



Public Service Statement

TG4

December 2011

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Section 1: TG4's Statutory Mandate

This Statement presents TG4's remit as a national public service broadcaster and the standards or principles through which it fulfils this, including accountability to its key stakeholders and audiences, and overall, how it fulfils the obligations of its public service objects.

The basis for this is reflected in TG4's statutory mandate which is set-down in broadcast legislation, most recently in the Broadcasting Act 2009. Under this legislation, TG4 is required to provide a national television broadcasting service as a free-to-air public service which is made available to the whole community on the island of Ireland. This is for the purposes of promotion and development of the Irish language and the preservation of Irish culture.

TG4 is specifically mandated to provide a comprehensive range of programmes:

- primarily in the Irish language;
- that reflect the cultural diversity of the whole island of Ireland;
- that entertain, inform and educate;
- that provide coverage of sporting, religious and cultural activities;
- of news and current affairs, primarily in the Irish language; and,
- that provide coverage of proceedings in the Houses of the Oireachtas and the European Parliament.

In fulfilling this mandate, TG4 is required to cater for those of all age groups in the community whose preferred spoken language is Irish or who otherwise have an interest in Irish. Not only does TG4 cater for those with an interest in the Irish language, but also for all those in the community who have an interest in Irish culture and in particular, people who may enjoy sport and music.

In support of this, TG4 can also establish and maintain a website and teletext services and other ancillary non-broadcast services as appropriate, which support its main broadcast activities.

TG4 is also mandated to facilitate or assist contemporary cultural expression and encourage or promote innovation and experimentation in broadcasting.

Under national legislation, TG4 is permitted to originate programmes and procure programmes from any source. It does not have any statutory obligations regarding in-house versus independent production commitments. However, as a publisher / broadcaster, TG4 commissions a significant number of original Irish language programmes and commits on an annual basis to spending all of its Exchequer current funding, apart from operational costs, on Irish language content.

TG4's use of its public funding is limited to the achievement of its public service objects and duties. The use of public funding is precluded for any public service broadcasting services which are of special interest to only certain members of the community and which are made available on a subscription or pay-per-view basis. These must be operated on a commercial basis only.

TG4's statutory mandate also sets down a range of supervisory mechanisms through which TG4 is governed. These are described in detail in Section 4 of this Statement.

Section 2: Provision of Services – TG4’s Principles

In providing its services, TG4’s principles are as follows:

- Deliver programming primarily in the Irish language and provide a daily link for the Irish language to every household in the island of Ireland.
- Ensure that our programming reflects the varied elements which make up the culture of the people of the island of Ireland and have special regard for the elements which distinguish that culture and in particular, for the Gaeltachtaí.
- Ensure that our services reflect the requirements of the Gaeltacht communities and households whose daily language is Irish.
- Ensure that our programming reflects the democratic and social values of Irish society.
- Feature programming across all genres that informs, entertains and educates audiences of all age groups within Irish society.
- Always strive to deliver and maintain the highest standards of editorial integrity and to deliver a diverse range of high quality programming.
- Show no editorial or programming bias in terms of gender, age, disability, race, sexual orientation, religion or membership of a minority community.
- Show no editorial bias in news and current affairs reporting being fair, impartial and objective.
- Ensure that our broadcasts do not cause harm or offence, do not incite crime or undermine the authority of the State.
- Respect children in our programming and advertising broadcasts.
- Take into account, the needs of those with physical, sensory or intellectual disability.
- Respect individuals and ensure that the privacy of any individual is not unreasonably encroached upon.
- Play a leading role in the development of Irish language television by encouraging high standards of programme quality in addition to supporting the talents and creative resources of the independent production sector in Ireland.
- Be mindful of the need for understanding and peace within the whole island of Ireland.
- Uphold the democratic values enshrined in the Constitution, especially those relating to rightful liberty of expression.
- Have regard to the need for the formation of public awareness and understanding of the values and traditions of countries other than the State, including in particular, those of other EU Member States.

- Deliver audiences and stakeholders real value-for-money by successfully promoting the Irish language and culture through high quality broadcast and content services and by operating as efficiently as possible.

In fulfilment of these principles, TG4 will:

- Deliver content mainly in the Irish language and strive to broadcast at least six hours per day of *original / new* Irish language content.
- Deliver a high quality broadcast and content service that promotes and celebrates the Irish language in an accessible and engaging manner.
- Encourage a broad audience viewership through delivery of innovative and attractive content.
- Ensure our outputs reflect the values of innovation and quality, and the celebration of the Irish identity and creativity as encapsulated in our motto “*súil eile*”.
- Provide independent and in-depth coverage and analysis of, and an alternative viewpoint on, news and current affairs in Ireland – throughout the country – in addition to the rest of the world.
- Deliver content across a wide range of genre including drama, documentary, entertainment, lifestyle, travel, music, sport, education, the arts, news and current affairs and the Houses of the Oireachtas.
- Feature Irish and international programmes that provide for the informational, entertainment and educational needs of children and young people including broadcasting an average of 200 *original* hours of children’s television programmes per year which feature drama, entertainment and studio-based programming and interactivity.
- Feature programming on Irish traditional music, striving to deliver a number of series on an annual basis.
- Feature programming of an educational nature that supports learning and the personal development of viewers, including programming that contributes towards science and technology education, striving to deliver at least one series per annum on average.
- Feature programmes about Ireland’s history, culture and current issues.
- Deliver high-quality documentary and / or “human interest” programming focusing on other cultures, people and country / human interest issues, thereby fostering an understanding of these amongst Irish audiences.
- Reflect the role that sporting (particularly Irish sports) and other leisure interests such as music and the arts, play in Irish life and culture.
- Commission from the Irish independent production sector, a minimum of 500 hours of new / original Irish language content every year, subject to appropriate funding being available.
- Invest 70% of public funding in Irish language content annually.
- Deliver Irish language content which is supported by content in English and other languages.

- Take measures to increase the accessibility of programming to audiences with physical, sensory or intellectual disability, particularly those who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Commit to providing sub-titling on TG4 programmes in accordance with Broadcasting Authority of Ireland guidelines.
- Continue to make the TG4 broadcast signal available on an all-island basis
- Continue to provide services to the Irish community and learners of Irish and those worldwide who have an interest in Ireland or the Irish language and culture through developing the TG4 website and broadband webcast services to the highest standards.
- Maintain an archive to best-in-class industry standards to support Irish culture and heritage.
- Ensure our programming is free from inappropriate political and other control or influence.
- Observe broadcasting codes that address advertising and in particular, the level and nature of advertising to which children are exposed.

Section 3: TG4's Mission, Vision & Values

TG4's vision and mission reflect the principles described in Section 2 and overall, how it will make a difference to the Irish broadcasting landscape and how it will deliver its public service objects.

"TG4's mission is to provide an attractive and innovative television and content service in Irish, that celebrates Irish creativity and identity – language, culture, music and sport, packaged and presented to be accessible and appealing in order to connect to audiences in Ireland and worldwide".

TG4's vision is

"To continue to promote successfully Irish language and culture using television and web content so as to ensure a central place in Irish people's lives, both in Ireland and abroad".

This vision and mission are encapsulated in the two word motto "*súil eile*".

TG4 will deliver its mission and ultimately achieve its vision, through implementing a number of strategic objectives which are defined on a five-year basis and reviewed annually. These are essentially commitments which TG4 sets-out in its five-year Corporate Strategic Plan and subsequently expands into an annual Statement of Commitments.

While TG4's vision and mission set-out *what* the organisation will achieve and the strategies it will use to deliver on its public service objects, TG4's values influence the *way* in which they will be achieved, the manner in which it works with its key stakeholders and overall, reflect the principles which are the founding characteristics of the organisation. TG4's core values are:

Connection:

- To provide a daily link for the Irish Language to every household in the country
- To put our audiences at the centre of everything we do.
- To offer an alternative viewpoint on national and international affairs

Quality & Value-for-money:

- To provide a high quality programme schedule
- To operate a cost effective and efficient structure.

Creativity:

- To be creative in our output and everything we do
- To continue to deliver innovative and unique programs

Proactive:

- To maintain the can do attitude cultivated and now established within our organisation and staff.

Section 4: Accountability

TG4 is accountable to a broad range of stakeholders, primary amongst which are our audiences, the Department of Communications, Energy & Natural Resources and the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland. As such, we are governed through a range of supervisory mechanisms as follows:

4.1 TG4 Board & Board Sub-Committees

TG4 is governed by a Board which, under the Broadcasting Act 2009, comprises 12 members. As set out in legislation, six members are appointed by the Government on the nomination of the Minister, four are appointed by the Government having regard to the advice of the Joint Oireachtas Committee, one is a worker director and the remaining member is the TG4 CEO / Director General.

The Board has formally adopted the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, as issued by the Department of Finance in 2001 and it is also a prescribed public body for the purpose of the Ethics in Public Office Act 1995 and Standards in Public Office Act 2001.

TG4 takes its statutory duties and obligations very seriously and the management and staff report regularly to its Board. The Board has established two committees to assist in the performance of their duties namely, the Audit Committee and the Remuneration Committee. The Audit Committee is responsible for: agreeing internal audit plans; reviewing internal audit reports on the effectiveness of systems of internal controls and monitoring progress. It also monitors these in the context of the organisation's risk management system. The Remuneration Committee is responsible for: determining the framework for remuneration of the Chief Executive; reviewing the on-going appropriateness of remuneration policy; and, approving performance related pay schemes etc.

4.2 Regular Reporting to the Minister for Communications, Energy & Natural Resources

TG4 must report to the Minister for Communications, Energy & Natural Resources ("the Minister") or a party appointed by the Minister.

As part of this, TG4 must keep detailed financial records in a manner that enables the Minister to review TG4's performance in fulfilling its statutory remit.

In addition, TG4 must provide the Minister with an annual "Statement of Commitments" which sets-out the details of the activities it will undertake in delivering on its public service remit. In this annual Statement, TG4 sets out its commitments and targets for the:

- Broadcast and delivery of Irish language content;
- Programme schedule development;
- Use of Exchequer funding;
- Audience share;
- Development of, and initiatives with, the Irish independent production sector;
- Other service developments;
- Contribution to the wider national economy; and,
- General organisation / business developments.

TG4 must also provide the Minister with a detailed annual review of its performance against the targets set-out in its Statement of Commitments, with these reports being subject to independent review if required. As a part of this, TG4 provides details of the costs and revenues associated with these commitments.

TG4 is also subject to public value and sector impact assessments by the Minister, in respect of major changes in its services which fall within the ambit of its public service remit and for which public funds are used. These are as follows:

- Changes in the number of television channels;
- Establishment of public service, free-to-air community, local or regional broadcasting services;
- Establishment of non-broadcast, non-linear services; and,
- Any significant new services not expressly stipulated by legislation.

Ministerial consent is also required in respect of: any changes in the total time fixed for broadcast of advertisements; the establishment of subsidiaries, investments and joint ventures; schemes for third party access to archives maintained by TG4; and any alterations in TG4's approved borrowing levels.

Finally, on an annual basis, TG4 publishes its Annual Report which presents an overview of our performance during the year in question including reports from the Chairman and Chief Executive, a report on Corporate Governance and a Financial Review and Financial Statements. See Section 4.7 below.

4.3 Reporting to the Broadcast Authority of Ireland (“the BAI”/ “the Authority”)

The BAI monitors and enforces TG4 compliance with broadcasting duties, codes and rules as set-out in broadcast legislation. Key broadcasting duties, codes and rules enforced are as follows:

- That TG4 does not broadcast anything which may reasonably be regarded as offending against good taste, decency or as being likely to promote or incite crime or undermine the authority of the State.
- That TG4 does not unreasonably encroach upon the privacy of any individual.
- That TG4 does not exceed its maximum amount of time for the broadcast of advertisements and sponsorship acknowledgements.
- That TG4 complies with requirements that the interests of the audience and in particular, children, are protected with respect to advertising, teleshopping, sponsorship and other forms of commercial promotion employed in any broadcasting service.
- TG4 compliance with any arrangements in respect of third party access to its archives.
- TG4 compliance with ensuring that transactions or arrangements entered into by it, as between public service objectives and the exploitation of commercial opportunities, are made at arm's length.
- That all news delivered by TG4 is reported and presented objectively and impartially.
- That TG4 treatment of current affairs is fair to all interests concerned and is delivered in an objective and impartial manner.

TG4 reports to the BAI on a regular basis across a full range of its operations ranging from output, access, subtitling and compliance to programme standards among many other items.

In addition to the monitoring and enforcing of TG4's compliance with broadcasting duties, codes and rules, the Authority also has a number of other functions with respect to TG4 governance, as follows:

- The Authority issues guidance to TG4 as to the fulfilment of its obligations on reporting on income and expenditure and on its cost accounting principles, to the Minister.
- There are a number of mechanisms to ensure that TG4 is not overcompensated including: limiting funding by statute to its public service objects; a requirement to report annually on its use of public funding; an annual review by the Authority; and, a statutorily mandated review of the adequacy or otherwise of the public funding made available to TG4 in order to meet its

public service objects. The Authority carries out these reviews. The annual review concerns the extent to which TG4 has fulfilled its commitments as set-out in its Statement of Commitments for the previous financial year. The five-yearly review concerns the adequacy of TG4's funding following which the Authority makes a recommendation to the Minister regarding the level of funding which TG4 should receive on an annual basis. As part of these reviews, TG4 must report annually on the use it has made of its public funding and must distinguish between transactions and arrangements entered into in the pursuit of public service objects versus commercial opportunities.

In addition, the BAI investigates and decides upon any complaints made against TG4 vis-à-vis broadcasting codes and standards. Complaints regarding breaches of these duties, codes and rules should be made directly to TG4 in advance of any investigation by the Authority and TG4 must give due and adequate consideration to any complaint made with respect to the broadcasting duties, codes and rules when made in good faith.

As part of this process of redress, TG4 has a **Code of Practice for the Handling of Complaints**. This code is available on our website (www.tg4.ie) and makes provision for:

- An initial point of contact in TG4 for complainants;
- A time period within which TG4 shall respond to complaints;
- The procedures to be followed by TG4 in the resolution of complaints.

TG4 also submits this Code to the Authority for publication on the Authority's own website and in addition, shall keep a record of complaints made in addition to any replies, for a period of two years from the date of the receipt of the complaint.

4.4 Publication of five-year Statement of Strategy and Funding Plan

The requirement for TG4 to prepare a Statement of Strategy is set-down in section 99 of the Broadcasting Act 2009. The Act states that TG4 must, not later than six months after the passing of the Act and every five years thereafter, prepare and present to the Minister a Statement of Strategy. The Strategy must reflect how the organisation will achieve its objects under the Act having regard to the resources of the corporation.

TG4 also updates this strategy on an annual basis in keeping with good corporate practice and to reflect the economic and fiscal realities in which we operate. Our Statement of Strategy sets-out our vision for TG4's future and describes a broad range of medium and longer-term strategic development initiatives through which we will deliver on our objects, in addition to addressing the fundamental business opportunities and challenges facing us.

TG4's annual Statement of Performance Commitments (ASPC) is based upon these five-year plans - they provide the basis for all of the organisation's targets and actions and reflect its public service objects and how it will deliver them.

4.5 Audience Council

TG4 is obliged by Statute to establish an Audience Council comprising 15 members who represent TG4 viewers including persons with a sight or hearing disability. Through this Council, TG4 encourages the public's expression of views on its performance and enhances communications with its audience base. It is also a vehicle for complaints and feedback with TG4 ensuring that all complaints are logged, acknowledged, investigated and responded to. This Council supplements TG4's internal processes whereby all audience and media feedback on recent output is currently provided and acted upon, through regular reporting to its own Board, Management Committee, Commissioning, Acquisitions and through the Editorial and Schedule Planning Committees.

The role of the Audience Council is to engage with audiences, to understand what they need and expect from TG4, and through that engagement, to inform our services and ensure we are delivering in our role as a public service broadcaster. The key activities of the Audience Council include:

- Gathering audience views and testing reaction to TG4 services and content through a range of engagement activities each year.
- Discussion and assessment of the performance of TG4 at its Audience Council meetings.
- Advising TG4 on our performance.
- Identifying priority areas for action or improvement on behalf of audiences.

4.6 Publication of a Public Service Statement

TG4's Public Service Statement presents our remit as a national public service broadcaster and the standards or principles through which we fulfil this remit, including accountability to our key stakeholders and audiences, and overall, how we fulfil the obligations of our public service objects. Essentially, TG4's Public Service Statement presents a set of principles to which we adhere in providing our services. These range from "delivering programming primarily in the Irish language and providing a daily link for the Irish language to every household in the island of Ireland" to "ensuring that our programming reflects the varied elements which make up the culture of the people of the island of Ireland and have special regard for the elements which distinguish that culture and in particular, for the Gaeltachtaí". TG4's statutory mandate also sets down a range of supervisory mechanisms through which TG4 is governed, which are also described in our Public Service Statement.

The purpose of the Statement is to provide an understanding to the people of Ireland and to worldwide viewers and user of TG4 of what is expected of TG4 in return for the public funds provided to it from the Exchequer. Both TG4 and the Minister will keep this Statement under review so that it continues to reflect the change in the nature of Irish society along with changes in the broadcasting environment. TG4 is mandated to prepare a Statement every five years or as required by the Minister.

4.7 Publication of an Annual Statement of Performance Commitments

As required by the Broadcasting Act 2009, TG4 must prepare an Annual Statement of Performance Commitments ("ASPC") in accordance with our:

- (a) Objects;
- (b) Statement of Strategy; and,
- (c) Public Service Statement.

The Statement presents TG4's targets and objectives for any one year. As set down in the Broadcasting Act 2009, the Statement shall specifically address inter alia:

- The nature and number of hours of children's television programming to be broadcast by the service;
- The nature and number of hours of science and technology programming to be broadcast by the corporation;
- The number of magazines and books to be prepared, published and distributed in pursuance of the corporation's public service objects; and,
- The recorded video material to be compiled, published and distributed in pursuance of the corporation's public service objects.

4.8 Publication of an Annual Report

On an annual basis, TG4 publishes a report on its performance during the previous year. This report presents a detailed operational and financial overview of the channel in addition to a presentation of its audited statutory accounts. The Annual Report is presented to the Minister and brought to Government and laid before the Houses of the Oireachtas prior to its publication.

4.9 Publication of a Code of Fair Trading Practice

As required by legislation, TG4 must prepare and publish a code of fair trading practice which describes the principles that apply when agreeing terms for the commissioning of programming material from independent producers. This code is based on guidelines provided to TG4 by the BAI and must be reviewed and re-published every four years following its first publication. The code includes TG4's approach to: multi-annual commissioning; acquisition of rights; and, the timetable for contractual negotiations. This code must be approved by the Minister before coming into force.

Section 5: Contact with TG4

If you wish to contact TG4 regarding any aspect of this Statement or our other public information, please contact:

Pádhraic Ó Ciardha

Deputy Chief Executive / Leas Phríomh Fheidhmeannach

TG4

Baile Na hAbhann

Co. Galway

padhraic.o.ciardha@tg4.ie

Phone: 091 505050

Fax: 091 505021

You can also contact us directly through our website www.tg4.ie/foir / www.tg4.ie/feedback and provide feedback on or enquire about:

- Our website
- Our schedule
- Our programmes
- Our news stories
- Other general comments

Any one of TG4's managers or staff will be glad to receive your feedback / enquiries and you can connect directly to their email addresses via our website.

TG4 has a **[Code of Practice for Complaints Handling](#)** which sets out our initial point of contact in TG4 for complainants; the time period within which we shall respond to complaints and the procedures we follow to resolve any complaints. This code is available on our website (www.tg4.ie) and on the website of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (www.bai.ie)

Irish is the working language of TG4 and while the organisation particularly welcomes contact and correspondence in Irish, it is happy to respond in English to any correspondence/contact initiated in that language.