

GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING STING OPERATIONS

In furtherance of the principles of self-regulation as contained in NBA's Code of Ethics and Broadcasting Standards and Specific Guidelines Covering Reportage, a member news channel may conduct a "sting operation", but only in conformity, with the following guidelines :

1. No sting operation shall be conducted except with the prior approval and under the supervision of the head of the editorial team of a news channel, who shall also, along with other person concerned, be responsible for all consequences ;
2. A sting operation may be conducted only if warranted in public interest ;
3. A sting operation should be conducted only for exposing a wrong-doing ;
4. A sting operation should not be used for gratuitously prying into peoples' private lives;
5. A sting operation may be resorted to only if there is no other effective overt means of collecting or recording the same information or news ;
6. In conducting a sting operation, a news channel shall not indulge in inducing a person to commit a wrongful act not otherwise contemplated by the person ;
7. Resort shall not be had to sleaze or sex or any illegal act as a means for carrying-out a sting operation ;
8. The entire recordings of a sting operation, including edited and un-edited, audio and video footage, must be preserved, as they are for a period of 90 days or for such other period as may be necessary in a given case ;
9. Recordings of a sting operation, including edited and un-edited, audio and video footage, shall not be tampered, manipulated, interposed, altered, distorted, morphed or otherwise doctored in any manner that may change the context, purport or meaning thereof ;
10. There must be concurrent and contemporaneous recording in writing of the various stages of progress of a sting operation by the person in-charge of it ; and such written record shall also be preserved for a period of 90 days or for such other period as may be necessary in a given case ;
11. A sting operation must not offend against the provisions of Section 5 of The Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act 1995 and Rule 6 of The Cable Television Networks Rules 1994 relating to "Programme Code" or any other law in force for the time being, including Section 24 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 ;
12. A sting operation shall be telecast only if, and when there is ample evidence to prima facie demonstrate the culpability of a wrong-doer ;
13. If a sting operation is found false or fabricated, all persons concerned with conducting the sting operation could be liable for punishment in accordance with the law.

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