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On the air 24 hours

Two satellite channels started

May 2 was an historic day for Swiss Radio International (SRI), the day when the first of four continuous 24-hour satellite services began on, the French channel. The English channel will follow one month later on June 6. In early 1995 the turn of the German and Italian channels will come. The four channels bring the "SRI Futura" plan, developed in 1993, to fruition and mean a fundamental change in the Swiss media presence abroad.

SRI wants to give Switzerland a new, powerful and effective voice. It wishes to maintain its position as an innovative and forward-looking operation in the competitive and colourful media world with a high quality, attractive and specifically Swiss output. Four continuous satellite services, one in each of the official Swiss languages and one in English, are going on the air, at first in Europe, and then, step by step, throughout the world. It will still be possible to receive SRI programmes on short wave, and it is even being planned to increase selectively the short wave output. SRI is being restructured in order to increase efficiency and the level of co-operation with other sectors of the SBC.

SRI's new strategy is based on the premise that every effort must be made to revitalise the organisation. In recent years the signs were all too clear that a short wave radio station in the traditional style could no longer meet the demands of the public – and above all the demands of Swiss people living abroad.

The four new channels each offer a continuous 24-hour service. While possessing the common identity of "Swiss Radio International", they will develop individual styles, in keeping with the requirements of their listeners. The four services will focus their attention on Swiss news

and current affairs and connected matters for the Swiss audience abroad. The Swiss language channels will collaborate with the regional radio units of the SBC for much of their programme output.

The French-language channel

The French-language channel is aimed mainly at a French-speaking audience in Europe and Africa. Part of the service on offer is tailored for a French-speaking audience outside these priority regions. Particular attention is given to listeners who do not have access to reliable information in their own countries. The emphasis is on Swiss themes or international information with a Swiss connection. (EUTELSAT II-F1, 13° East, TV channel TV5, audio frequency 7.74 MHz)

The English-language channel

The English-language channel is SRI's truly international service. It is aimed at listeners who have English as a mother tongue or use English as a foreign language, and countries where English is an official language. The programmes are targeted in particular towards the educated classes of society, and those in positions of responsibility; the policy-makers

and decision-takers. Every hour, twenty-four a day, there are thirty minutes of news and current affairs followed by half an hour of in-depth reporting on every aspect of Switzerland, featuring domestic matters and those related to Switzerland's relationship with the rest of the world.

(ASTRA, 19.2 Ost, TV channel Teleclub, audio frequency 7.56MHz)

The German-language channel

The German-language channel is directed primarily at Swiss living abroad, together with an audience in the German-speaking countries of Europe and any other listeners interested in the German language and the culture of German-speaking Europe. Reports will have an international flavour; reports on Swiss matters will deal with cultural, social and political themes. In-depth features will place a clear emphasis on Switzerland and its relationship with the rest of the world. (ASTRA)

The Italian-language channel

In addition to Swiss people living abroad, the target audience of this channel will be

listeners in Italy interested in Switzerland, together with Italian emigrants on every continent. A clear emphasis will be placed on the reporting of both Swiss and international current affairs, with in-depth features on themes of international interest in the fields of society and the environment, and developments in science and technology.

(EUTELSAT)

Until the start of the German-language channel, an ASTRA-channel will carry the European short wave programmes (TV channel Teleclub, audio frequency 7.38 MHz). The satellite INTEL-SAT-K for America (TV channel Deutsche Welle TV, audio frequency 8.1 MHz) is carrying the intercontinental short wave programmes. SRI will be pleased to provide Swiss citizens living abroad with information at any time regarding reception of its satellite programmes. Those interested can contact us at the following address.

Swiss Radio International,
Listener Services, P.O. Box,
CH-3000 Berne 15, Switzerland.

Telephone: (41) 31 350 92 22
Fax: (41) 31 350 95 44

Walter Fankhauser,
Communication and
Marketing Service SRI ■

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