

Swisscom continues to fight for its ice hockey fans

Despite clear indications of anti-competitive behaviour, the Competition Commission (Weko) has rejected precautionary measures against UPC concerning the offer of ice-hockey broadcasts to Teleclub and Swisscom TV. But the final decision is yet to be made and the investigation by Weko continues: Swisscom and Cinetrade/Teleclub are demanding equal opportunities for all providers.

UPC will be broadcasting the Swiss ice-hockey league games for the upcoming season 2017/2018 up until the play-offs. It has put forward an offer to activate signals solely to Swiss cable network operators. Consequently, Swisscom and Cinetrade/Teleclub submitted a notification to Weko, which has now decided to forgo the directive of precautionary measures – despite significant evidence of anticompetitive behaviour by UPC. The procedure against UPC is thus now being pursued further. "That ice hockey fans are the only group among our customers to be excluded is clear discrimination. We regret this decision," says Dirk Wierzbitzki, Head of Products and Marketing and member of the Group Executive Board at Swisscom. Swisscom will therefore continue fighting to ensure that its customers do not have to forgo Swiss league ice hockey.

Swisscom favours fair play: all sport broadcasts to all households

Since last year the full **sports** programme of Teleclub, which holds the rights for the transmission of football matches, has been open to all interested TV platforms. However, cable network operators have not yet chosen to make use of this. "Ten years ago we built up an extensive ice hockey editorial board out of nothing, also establishing ice hockey as a type of TV sport in Switzerland," explains Dirk Wierzbitzki. "So it is particularly important for us that we can carry on with our comprehensive reporting in the future and we will fight on." As sport fans, we naturally will not give up so quickly." However, it is certain that customers of Swisscom TV and/or Teleclub subscribers will benefit from the extended ice hockey programme with matches of the National Hockey League (NHL), the Champions Hockey League, the Swiss Ice Hockey Cup and the IIHS Ice Hockey World Championships.

Background information



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Altogether, Teleclub has the rights for 30 different competitions, including a substantial ice hockey portfolio with the NHL and the Swiss Ice Hockey Cup, for example. Teleclub has been on air since the spring of 1982 and has been broadcasting Swiss sporting events live since 2006. From the very beginning the broadcasts were not only available on Swisscom TV, but, in the majority of cases, on all cable networks as well. To enable even small cable networks to activate Teleclub, Teleclub has had a sophisticated, close-knit distribution system for decades. This is because for a great many small networks - whose number in Switzerland still runs into triple figures – the spread of Pay TV is difficult from a technical and administrative point of view.

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