomination as views of all the followers of this religion; neither shall we allow any religious group to speak on behalf of all believers.

Religious programmes must not seek to promote religious views or beliefs by stealth. They must not improperly exploit any susceptibilities of the audience.

We should pay special attention to information that contains claims that a living person (or group) has special powers or abilities. such programmes must treat

such claims with due objectivity and must not broadcast such claims when significant numbers of children may be expected to be watching or listening.

Special care should be given when such information or claims are broadcast in a religious programme.

We should avoid reporting a material that might offend any religion or religious denomination.

When replicating horoscopes on air (or generally in information), we should indicate the country where the horoscope is popular. When replicating astrological forecasts, we should name its author (or more or less qualified source) and avoid mentioning non-academic degrees, where available, of the author (source). At least, indicate that such degrees are non-academic.

We will ensure that the beliefs and practices of the great world faiths are described in programmes. Identification of peoples and states on the basis of religion is inadmissible, especially when it is not related to the subject matter of a programme.

15.5 Attitude to intolerance

When a programme guest or contributor unreasonably claims ethnic origin or religious belief as a causative factor of any event, we should necessarily inform the audience about the actual causes of the event and underline that the ethnic origin and religion have no relation whatsoever to the matter in question.

We should not disregard racist or xenophobic statements of a programme guest/contributor. WE should criticize such statements. Our audience need to be confident that the Broadcaster does not share racist and xenophobic statements.

15.6 Terminology

We should avoid such terminology that may be offensive for representatives of a specific ethnic or religious minority.

We should react to words which belittle and offend an individual because of its ethnic origin and religious belief. We should make it clear to contributors who directly use such words on air that the public broadcaster disagrees with the statements made by them and the way of their expression.

Since other believers of various faiths living in Georgia also use the word "Church", we should not identify it with the Orthodox Church only. WE should mention in a programme which Church is being discussed: Orthodox, Catholic or other. If a programme deals with a single faith (e.g. Orthodox), which is quite obvious to the audience, the word "Church" may be used as a synonym of Orthodoxy without further concretization.

We should not liberally use terms such as, for example, "fundamentalist", "Islamite". What is appropriate for describing one group might prove quite inappropriate for the other.

We should not name an individual's ethnic origin with a word having a negative colouring. For example, we should not say "kike" instead of "Jew", "Tatar" instead of "Azeri", etc.

15.7 Women

Notwithstanding recent dramatic changes in the attitude towards women and the fact that the present-day Georgian women lead rather an active life, there have been still preserved stereotypes that are offensive for many women. When speaking about women, we should avoid the use of sexist expressions, the making sexist assessments or comparisons.

Sexism means a discriminatory opinion, statement, behaviour, and attitude of one sex to the other.

For example, such characterization of a woman as: "she is not inferior to man", "she has a man's mind", etc. some women might take as an offence.

15.8 Vulnerable people

We should be especially sensitive in relations with vulnerable people in order to avoid offending their dignity. We should not behave with conscious superiority or, reveal pity; we should deal with them as with full-value members of society. Vulnerable people must be given an opportunity to participate in programmes based on real facts, entertainment or other programmes.

We should provide audiences with accurate and objective information about problems and difficulties faced by vulnerable people. To ensure this, we should listen to vulnerable people, understand their problems, and consult social workers, health care experts and other competent people. Only with such an approach it we will be able to prepare an objective material that would raise compassion in the audience.

Ordinary vulnerable people do not try to conceal their defects and speak about them openly and in detail. Prior to interviewing, we should inform them about a matter to be discussed. We should pay special attention to terms. We should not use outdated and frequently offensive terminology. Instead, we should employ modern terms recognized by experts.

Such terms as "invalid" and "disabled" are currently perceived as abusive words. The words "incapable" some also might treat as such. Therefore, better use the currently popular term "handicapped people". At present social, health care and educational sphere experts call them as "people of special needs". This term can also be used.

The words, such as "feeble-minded", "defective", "moron", are MOST abusive. Better employ "handicapped", "mentally disordered" - instead of "madman", or other more neutral word; say "person with diminished hearing" instead of "deaf", etc.

15.9 Sexual minorities

Homosexuals frequently become victims of offensive stereotypes. Homosexuals and bisexuals constitute a minority and the programme authors should remember that they too, like others, represent a part of society.

We should mention a homosexual's sexual orientation in a programme only if it is directly associated with its subject matter. Otherwise we shall violate the right of personal inviolability and contribute to the stereotype's consolidation.

We should be especially careful in selecting words and expressions. We should say a homosexual or bisexual rather than use such swearwords as "bugger", "sodomite" or "gay". We should neither allow the programme guests to resort to such language.

15.10 Coverage of the old

We should not present the old as lonely, helpless and needy people who only frequent charity canteens. Of course, it is one aspect part of reality, whereas the other aspect is that many elderly people, who have already passed active life, continue to be energetic and active.

The age is not the only factor to be used as a basis in discussing human possibilities, interests and the mental; of physical condition. The age should be referred to only in the appropriate circumstances.

16. MINORS AND CHILDREN

16.1 Protecting minors from harm and abuse

The GPB should ensure the protection of minors from harm and abuse both when preparing programmes as well as during their broadcast.

Minors represent a rather large portion of our audience. This means their interests and safety must take priority over any editorial requirements, regardless of the fact is a programme designated for adults or for children.

The material that might harm the physical and emotional welfare of minors, and in particular children under fifteen, should not be broadcast before the watershed.

We should appropriately schedule the airtime to protect children from programmes unsuitable for them. The airtime should be scheduled with account of such factors as: the programme content, the time of its starting and ending, the prospective expectation of the audience for a programme aired on a specific day and time, the expected number of children in the audience and their presumable age.

We should strictly comply with the television watershed. Material that is unsuitable for children should be broadcast after the watershed. Radio

broadcasters must have particular regard to times when children are particularly likely to be listening.

We must ensure that children and young people are not caused unnecessary anxiety or distress by their involvement in programmes or by their broadcast.

16.2 Consent for featuring children

Children may be involved in programmes differently; they may be contributors, programme participants, main characters, etc. We should normally seek the consent of parents or legal guardians before interviewing children, or otherwise involving them in our output. The younger and more vulnerable the child, and the more sensitive the subject matter, the more likely it is that consent is essential. Any financial inducement to the child or parent/guardian to secure consent is inadmissible. A child's consent is also necessary. In deciding whether a child can give consent, the stage of development and degree of understanding as well as their age should be taken into account. We should normally obtain the consent of the parents/guardians to the child's participation or contribution. An exception may be when recording vox pops with children on non-controversial subjects such as favourite singers or sportsmen.

Upon obtaining a child's consent for participating in a programme, we should explain the child in a language understandable to them the nature and content of the programme and respect any refusal to take part. We should ensure that any reasonably foreseeable consequences of the child's participation are made clear to the parent/guardian for making a right decision. Any decision to proceed without parental consent is normally only justified on the basis of a clear public interest.

We should obtain permission from the school director for filming or interviewing on school premises or during school hours.

16.3 Children' participation in programmes

Children are often eager to be interviewed and participate in programmes but they lack the judgement necessary to assess the longer-term impact it may have on their lives. We must consider carefully the impact and possible consequences of any material which involves a child, both during the production process and once the material has been broadcast. This applies whether or not we have secured parental consent.

Interviews with children require special care. We should ensure children and young people are given a voice but we must also be alert to occasions when children exaggerate, try to please or report gossip or hearsay as fact. In particular, children should not be asked for views on matters likely to be beyond their capacity to answer properly.

We should consider consulting experts about the best way of approaching interviews and minimising distress, when featuring anti-social, harmful or illegal activity amongst children, such as illegal drug use, abuse, eating disorders, and bullying.

A specialist's consultation will also be needed when the programme deals with children involved in anti-social or illegal activity (for example, drug abuse or prostitution). If the broadcast is with the participation of children, an expert should also be invited. We should so feature the activity as to avoid encouraging other children to imitate it.

16.4 Anonymity

The welfare of children takes priority over and public interest and the protection of anonymity of a child, whatever strong is the public interest, is most important. Parental consent to identification of a child is not a sufficient ground for disclosure of the child's identity. Under a big stress parents frequently fail to understand that the child might be faced with serious problems in the future. Therefore, we should be particularly careful when identifying of a child or when taking a decision on his/her evidence.

We should not normally identify children when featuring material on anti-social or criminal behaviour of children, which purpose is to demonstrate such behaviour rather than specific children.

The decision to involve, feature or identify children whose parents are engaged in anti-social or criminal activity should only be made if the welfare of the child will not be harmed.

We should not identify a child who participates in criminal proceedings as a suspect, accused or witness. Any information which might lead to the identification of a minor witness, defendant or other party in criminal proceedings should not be aired. The restrictions include: (i) the naming of a school and its number, address; (ii) the showing pictures of a person on air or on website. The same principles apply to legal proceedings where a child's adoption, appointment of a guardian, and other related matters are decided.

We should be particularly careful not to provide clues which may lead to the identification of those who are not yet adult and who are, or might be, involved as a victim, witness, defendant or other perpetrator in the case of sexual offences featured in legal proceedings. Such clues or information may be the showing of the victim's place of residence, parents or neighbours, educational establishment, describing an offence as "incest", etc.

16.5 Children and dangerous imitation

Children can be influenced by what they see, hear and read. We must ensure that behaviour likely to be easily imitable by children in a manner that is dangerous, must not be broadcast before the Watershed or when children are particularly likely to be in our audience for radio, or online when content is likely to appeal to a high proportion of children.

The use of drugs, the abuse of drugs, smoking, and the misuse of alcohol must not be featured in programmes made primarily for children.

Violence, its after-effects and descriptions of violence, whether verbal or physical, must be appropriately limited in programmes broadcast before the watershed or when children are particularly likely to be listening.

Very careful judgements are required about material which might lead to dangerous imitation, including the use of domestic objects in violent acts (e.g. knives, hammers, bottles, etc.). When hazardous activities such as rock climbing, snowboarding or white water rafting are portrayed before the Watershed, we must give warnings about the dangers of imitation without expert supervision.

Programmes for children must not contain swearwords. Offensive language must not be broadcast before the watershed or when children are particularly likely to be listening, unless it is strongly justified.

Programmes broadcast pre-watershed, or when children are particularly likely to be in our audience should not portray inappropriate sexual behaviour or contain explicit sexual discussion or portrayal of explicit sex between children and adults. Nudity before the watershed must be justified by the context.

Talks on exorcism, occult practices and the paranormal in programmes broadcast before the watershed is inadmissible. Such events should not also be demonstrated in pre-watershed entertainment programmes. (This rule does not apply to drama, film or comedy).

16.6 Children and the Internet

We should ensure that websites which are likely to appeal to a high proportion of children carry appropriate content. In particular:

- Any material on the GPB home page must be suitable for a general audience, including children. The first click from the GPB home page should not normally lead straight to a page which includes material unsuitable for children.
- We should not link from a site whose associated radio or television programme is designed to attract a child audience to one whose radio or television programme contains material which is clearly unsuitable for children.
- Any live streaming of TV pictures on the web which is trailed on the home page should normally be suitable for a family audience.

17. PUBLIC OPINION POLLS, INTERACTIVITY

17.1 Reporting opinion polls

We should provide audiences with sufficient information about public opinion polls so that they themselves could assess the significance and value of the results. Public opinion polls are commissioned and run by various

interested groups and, frequently, such polls are biased. Therefore, we should not report and treat them as a sociological survey conducted according to a science-based methodology.

The following rules for reporting the findings of opinion polls must be applied:

- We do not lead a news bulletin or programme simply with the results of an opinion poll;
- We do not headline the results of a poll unless it has prompted a story which itself deserves a headline;
- We pay more attention to the poll results rather than their interpretation;
- We do not rely only on the analysis of the poll results made by the organizations which commissioned it;
- We treat with scepticism the reporting of such results which reflect dramatic changes in the public opinion and should explain the result sharply differentiating from general trends.
- We do not use language which gives greater credibility to the poll than they deserve. We should say polls “suggest”, but never “prove” or even “show”.

When reporting public opinion poll results, we should indicate:

- the organizations which run a poll;
- the poll commissioner and funder;
- the exact wording of questions;
- the method of selection;
- the number of polled;
- the margin of error;
- the date of polling.

17.2 Interactive poll

Interactive polls, including by phone calls, short text messages, email, internet, or any other such poll, where the audience participates at own will, do not reflect a wide public opinion, because they are not representative. **Upon announcement of the findings of an interactive poll run in the format of a programme, we should mention that they reflect only views of the people who wished to express own position at the given time. The results of such polls should be assigned significance of the results of a specially held public opinion survey.**

Interactive poll results should be announced only in a programme within the scope of which the given poll was run. When we offer interactivity to our audiences we should ensure that it:

- adds public value and enhances our output in a way which fits our public service remit;
- matches the subject matter of the programme and has a clear editorial purpose;
- matches the expectations of the likely audience.

17.3 Phone-in programmes

Phone-in programmes may use comments sent via text, email as well as talking to callers. The live nature of phone-ins means we should be alert to the possibility of contributors breaking the law or causing widespread offence.

17.4 Internet forum

Internet forums make it possible for society to take part in discussions of topical issues, to express views and to hold a dialogue.

Through preliminary or further moderation of a forum, we should avoid such statements that might contain slanders, insults, incite enmity, preach hatred, condone wrongdoing, violate human rights, etc.

A forum should be a place for live debates. Through preliminary or further moderation, we should promote pluralism and diversity and create an environment favouring discussion. The forum holding rules should be made public in advance.

18. REPORTING STATISTICS AND RISKS

We should report statistics and risks in context, taking care not to worry the audience unduly, especially about health or crime.

It may also be appropriate to report the margin of error and the source of figures to enable people to judge their significance. This may involve giving trends, taking care to avoid giving figures more weight than can stand scrutiny. If reporting a change, consideration should be given to making the baseline figure clear.

19. COMPETITIONS AND PRIZES

Competitions of viewers and listeners should be conducted fairly, openly and objectively.

We should ensure there is a clear editorial purpose for our competitions whether on television, radio, mobile devices or online. We should offer a genuine test of skill, knowledge or judgement appropriate to the audience. We should publish rules in advance to make sure competitions are run properly, fairly and openly.

We should normally pay for the prizes we offer in our competitions and aim to offer original, rather than expensive prizes. We should not normally refer to brand names or give details about the manufacturer or supplier of a prize.

We should normally only accept modest donated prizes such as theatre tickets, football tickets, books, CDs or DVDs, etc. We may accept prizes of visits to special events, including the hospitality offered at the event. Donations of substantial prizes are permissible only in exceptional circumstances and must not bring the GPB's editorial integrity into question. We must never give an assurance that there will be an on air or online credit or any publicity in exchange for the donation of a competition prize.

Cash prizes should never be offered for any children's competition. Prizes in children's competitions should be appropriate to the age of the target audience.

20. INTERFERENCE

20.1 Requests to withhold material

Once material is recorded in accordance with journalistic policies, it may be used for broadcast provided no considerations intervene outweighing the program need, and no other agreement was made at the time of recording.

Sometimes a contributor having consented to an interview is against its broadcasting on air. Good judgment must be exercised to balance the reasons for a request to withhold material against program requirements. There may be strong reasons for the request, which may outweigh the need to include the material in a program. Such reasons could include compassionate grounds or a lapse of time during which the context may have changed. In such cases, a decision should be made in consultation with a respective department manager.

20.2 Veto of programme material

Participants in programs will not be granted the right to veto any portion of a program. The responsibility for program material cannot be transferred from the GPB, which is solely responsible for what it broadcasts, and for ensuring programs follow its journalistic policies. **Journalists must not expose themselves to pressures from one or more participants.**

20.3 Censorship

There may be cases where the journalist in pursuing, preparing or filing a story has been hampered in any of a number of ways. For example, the journalist is being subjected to coercive or threatening behaviour of any kind; being required to comply with definite conditions; being denied access to individuals willing to be contacted, or to a particular area. Where such restrictions are deemed to have

had any serious effect they should be brought to the attention of the audience at the time of broadcast.

21. ADVERTISING AND SPONSORSHIP

21.1 Ethical criteria of advertising

Advertising broadcast by the GPB should comply with legislation in force and should not interfere with the principles of ethics. Advertising must be clearly separated from programmes.

We should not broadcast commercial advertising which:

- runs counter to the Law of Georgia on Advertising;
- by its content or visually renders a harmful effect upon development of a child;
- contains a message being offensive for a legal or physical person or the Broadcaster;
- by its content (text, music, pictures) debases human dignity;
- calls or incites for such action which endangers public health and safety;
- promotes environmentally harmful behaviour;
- runs counter to recognized societal standards and cultural values;
- insults or humbles religious or political views of an individual or a social group;
- propagates intolerance ethnic, religious or other features;
- contains violence or pornography;
- contains slanders or offences;
- advocates illegal products or services;
- is not in Georgian (is not translated into Georgian or is not accompanied with Georgian subtitles);
- advertises a direct broadcasting competitor of the GPB;
- is supplied by a customer being indebted to the Broadcaster or under a judicial contest;
- fails to comply with technical standards of the Broadcaster.

21.2 Advertising and promotion

The GPB's programmes reflect the real life and, correspondingly, its materials may, from time to time, be concerned with commercial products, organizations, and various services. Such programmes should not create an impression that the GPB aims to promote any product, service or company. **The GPB's programmes must not contain any open or covert elements of commercial advertising of a product, service, manufacture or company, which could bring the Broadcaster's impartiality into question.**

We should not mention in information programmes a specific company, product or service unless editorially justified. We should not broadcast the same commercial spot in short time intervals in several programmes. Reporters, journalists and other staff must not have a material incentive in a company on whose plot they are working.

When preparing commercial plots of a specific company, follow the following rules:

- We should not refer to and/or demonstrate company names, brand names and logos in a programme where there is no editorial justification.
- We should not freeze frame on company names, brand names or logos and do not refer to it frequently unless the programme content so requires.
- We should not refer to products in programmes for children.
- We should use advertising company material only if there is an editorial justification.

21.3 Promotional reference to products or services

Programmes designed for consumers are frequently dedicated to promotional reference to products or services. When reporting a specific product or service, we should not give undue prominence to one supplier or manufacturer. This might be treated as promotion. We should refer to other suppliers or manufacturers, their products and services (for example, if a programme deals with holidays and travel, refer to various travel agencies). At the same time, we should not advise the audience on where and how to purchase a specific product. We should refer to product storage rules only in the editorially justified cases. Promotional reference should bring the GPB's impartiality into question.

21.4 Product placement

The inclusion of, or a reference to, a product or service within a programme in return for payment or other valuable consideration is prohibited. Such activity is called "product placement".

Product placement on the air of the GPB is prohibited. The following are not considered to be product placement:

- References to products or services acquired at no, or less than full, cost, where their inclusion within the programme is justified editorially.
- On television, a brief, basic text acknowledgement of the provider of these products or services may be included within the end credits of the programme.
- For television, arrangements covering the inclusion of products or services in a programme acquired from outside Georgia and films.

21.5 Journalists and reporters working on air

Reporters and journalists involved in news, socio-political programmes and election debates are prohibited from taking part in any type of advertising.

Exceptions are possible in the case of charity appeals if the organization concerned can produce satisfactory evidence of charitable status and based on an editorial decision. This restriction does not apply to the participation in commercials serving the promotion of the Broadcaster proper.

21.6 Programme sponsorship

Sponsoring of the GPB programmes is allowed by law. **A sponsor must not influence the content and/or scheduling of a programme in such a way as to impair the responsibility and editorial independence of the Broadcaster.**

Inadmissible is the sponsorship of programmes by funds provided by an administrative agency or its member/official, political party or its leader, a coalition, bloc of political parties, or election subject, as well as from a physical or legal person whose principal activity is manufacture of such products and rendering of such services, the advertising of which is prohibited under the law of Georgia on Advertising.

In addition to the above, sponsorship should not be sought from such organizations whose interests or activities might bring into question the GPB's objectivity. Appropriate sponsors may be organizations founded on a voluntary basis, charity foundations or volunteers, international organizations. In any case, care must be taken, so that the GPB might preserve the principles of impartiality and independence. Such programmes should not promote and give undue prominence to the sponsor.

The following programmes may not be sponsored:

- a) News and current affairs programmes (except sports news and weather forecasts, if they are broadcast as individual programmes);
- b) Reports on social and political matters;
- c) Programmes dealing with consumer rights, programmes directly associated with elections or election campaigns.

Based on the principle of transparency, we should always refer to the programme's source of financing. In a partially or fully sponsored programme refer to the sponsor in the start and/or end of the programme. Such reference must remain brief and secondary, without any elements of promotion and advertising.

22. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

22.1 Personal activity and conflict of interest

The GPB's journalists, presenters reporters, producers, and other responsible persons must not by their public, political or other non-broadcasting activity bring into question the principles of impartiality and fairness being advocated by the Broadcaster.

Any employee of the GPB is fully entitled to engage in any activity which, however, should not give rise to a conflict of interests. Employees must not use the Broadcaster's name to further their personal interests and personal opinions as those of the Broadcaster.

22.2 Disclosure of a conflict of interest

If an employee, acting reasonably and in good faith, concludes at any time that there is a conflict of interest or that there are reasonable grounds for a perception of conflict of interest, then the employee has a duty to disclose the matter to his or her immediate supervisor. The Broadcaster and the employee should resort to any appropriate measure to remove the conflict. Based on the circumstances, the employee might have to refuse reporting certain issues or perform other service.

22.3 Association in political or professional organizations

Any GPB employee is eligible to membership of political, trade unionist or any other professional organizations. **The political or other activity of an employee should not, however, interfere with objective performance of official duties and obligations thereby and/or challenge the Broadcaster's impartiality.**

If a GPB employee is actively involved in politics, there might arise a risk that the employee's political views would be identified with those of the Broadcaster. A GPB employee, who is involved in political activity, should not break the Broadcaster neutrality:

- by openly sympathizing with specific political candidates or political parties;
- by participating in fundraising campaign for a political party or involving in other political actions or activity in support of a specific party.

If a GPB employee intends to stand for elections in a public agency as prescribed by Georgian law, he/she must, timely and prior to nominating his/her candidacy, notify the Broadcaster thereof. To participate in elections, the employee will be given a leave without pay. The employee concerned should not appear during the election period in the GPB programmes, other than in programmes dealing with election matters (e.g. debates, political advertising, etc.). During this period, the employee should not perform as a producer, journalist or presenter.

The employee concerned must leave the Broadcaster on the same day when pronounced winner in elections. If the employee is defeated in elections and continues his/her professional activity, he/she may be transferred to another position, if the company management consider that the employee's return to the previous position might challenge the Broadcaster's impartiality.

22.4 Family and conflict of interest

Family members and close relatives of a GPB employee are fully entitled to lead an active personal and professional activity. Family members are not required to meet the same standards as a representative of GPB should.

Legitimate (public, political, professional or financial) activities of a GPB employee's family member might lead to a conflict of interest for the former. We should inform the Broadcaster's management about any type of family business, political or public activity which may challenge our and the Broadcaster's neutrality and objectivity. **To avoid and remove a conflict of interest, the employee concerned should not cover in programmes the activity of the family members and close relatives.**

22.5 Use of position

Employees may not use the Broadcaster's property (premises, equipment, supplies) or their positions at GRP for furthering personal interests.

Employees may not use their positions at GPB for obtaining non-public information. Employees may not use paper bearing the Company logo for writing personal complaints. Confidential information and material entrusted to and/or developed by employees in the course of GPB employment must not be used for employees' personal advantage either during or after their employment with the Company.

22.6 Appearance and participation in competing media

Employees may not work, on a paid or unpaid basis, for organizations considered by the Broadcaster to be in competition, or on outside projects that are known at the time of participation to be intended for use by competing organizations. In exceptional circumstances, management may authorize such outside work if there is a recognizable benefit to the Broadcaster.

Subject to a preliminary approval by the Broadcaster, its employee may take part on television and radio broadcasts of a competing broadcaster:

- in programmes related to factual information;
- in a programme made based on own publication or research;
- in a documentary or educational programme;
- in an entertainment programme.

Employees may not work as freelance/independent reporters in other companies without prior approval by the Broadcaster. Approval for freelance journalism will be given only if the Broadcaster is not interested in a specific event and it is being covered by a media which is not an immediate competitor of the Broadcaster. A journalist should not accept a freelance/independent offer or royalty which may be treated as hidden bribing.

22.7 Outside activities

Outside employment and activities must not directly restrict employees' availability to, or indirectly impair their efficiency with, the Broadcaster.

In any outside employment and activities, employees may not act as representatives of or spokespersons for the Broadcaster unless they have obtained prior approval from their supervisor.

Employees may not engage, for remuneration or without it, in activities of public relation services.

Employees should immediately inform their supervisor about their intention:

- to give evidence in court;
- to lead a public forum or seminar arranged by a professional or commercial organization;
- to engage in such activity which will be presumably incompatible their professional duties;
- to lead public political forums or appear on a political platform.

Employees may not deliver a speech, report or lecture before a group if this might challenge their impartiality. The concerned employee might find him/herself in a situation when the delivery made thereby might be perceived as a support of the goals of any organization or group.

An exception from the above rules is possible unless the Broadcaster's impartiality is challenged.

22.8 Gifts and other benefits

A journalist must not accept money or other material benefit from contributors for broadcasting on air material or information reporting their activities.

Journalist may not accept gifts or other benefits (for example, free vouchers, air tickets or costly things) from a company, organization or individual in exchange for altering material concerning them which might result in infringement of the principles of accuracy, objectivity and fairness.

Except gifts or benefits of modest value being distributed as advertising of goodwill gestures or modest hospitality, GPB employees must not accept any such offer. In exceptional circumstances, only for the purpose of discharging official duties, journalists may accept certain benefits or privileges, such, for example, as discounted air tickets, free transportation, hotel accommodation, etc. Such offers should not influence objective coverage of the matter.

Offers of questionable acceptability should be refused or referred for guidance to the employee's supervisor.

23. CONSIDERING COMPLAINTS

The Broadcaster should openly and objectively cover issues related to the company and its staff.

Our commitment to our audience is to ensure that complaints are dealt with quickly, courteously and with respect.

If a claim in a complaint is justified, we should immediately correct the neglected errors.

24. CONSULTATION/ADVICE

Journalists, producers, television and radio programme makers should inform managers of respective services about their work and seek advice in connection with such controversial subjects that might evoke a serious response of audiences.

When reporting acute questions, employees must consult both their immediate supervisors as well as the Monitoring Group and, where necessary, the Legal Department, so that professional standards and ethical principles advocated by the Broadcaster are not impaired. Decisions taken on the basis of such consultation will serve as a guarantee for gaining the audience's trust.