



**ANNUAL PROGRAMME STATEMENT 2007
& REVIEW 2006**

ANNUAL PROGRAMME STATEMENT 2007

UTV produces regional news, current affairs and other quality programming for Northern Ireland.

The UTV region has the lowest multi-channel penetration - ITV figures show 63% of homes have digital television compared to the national average of 79%. The digital switchover date for Northern Ireland is 2012 – one of the last regions of the UK to lose the analogue signal. Even so UTV programming faces more competition than ever before. As well as a greater multi-channel offering in digital homes, additional stations are now becoming available from the Republic of Ireland to audiences within Northern Ireland.

Our regional productions are frequently scheduled in highly competitive peaktime slots and need to deliver large audiences. UTV sees no difficulty in associating the best public service broadcasting with a highly commercial business ethos. We have an overriding advantage in delivering our objectives - we know the interests and the issues that affect our audience, we understand the social and cultural background of Northern Ireland and we are proud to be part of our community.

We are also proud of the regional programmes we produce and commission. More so we have a strong record of transmitting high quality, well-watched regional output which is popular with viewers, frequently award winning, often challenging and which attracts large audiences. In 2007 we intend to strengthen this position.

OVERALL STRATEGY

Our overall strategy remains the same as in 2006. News is at the core of our public service broadcaster responsibilities. We will provide an impartial, accurate, comprehensive and fair news service. As a regulated broadcaster we have the responsibility for being, and being seen as impartial. We will endeavour, as we have in the past, to present as full a picture of our society as possible.



UTV Live at Six

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UTV Live is by far the most watched news programme in Northern Ireland and the quality of our content is second to none. The experience of our journalists, camera crews, editors and senior newsroom staff provides our audience with mature programming which is respected by all our communities. In 2007, while maintaining the high quality of news gathering, we will also be concentrating our efforts on the quality of storytelling. We will strive to make our programmes more stylish and more relevant to the audience. We will be more analytical in our coverage of news stories and we will make every attempt to show our audience what each individual issue really means to them.

We are fully committed to relevant coverage of the key issues of 2007 including the probable election for the Stormont Assembly leading to devolved government for the first time in 4 years, the introduction of a new rating system and the preparation for the introduction of water charges for the first time.

In 2007 a large proportion of current affairs will remain in peaktime. The **Insight** brand is arguably one of the most respected names in regional current affairs in the whole of the UK. We will give that production team the resources and timeslots it requires to continue its investigative tradition.

As the community in Northern Ireland moves forward we remain aware of the interest in current affairs relating to our recent history but there is still a lack of confidence in the institutions of state, the judicial system, the police and the health and education services. We will continue to scrutinise the decisions of policy makers as part of our high-quality, investigative current affairs.

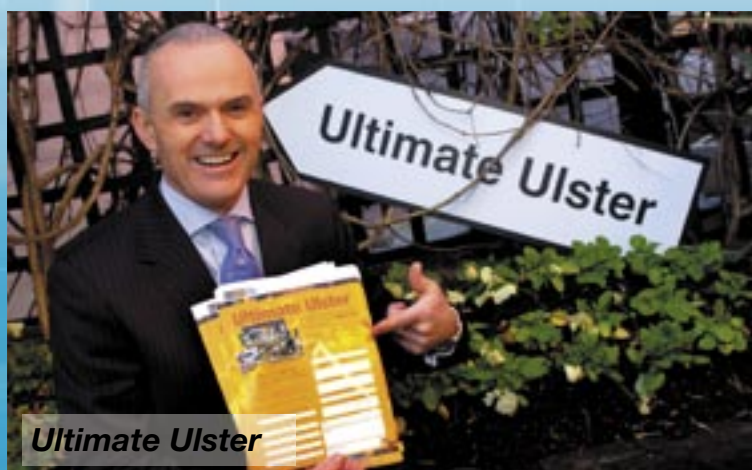
In 2007 UTV will offer a wide portfolio of non-news programming. We will broadcast much of this in peaktime and we will reflect all parts of our community. In non-news programming we give a commitment in 2007 to attempt to develop new talent both on and off screen and, where possible, refresh our programme offering to the audience. UTV has many long-running series and we will take calculated production risks to bring new offerings to our viewers.



Gerry Meets...



Jenny Bristow USA



Ultimate Ulster

Significant changes

No significant changes are planned that would materially alter the character of the service as a whole.

Tier 2 arrangements

Our total licence hours 494

This is made up of 5.5 hours of news, a current affairs commitment of at least 30 minutes per week, and a “floating allowance” of news and non-news programmes of 3.5 hours.

UTV intends to commission at least 25% of its local non-news programmes from the independent sector.

Programme Offer

News

Our flagship evening programme **UTV Live** is at the heart of UTV’s public service commitment. The programme, which is an hour long, takes the following format.

17:30 – 18:00 Regional features, guests and interviews that reflect the diversity of Northern Ireland

18:00 – 18:30 The harder news programme which reports and analyses the days news and sports events

We continue to deliver enviable viewing figures. **UTV Live at Six** has an average audience of 168,000 individuals and a 37% share in 2006. This compares with an average volume of 165,000 and 36.1% share in 2005. The network average in this slot was 19.9%. It comes as no surprise that **UTV Live at Six** is the best performing regional news programme within the ITV network.

We also wish to increase viewer interaction and will increase the amount of time given on air to viewer feedback.

At UTV we will strive to ensure that regional production will be delivered with network production values. Our commitment to quality is demonstrated by increased resources for training and personnel development within the editorial team.



Within **UTV Live** we will continue our comprehensive coverage of all major sports at a local, national and international level. Our sports team will continue to travel to major tournaments. ITV is the rights holder to the Rugby World Cup 2007 and UTV will follow Ireland’s team during its preparation and the tournament itself.

We will also support non-professional and schools sports in both on-air and off-air activities.

To make for better scheduling, the separate Sunday news and sports programmes currently being offered are likely to be merged into one extended weekend news programme.

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Current Affairs

The current affairs series **Insight** has been at the cornerstone of UTV's investigative journalism for many years. In 2007 we intend to run three series of **Insight** in peaktime – we will continue to replace and reschedule Network current affairs. **Insight** is well respected and regularly attracts an audience share above 30% which is a significant achievement when scheduled against *Eastenders*. UTV will resource **Insight** to allow for longer investigations as well as analysis of current news stories.

insight

Current affairs programmes will also cover Northern Ireland politics and the expected election. Core issues will be analysed and the policies of the parties scrutinised. When the Stormont Assembly returns, UTV will introduce a regular political programme.

Subject to a successful pilot series at the end of 2006 UTV intends to bring back the current affairs debate programme **L8 and Live**. This programme has a bold brief to engage a non-current affairs audience in topical issues. In 2006 the series debated current affairs subjects such as the safety benefits of speed cameras, talked with Muslim women living in Northern Ireland about the veil controversy and highlighted the inadequate support for young breast cancer victims living in our region.

**Other Programming**

We will seek to celebrate, reflect, inform and record the richness, diversity and history of Northern Ireland. Long-running series such as **Lesser Spotted Ulster**, **RPM** and **Jenny Bristow's** cookery series – in 2007 she will visit America – are core to the familiarity and programme experience viewers have come to expect from UTV. Also returning for the second year will be Gerry Kelly's **Gerry Meets...** our single-guest talk show.

After a successful first year on air, in 2007 we will move **Gerry Meets...** from a Friday night to a 19:30 slot on a Thursday. UTV believes his relaxed style of presentation is far more suited to this slot than its previous scheduling. The 19:30 slot is also guaranteed by the ITV network and will prevent the programme moving around the listings as it did in 2006.

Across the year we will also produce a number of hour-long **Gerry Meets...** specials with big name guests. We experimented in 2006 with this concept and it was highly successful.

The percentage of independent production will be increased in 2007 as UTV believes there is a huge amount of production skill and knowledge that can be harnessed within this sector.

Hidden Heritage, produced by Byword Productions, will follow environmentalist and journalist Brian Black around some of the most archaeologically-sensitive locations in Northern Ireland.

At the end of 2006 the longest-serving Anglican Bishop in the world, Robin Eames, retires. Produced by Dougal Media, UTV plans to broadcast a number of programmes to celebrate and analyse his work as a leading churchman during some of Northern Ireland's most difficult times.



Our independently commissioned factual entertainment series **Ultimate Ulster** will canvas opinion from hundreds of viewers as to their favourite locations across Northern Ireland.

UTV's archive contains almost 50 years of footage. This valuable but underused resource will be tapped for an archive series.

UTV also intends to commission a number of one-off factual programmes under the umbrella title of **UTV Focus**. Opportunities for this peaktime slot are being offered in an independent commissioning round as well as internally to all members of staff whether programme makers or not.

Our programming for 2007 will continue and develop upon the proven strategy we have worked to over a number of years. It also conforms with Ofcom's six identified characteristics of good public service broadcasting:

- High quality programmes well funded and produced
- Original programmes rather than repeats or acquisitions
- Innovative - breaking new ideas rather than copying old ones
- Challenging – programmes that make viewers think
- Engaging – programmes that are accessible and attractive to viewers
- Widely available – the public need to be given a chance to watch public service programming

UTV believe that our 2007 programme offering meets every one of these criteria. We also believe that our programmes are commercially viable and that there is no conflict between being commercially aware and serving the audience.

Other matters

Cultural and Other Diversity

Across all our programming we will continue to represent and reflect the communities and the experiences and viewpoints of the communities to which we broadcast.

Working in partnership with the Northern Ireland Film and Television Commission, the Equality Commission and Westway Films, UTV in 2007 will broadcast a five-part series called **Homelands to Townlands** which reflects and celebrates the increasing cultural diversity of Northern Ireland. These programmes explore the origins of our minority communities and afford our participants an opportunity to compare and contrast the homelands they have left behind with the lifestyles they currently enjoy here.

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Repeats

Our Tier 2 commitments are based on original regional production. We may schedule repeats of regional programming. Our factual series are usually repeated within 18 months of original transmission – often in a different timeslot - and frequently attract similar viewing figures to their first transmission.

Media Literacy

Broadcasters are frequently guilty of taking high levels of media literacy for granted. At UTV we go to considerable lengths not to jump to assumptions and go out of our way to signpost programming so viewers are not shocked, surprised or offended by their content. UTV adopts a painstaking approach to warnings and viewer advice. As a company we wish to be accessible and to give our audience and visitors an opportunity to see what we do. In 2006 almost thirty groups had guided tours of UTV or used UTV to host community events. They included schools, higher education facilities, sporting organisations, business and charity groups.

As part of both our social policy and a key role of promoting and understanding media literacy all organisations selected for our Community Service Announcements receive training in script writing, basic production and presentation skills.

Across all departments within UTV we welcome work placement students from all levels of education, and in partnership with third level colleges we will have one-year placements in our IT, Newsroom, Engineering, Internet, Finance, Graphics and Archive departments.

We will also as in previous years fully support and, where possible, report upon media literacy events across Northern Ireland. In a multi-channel world digital exclusion must be minimised and as a key public service broadcaster in Northern Ireland we will support any initiatives.

Public Input

Day-to-day viewer feedback through letter, email or phone call is seen by the highest level of management within 24 hours of any comments being received.

In our programming for 2007 we will be encouraging further comment and participation from the audience and we will be actively promoting a text number for viewers to contact the station directly. In the first instance this will be for comment on news stories but we will also ask for editorial ideas and programme comments through this mechanism.

Our Regional Advisory Committee and Religious Advisory Panel continue to be an established framework for external comment and input to our programmes.



This is UTV's own assessment of how well we fulfilled our public service remit in the year ending 2006. The Review has been produced in accordance with the requirements of the Communications Act and the guidelines issued by Ofcom.

1. Overall Strategy

UTV's strategy was laid out in our regional programme plans issued at the start of 2006. The key tenets were:

- Extended regional news at the hub of the schedule
- Current affairs slots in peaktime
- A broad and varied range of non-news programmes which would appeal to different audiences – all within guaranteed slots
- Programmes should have a strong sense of place and origin and they should resonate with the cultural, social and economic character of Northern Ireland
- They should be produced to the highest standards by skilled staff with an understanding and sensitivity which experience and local knowledge provide
- We want to identify and produce either factual or entertainment series for the 19:30 slots which have the potential to continue for a number of years and to attract loyal audiences

2. Significant Changes

There were no significant changes planned for the regional programme service, nor were any significant changes implemented.

3. Innovation, experiment and creativity

UTV continues to strive to make our news authoritative and ambitious in its content, and to engage the audience both by the quality of its coverage and the style in which it is presented. In the summer of 2006 our main evening news programme **UTV Live** moved studio and was re-modelled with a simple but distinctive new set. By moving the programme into UTV's larger Studio 1, programme makers and presenters were given the opportunity to develop a much more relaxed and warm presentation environment. The first half of the programme was completely re-styled and in the first two months of the re-launch increased its audience by more than 20% yet continued to cover a diverse portfolio of stories.

From 18:00 the harder news element of **UTV Live** has attempted to be closer to stories and main presenters and senior correspondents have begun to anchor from location rather than the studio for major events.



UTV Live at Six



UTV Live

In current affairs we continued to produce **Insight** – which for a second year running won the RTS Nations and Regions best current affairs award. The effort that goes into long-form investigative current affairs should not be underestimated and to win this award two years running is a credit to the innovation and production creativity of the **Insight** team. UTV is very proud of their achievements.

UTV recognises that current affairs can be inaccessible and a turn-off to a proportion of our audience - yet we are committed to peak time production. The series **A Day in the Life** allowed training opportunities for non-programme making members of staff to create peaktime current affairs. In 2006 UTV assigned additional production power with highly successful results and in both audience terms and the quality of the programme the series has to be judged a success. The 2006 audience share was 24.6% - an increase from the 19.9% share the programme delivered in 2005.

Our third strand of current affairs **L8 and Live** was a bold attempt to attract a much younger audience to current affairs programming. The studio debate format with active participation from the audience was a completely new production genre for UTV. As part of the programme we experimented with viewer interaction and received approximately 60-100 texts per hour-long programme.

In factual programming UTV produced **Teenage Kicks**, a short series looking at the challenges involved in being a teenage parent. A number of schools and community groups have requested the use of this series as part of their sex education programmes and naturally UTV has been delighted to co-operate.

Small World, Big Island was a largely visual series made by an experienced independent cinematographer. The lack of narration and freeform of the programme made it an interesting production, but even in its late night slot was perhaps a little avant garde for a mainstream broadcaster.

In partnership with the Northern Ireland Film and Television Commission we broadcast sixteen short films on the theme of **Home**. These films are made by first time directors and producers who are trained by UTV and offered complete creative latitude in their production. Consequently we broadcast very different and imaginative films which are highly distinctive.

UTV was delighted to be able to bring a charity premiere of **Casino Royale** to Northern Ireland. We produced what we believe to have been the first televised premiere event for a movie in Northern Ireland.



UTV's Casino Royale Premiere

1. Tier 2 arrangements

In 2006 UTV was on target to exceed all its Tier 2 licence arrangements. However, following schedule changes to the ITV lunchtime news in September 2006 the slots available for regional output fell by approximately 50 minutes per week for all licencees including UTV.

ITV (on behalf of the ITV licence holders) notified Ofcom of this shortfall and has opened a dialogue with the regulator regarding the possibility of setting the licence quota in line with natural schedule delivery. This is under consideration by the regulator.

UTV is licensed to produce 494 hours of regional production per year. In 2006 we have produced 484.40. UTV has exceeded its targets to produce both news and current affairs. However because of the already-mentioned schedule change we are reporting a shortfall in our non-news programming.

Once news and current affairs commitments are met, UTV is able to allocate the remaining 182 hours of our regional production to either news or non-news programming as long as we continue to offer a diverse schedule. UTV produced just over 82 hours of non-news regional programming in 2006. The other 100 hours had been allocated to news. As a direct result of the change in the ITV Network lunchtime news schedule UTV lost 14 hours and 10 minutes of regional time. We have attempted to make up this shortfall of approximately 9 hours in 2006. In previous years UTV over-produced our licence obligation by 21 hours in 2004 and 29 hours in 2005.

UTV proposed to commission at least 25% of non-news output from the independent sector; in 2006 that figure was significantly exceeded – more than one third of all our non-news regional programming was externally sourced.

We subtitled approximately 98% of all our regional programmes against a regulatory requirement of 85%.

Of all the planned non-news regional programming almost 60 hours - more than 70% - were broadcast in peak time. Peak time is defined as 18:00 until 22:30.



Programme Review

NEWS

Our news was at the heart of our 2006 schedule.

We remain the only ITV licensee to offer an hour-long news programme every weekday evening. **UTV Live** from 17:30 has a family-friendly agenda and is deceptively diverse in the stories covered. It addresses a broad range of issues in an accessible way with particular emphasis on social action and community initiatives.

We are delighted with the performance of **UTV Live** and are even more delighted with the acceleration in audience growth in the first half of the programme since we re-modelled the output in the late summer. We believe that the success of the 18:00 news element of **UTV Live** is significantly enhanced by building our own inheritance with strong local public service values rather than relying on entertainment-led programming supplied by the ITV network.

We said **UTV Live** would continue to be the first choice news programme for viewers in Northern Ireland. We are proud to have delivered on this promise and are now the most viewed ITV regional news programme in the country. Core to this success is the newsroom's knowledge and understanding of what matters to viewers. During 2006 we have maintained our ability to be accurate and authoritative but we have also tried to be warm, engaging and entertaining to watch. Our objective in telling the main news stories of the day in a relevant and friendly manner has been highly successful.

UTV relocated its North West studio in Londonderry in the autumn. The new office has more space and improved facilities for our team. We have also remodelled the live position within the North West bureau and the set is now branded with the same graphics as the main **UTV Live** set. The commitment by UTV News to cover the whole of Northern Ireland has remained throughout 2006.

Across the year we have reflected on Northern Ireland's steady progress to a normal and more peaceful society. Coverage of community division is now beginning to be replaced by stories such as local education, health, environment and economic policy as well as day-to-day crime and domestic issues.

We promised to cover national and international politics and we closely monitored the political developments which may bring about a return to the Northern Ireland Assembly. So important do we see these day-to-day developments that we anchored **UTV Live** from Scotland on the day of the St Andrew's Agreement in October 2006.

PROGRAMME OFFER – CURRENT AFFAIRS

Our Programme Statement for 2006 made a commitment to schedule 20 hours of our 26 hours of current affairs in peak time: across the **Insight**, **A Day in the Life** and **Sex Crime : Northern Ireland** series we achieved that target.

As already stated **Insight** won the Royal Television Society Nations and Regions Best Current Affairs award for the second year running. The programme entitled **Under the Law** focused on significant failings in the Police investigation in a high profile murder case involving a convicted paedophile. In many ways it embodied in one programme what we try to achieve in our current affairs output - important issues and stories, rigorous investigation and production values which engaged the audience. We promised to continue producing high quality filmed investigative programmes and schedule them in peak time. This was an important commitment as Ofcom reports have clearly stated the interest the Northern Ireland audience has in serious journalism. Our commitment to these programmes did not waver in 2006.



Insight wins RTS Award

In 2006 the **Insight** programme investigated a number of significant issues of public interest, many of the investigations creating further interest in the wider media. These programmes included an investigation into the career of British agent and Sinn Fein party worker Denis Donaldson and the events that led to him being exposed, following Gerry Adams to Israel and Palestinian Territories, reporting on one woman's battle to receive the breast cancer drug Herceptin and we took the programme to a popular Northern Ireland "local" to debate plans to liberalise the drinks trade.

In addition, UTV's **Insight** team had for many months been investigating a leading loyalist paramilitary gang leader. When he was shot by his own former supporters in May of 2006 the **UTV Insight** team worked around the clock to produce a programme which was broadcast the next evening – only 30 hours after the shooting. This programme was broadcast against billing and against *Eastenders* yet it achieved an audience share of 30% - the ITV network average that night was 17.1%

A special mention must be made here to the efforts of the current affairs team who continued to produce high quality programming during a year of change. In February the editor of current affairs and a senior producer left UTV to set up their own independent production company and in the summer the replacement editor resigned to become the editor of one of Northern Ireland's main newspapers. Throughout this period of transition UTV's **Insight** programme continued and developed its vigorous journalism and high production standards.

A Day in the Life returned in 2006 with a wider brief than the previous series. This peaktime current affairs programme followed 24 hours in the lives of individuals whose own personal stories reflected a key or topical current affairs issue.

The opening programme followed eleven women from Derry who have or were battling breast cancer and had decided to pose naked for a calendar. UTV cameras also recorded the challenges of being a carer, took a foreign tourists eye view of Northern Ireland and looked at the role of religion in the travelling community.

UTV promised to reflect Northern Ireland's place in the world in 2006 and the final two editions of **A Day in the Life** did just that. In two special programmes UTV programme makers firstly travelled to the Somme to follow a Northern Ireland man who lives in the heart of the former battlefield and helps families of the Ulster dead find their loved ones' graves, and in a one-hour special shown at Christmas we travelled to Rwanda to see how the work being carried out to reconcile their divided community could soon be used to help deal with community divisions here in Northern Ireland.

In the later part of the year we carried a post-watershed three-part series called **Sex Crime : Northern Ireland**. These challenging programmes investigated prostitution, electronic sex crime and child abuse. The series contained challenging interviews and dispelled the belief that sex crime does not occur in our community. The programmes did not make comfortable viewing but were received positively by the audience and the first programme achieved a 31% audience share.



A Day in the Life

Not in our plan for 2006 was our third major current affairs strand **L8 and Live**. Mainstream current affairs both on UTV and on other channels has not always been successful in engaging the next generation of viewer. Nor has UTV in the past been successful at finding the next generation of talent whether that be presenting, specialist guests or new-to-television commentators. **L8 and Live** was devised to address all these issues and ran for six weeks in the autumn.

L8 and Live was the top performing series in the Friday 23:00 slot across the year in the UTV region. The programme increased viewing in the slot, gaining 1 point from the same weeks in 2005.

This was also UTV's first attempt at inviting our audience at home to participate in live programming. We received a significant volume of texts and emails for this programme.

OTHER PROGRAMMING

UTV promised "a diverse range of series" and delivered on this promise. Perhaps the most important change of the year was with the arrival of Gerry Kelly's new peaktime talkshow. At the end of 2005 UTV ceased production of **The Kelly Show** which after 17 years on air had earned a unique place in both Northern Irish and Irish television. The **Gerry Meets...** series ran in the spring and the autumn with a wide and varied range of guests. The half hour single guest format allowed Gerry to interview his guests and address topical issues in greater depth than ever before. The audience figures for this programme across the series are higher than the old "Kelly" format.

One of UTV's proudest achievements of 2006 was to become the official broadcast partner of the **Special Olympics Ireland Games** held in Belfast. As part of the build-up to the games a series of twenty short programmes called **Special Stories** were commissioned. Each of these programmes focused on the efforts of an individual athlete, trainer, volunteer or family involved in the games. Much to UTV's delight these programmes were shown as part of the opening ceremony. The games opened in June and UTV broadcast the full two-hour ceremony. UTV personalities took significant roles at the opening and presenter Gerry Kelly was one of the main hosts. Throughout the games UTV news and sport bulletins covered both the action and the personal stories, and to round off the games a peaktime highlights programme was produced.

Two programmes promised for 2006 will not now be shown until 2007. **Jenny Bristow USA** was held to allow for better scheduling in relation to the programme content and will now run in autumn 2007 and the **Hidden Heritage** series – four programmes exploring the archaeology of southern Ulster – was delayed through lack of appropriate slots. This will now be shown in the first quarter of 2007.

Lesser Spotted Ulster continued its successful service – now in its eighth series – and two more series are commissioned. This programme, ever popular with the viewer, was re-envigorated this year with additional on-air publicity and promotion and across the series the programmes achieved a 27.7% audience share.



Gerry Meets...

UTV continue to support Northern Ireland's independent animation industry. As well as our **Busker and Barney** birthday greetings animations, we commissioned and began to broadcast at Christmas a new children's animation called **Breaktime**. This child's eye view of the world began running in the school holidays and will be broadcast throughout 2007 during holiday time.

Sports programming continued to play a major role in our output. Independently produced motorsport programme **RPM** continues to deliver a comprehensive round-up and quality event reports. UTV's coverage of the North West 200 was significantly reviewed this year with the introduction of a half hour peaktime programme previewing the event.

UTV believe that the programme offering in 2006 struck a good balance in continuing to provide popular series, introduce new programming and by refreshing established productions. All programming had a strong sense of history, identity and place. We produced a schedule that featured sport, politics, social action programmes, documentaries and factual entertainment - much of it in peaktime.

ADDITIONAL MATTERS

Social programming

We continue to produce Community Service Announcements – known as **YouCare** – for schedule both in peak and off-peak. As part of our commitment to media literacy we provided training in script-writing and television presentation for the individuals and organisations who participated in these short films.

Our commitment to the Special Olympics Ireland Games – both on and off-air – was an exemplary case of corporate social responsibility. We were closely involved in all elements of the games from encouraging volunteers, to helping to motivate the athletes with celebrity support. Every major on-screen personality took part in some way in the opening ceremony and during the events themselves UTV cameras and personalities were highly visible.

In the spring of 2006 we commissioned a special programme celebrating the twentieth anniversary of Disability Action NI. This programme ran in peaktime and had an audience share of 24% - the highest rated programme in that timeslot in any channel.

In November 2006 an entire hour-long edition of **UTV Live** was signed as part of our celebration of the Centenary of the RNID. As part of this programme we also devoted significant airtime to reporting on a major RNID Conference in Northern Ireland.

Social Responsibility and Diversity

Our staff and management are actively encouraged to participate in charity events and fundraising. UTV presenters, journalists and other staff members regularly volunteer to present awards or make personal appearances for charity.

All staff were encouraged to volunteer to support the Special Olympics Ireland Games this year.

UTV continues to contribute to a number of charitable causes – both financially and with support in kind.



Special Olympics Ireland Games

In 2006 all staff at UTV received diversity training. This training and awareness is designed to deliver an understanding of diversity in both our workforce at large and our broadcast output.

UTV and its staff constitute a diverse company and fully conforms to the statutory requirements of the Equality Commission.

Across 2006 our programming has dealt with matters of race, religion and nationality and we have continued to report on other groups who were marginalised in our society – the poor, the aged, people of different sexual orientation, people with learning, physical or psychological disabilities or impairments. We promised to do more to garner as wide a range of perspectives, and engage opinion about society's obligation to its disadvantaged citizens – we delivered on these promises across a wide range of programming in both news, current affairs and general output.

Repeats

It is clear that our audience like to see repeats of some factual series. We have repeated **Jenny Bristow Autumn/Winter** season, **Lesser Spotted Ulster** and **Jenny Bristow Light**. We also used Sunday afternoon to repeat some of the best programmes of the previous week to give our audience an opportunity to either re-watch or to catch up with viewing that might have been missed.

Promotion of Media Literacy

Community Involvement

Schools and College groups are regularly welcomed at UTV to help them understand our operation and how television is produced.

Our senior journalists have been involved in seminars, debates and training with various members of our community at all levels in an attempt to help them understand how television is created and how under-represented organisations can get access to programme makers.

Senior members of management have also actively engaged in Ofcom and EGSA seminars in how to develop media literacy strategies.

On-air promotion

We have continued to ensure that our viewers are fully informed about the content of programmes by the use of continuity announcements and programme trailers. UTV has attempted to avoid offence or to surprise viewers by making an extra effort to signpost particularly sensitive content. We have continued to use our internet service – u.tv – to provide programme information, to engage interested viewers and to enhance the enjoyment of our programmes.

Public Input

We have also begun to gather the views of our audience via text and email to a much greater level than in previous years. In a media-literate society it is important that the relationship between the broadcaster and the audience is a close one and more needs to be done to develop this relationship.



Lesser Spotted Ulster

UTV welcome all comments – both positive and negative – from our audience and all comments by telephone, letter or email are seen by the very highest levels of UTV Group management.

Relationships with political, business and social organisations remain strong, and comments, opinions, suggestions and indeed complaints are taken seriously and can and do affect programming decisions.

Both our news and our non-news programming comes under close regular scrutiny from both our Regional Advisory Committee and Religious Advisory Panel. These groups meet at least four times a year and review and comment on our output. They can question programme makers at all levels. Discussions are often frank and opinions given we believe are honest.

The Regional Advisory Committee is chaired by a UTV Group board member and the minutes of each meeting are submitted to the Board. Senior programme makers attend and the range of opinions expressed is varied and diverse.

In 2006 the Regional Advisory Committee took a close interest in our public service broadcasting proposition and this is reflected in their Annual Statement below.

“The UTV Regional Advisory Committee has met regularly in 2006. On each occasion we have been fully appraised of UTV’s programming plans and have discussed the content of regional output. We are keen to debate all issues involved in the provision of UTV’s television services. Members value regional production and believe it is well regarded by the audience in Northern Ireland as a whole. The Regional Advisory Committee would like to inform Ofcom that in our view UTV has delivered quality public service broadcasting and has fulfilled the spirit of its licence obligations.”

In addition, the Committee Member representing the RNID requested we add to the Annual Statement:

“UTV has delivered quality public service broadcasting and has offered an increased numbers of local programmes with subtitling as part of its licence obligations. A special thanks for giving a slot for sign language interpretation on UTV Live to celebrate the Centenary of the RNID.”

Compliance

In terms of compliance, regional licence requirements and commitments, UTV has again delivered against our programme statement as set out for 2006. In all licence commitments and obligations pertaining to Ofcom we believe we have met or exceeded our licence requirements in relation to programming standards. In terms of commitment to our regional minutes we have under-delivered through factors beyond our control and are currently in negotiation with Ofcom pertaining to this shortfall. There were no interventions by the Regulator throughout 2006. UTV believes our 2006 regional schedule has stood up well in the highly competitive commercial environment we operate in and that we have offered our viewers original, high quality programmes that reflect the region and inform and entertain the audience we are proud to serve.

Michael Wilson
Head of Television
UTV plc
December 2006