

The Objective: Broadcast Media Authority with Links to the Political Echelon

Chapter B of Bill for Broadcast Media Law-2025: Structure of BMA

Author and legal consultant: Adv. Ronen Reingold

This document addresses Chapter B of the Bill for Broadcast Media Law-2025,¹ which deals with the creation of the Broadcast Media Authority (BMA) and attendant Audiovisual Content Regulation Council (ACRC), and the powers to be conferred on them. **Zulat's position is that the arrangements set out in the bill bestow influence and powers on actors associated with the governing echelon in a way that substantially harms the independence of the two new bodies to be established under it.**

Gap Between Bill's Rhetoric and Arrangements

The bill seeks to abolish the existing broadcast regulators (Cable and Satellite Broadcasting Council and Second Authority for Television and Radio) and replace them with a new body: the aforementioned BMA. Under the proposal, this will be a public corporation that will operate in accordance with policy guidelines set by the ACRC.

According to the bill's declared objective, the new body is intended to be "independent," possess "professional capabilities," and "aspire to independence in its activities."² As much was also affirmed by the Communications Minister in several discussions held to date by the special committee set up to prepare the bill for second and third readings, with the emphatic goal of "keeping politics out of the content domain."

If this is indeed the objective underlying the bill, the arrangements it proposes will not achieve it. Not only does it fail to sever actors with ties to the governing echelon from the BMA, but quite the contrary: it grants them a broad foothold, accords them substantial influence over the selection of the ACRC's members and over its activities, and vests them with extensive and substantive powers in the regulation of broadcast media in Israel.

§ All references in this document are in Hebrew.

¹ [Bill for Broadcast Media Law-2025](#), Knesset National Legislation Repository, 8 December 2025.

² Page 43 of the bill's explanatory notes.

Independent Model of Public Broadcasting Law

Had the authors set out to create an independent and operationally autonomous body, the right thing to do would have been to embrace the model set out in the Public Broadcasting Law-2014,³ which governs the structure and powers of the Israel Public Broadcasting Corporation (IPBC) and its council. A comparison of the bill with the model in the said law demonstrates how far the bill falls short of creating a truly independent authority.

Under the Public Broadcasting Law, **all** members of the IPBC Council are selected by an **independent and autonomous** search committee. The Communications Minister appoints a retired judge as its chair, **and that is the extent of the minister's role**. The chairman appoints two additional members, and once they are appointed, the search committee is free to select all the other members.⁴

This model is designed to ensure maximum independence in the selection of council members. It limits the Communications Minister's role **solely** to appointing the chair of the search committee and **keeps him out** of the selection process, and consequently, from the IPBC Council's activities.

Proposed Arrangements Allow Close Link to Governing-Political Echelon

The model proposed in the bill is entirely different and seeks to provide a substantive foothold to representatives of government bodies, first and foremost Communications Ministry officials.

Under the bill, the members of the ACRC will be selected by a search committee. On the face of it, this would appear to advance the BMA's independence, but the search committee will primarily consist of government officials: the director general of the Communications Ministry, who will be the chair; the director of the Israel Regulatory Authority or one of his deputies; the director of the Finance Ministry's Budgets Division or one of his deputies; the Israel Competition Authority commissioner or one of his deputies; and an academic.⁵

It may be argued that the director general of the Communications Ministry (who, as is well known, is Minister Shlomo Karhi's appointee in a position of trust) is only one out of five

³ [Public Broadcasting Law-2014](#), *Knesset National Legislation Repository*, 11 August 2014.

⁴ Although they are formally appointed by the Communications Minister, the council's members are selected by the search committee and the minister has no say regarding their identity.

⁵ Article 23 of the bill.

votes. In practice, however, his position as chair effectively places him in control of the search committee's agenda and of the candidates presented for selection as ACRC members. It thus turns out that the proposed bill seeks to grant the Communications Ministry substantial and disproportionate influence over the selection of ACRC members already this early in the process.

The same holds true for the three additional members of the search committee representing government entities (the Regulatory Authority, the Competition Authority, and the Budgets Division). To preserve the independence and autonomy of the ACRC, the selection of its members should be done by a body unaffiliated with the governing echelon and not by a search committee composed almost entirely of government officials, even if some are perceived as professional actors independent from the political level.

The government's influence over the BMA is further intensified by the proposed structure of the ACRC. Under the proposal, the ACRC will comprise four public figures appointed upon the recommendation of the search committee: the chair, a faculty member at an academic institution, a person with experience in print or broadcast journalism, and a person with experience in the field of content production. The three other members will be employees of the ACRC, the ICA, and the Communications Ministry.

Thus, all four public representatives would be selected by a search committee closely tied to the governing echelon, alongside an employee of the Communications Ministry who will in all likelihood represent the interests of his master. In sum, the government would be substantially involved in the selection or appointment of at least five of the seven ACRC members. **Therefore, this structure is not designed to enable the BMA's independence and autonomy, but seeks to grant the governing echelon a deep foothold within the ACRC.**

The ACRC's close ties to the governing echelon are incompatible with the extensive powers the bill seeks to confer upon it with respect to regulating the activities of the various actors operating in the Israeli broadcast media sphere, primarily the far-reaching powers to revoke the registration of content providers and to impose significant monetary sanctions.

To sum up, the inevitable conclusion is that the bill does not seek to establish an independent authority, but rather one facilitating political influence. **In Zulat's view, the format proposed in the bill should not be implemented and should be replaced with a model that ensures its independence and autonomy, similar to the one set in the Public Broadcasting Law.**