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News Items

Telephone

After a long planning phase, *the medical emergency calling number 144 was put into operation in the canton of Lucerne*. Beforehand, programme changes had to be made in the 49 telecommunication centers of the Lucerne, Olten and Berne Telecom offices.

12 Natel C and 18 Natel D GSM base stations were put into operation. In addition, the Lausanne, Olten and Zurich mobile switching centers and base station controllers (MSC/BSC) were expanded in order to satisfy the rapid development of further coverage regions for the Natel D GSM.

Teleinformatics

24 leaselines were put into operation by the Leaseline Control Center (LCC), two of which with overseas destinations and one leaseline bearer channel.

Radio, Television, Radiocommunications

The following satellite links were set up in the Intelsat network via the Leuk earth station: one data connection of the SSTDMA (Satellite Switching Time Division Multiple Access) type with the United Arab Emirates, four voice circuits of the same type with China, four voice circuits each of the FDMA (Frequency Division Multiple Access) type with Uruguay, the Dominican Republic and Cameroon as well as six voice circuits of the same type with Ecuador.

Moving panorama pictures are supplied directly from the tourist regions (ski and hiking regions) via the new television programme S Plus by the new *Swiss Vision* service. For this purpose, a total of eleven microwave radio link sections were newly set up in the areas of the Chur, Thun and Lausanne Telecom offices. The switching and control equipment (Industry PCs) were developed specially for this purpose. They operate with a precision of split seconds and allow the programming of almost as many switchings as desired in a day or in a year.

In order to be able to set free the television channel number 12 for the future DAB radio broadcasting, *a new television channel C64 was put into operation on the Chamossaire station* which transmits the programme of the French-speaking part of Switzerland. Both channels will be broadcast side by side for a year.

The following towns were equipped with one transmitter each for Telepage Swiss: Chevenez, Ganterschwil, Les Ordon, Männedorf, Meilen and St-Ursanne. During the month of January 1994, some 100 000 subscribers will be reached for all call classes.

Miscellaneous

The Technical Committee RES (Radio Equipment and Systems) of the ETSI (European Telecommunications Standards Institute) met in Warsaw from 29 November to 3 December, for the first time in an Eastern European country. Over 120 delegates from administrations, industry, management and user circles participated. With satisfaction the committee took note of the Memorandum of Understanding on the cooperation between ETSI and ERC (European Radio Committee) of the CEPT achieved after lengthy negotiations. However, a cooperation with bodies active worldwide such as the IEC is still extremely difficult, especially for RES, as the corresponding standards are unsuitable for the integration into ETSI standards. Drafts of standards for land mobile radio terminals with integrated antenna were adopted for consideration by ETSI, and current questions from the following standardization areas were handled: TFTS (Terrestrial Flight Telephone System), Ermes (European Radio Message System), Hiperlans (High-Performance European Radio Local Area Networks), various small radio systems, cordless telephones as well as EMC standards for radio equipment. Regarding TFTS, the extensive standards collection was restructured. Later on, a technical basis for regulation TBR is to be set up. The conversion of the interim standards I-ETS 300 131 for the cordless CT-2 telephone into a definite standard was rejected. In Switzerland the CT-1 is in the foreground.

After the European Union definitely decided not to further pursue the analogue TV MAC television method, *the digitalization of the television transmission will now be intensively accelerated also in Europe*, as it has been the case for some time in the USA. The work is taking place in the areas of source coding, multiplexing, channel coding and modulation, receiver characteristics and system integration. Since European research teams have already carried out fundamental work (Eureka, RACE, MPEG, ELG-DVB) within a short time, standards are to be worked out in the ETSI and CEN/Cenelec which will be valid for the transmission via cable and satellite as well as for terrestrial television broadcasting. Particular pressure is coming from the satellite operators and the receiver industry. Experts of the PTT Telecom have been active for some time already in the ETSI bodies concerned (JTC, NA, TE, TM, SES). In order to be able to carry out the manifold organizational and technical work in a coordinated way, 80 representatives from radio broadcasting entities, equipment manufacturers, network operators and ministries from 12 European countries signed a 'Memorandum of Understanding' (MoU) in September. On the 18th technical assembly of the ETSI (October 1993), the members were recommended to participate in this agreement. The participation for the PTT Telecom as network operator is essential, particularly as it also comprises the strategically important area of the broadband connection network. It is possible for the PTT Telecom to become an ETSI member without costly formalities.