

*The Wolfe Pack*

*The Nero Wolfe  
Literary Society*

## **Nero Wolfe TV Series in the 1950s**

(OOPs, 3 attempts never made it to prime-time)

### **1959 NEWS**



**'59. Nero Wolfe. Kurt Kasznar.  
Bill was one of the most sought-  
after young actors on TV. CBS.**

# TWO STAGE ACTORS SIGNED BY C.B.S.-TV

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**Kasznar and Shatner to Play  
in 'Nero Wolfe' Pilot Film  
—'Telephone Hour' Plans**

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William Shatner has been signed to star with Kurt Kasznar in a pilot film that may be the basis for a "Nero Wolfe" television series.

The film, with which the Columbia Broadcasting System hopes to lure a sponsor for the series, will be produced here starting Monday. Mr. Kasznar will have the title role and Mr. Shatner will play Archie Goodwin, his young colleague.

The series, based on Rex Stout's detective stories, will have Edwin Fadiman as executive producer. He had the same title with a similar series on radio. Gordon Duff has been named producer and Tom Donovan, director.

The first episode, written by Sidney Carroll, will feature Alexander Scourby. The two stars are appearing in Broadway shows. Mr. Kasznar is in "Look After Lulu" and Mr. Shatner in "The World of Suzie Wong."

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*The New York Times*

*March 14, 1959*



TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 1959

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## TELEVISION

## IN REVIEW

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By William Ewald

United Press International

NEW YORK (UPI) — There is something terribly sad about the contemporary circus—the mournful grey dirty elephants; the little clowns grinding out their pathetic attempts at fun; the spectacularly uncomely girls, the badly costumed flyers, wire walkers and high bar swingers milking pretend-danger out of dreary rituals; the seedy roustabouts constantly puncturing the sketchy illusion with the sweat-jobs of reality.

Monday night, ABC-TV funneled out portions of the Ringling Bros., and Barnum and Bailey Circus in a one hour special from Charlotte, N.C. and I must confess it looked to me like all the portions of the Ed Sullivan show that drive me to Steve Allen.

There was a fellow who hung by his hair and juggled fire, a fellow who hung from his heels on a trapeze and a bunch o' weepy elephants, those fictitious animals, who hung atop each other. There were some pussycats who jumped through a hoop of fire and a llama who jumped over a bar and an elephant

led Truex out of its script and introduced Don Porter in a new continuing role — Porter was a member of Miss Sothern's old TV show, *Private Secretary*. I doubt whether this sort of switch is going to help the show much—its trouble lies in its mechanical, assembly line approach to comedy. Things like Arthur Murray doing the tango Monday night help to make the NBC-TV Arthur Murray Party one of the funniest shows on television — unintentionally, of course.

The Channel Swim: Kurt Kaszner and William Shatner will film the pilot of CBS-TV's upcoming series, *Nero Wolfe*, next week in Manhattan. ABC-TV will shove Traffic Court into the Monday night Patli Page slot after Miss Page's show folds on March 16.

Rickey Nelson of ABC-TV's *Ozzie and Harriet* is on a bullfight kick and plans to go to Spain this summer. Larry Blyden Monday replaced Robert Morse in the NBC-TV Omnibus production of "Forty Five Minutes From Broadway" — Others in the cast of the March 15 musical are Russell Nye and Tammy Grimes.



There was also much to do about two people who were "shot" out of an "atomic" cannon and I seem to remember that same sad, cannon when it was functioning unanatomically back in the early '30's

There were in this hour a few patches of interest some of the camera work that went on while a high wire walker was working conveyed the feeling of height with remarkable truth And I

NBC-TV will repeat the one hour documentary, "The Jazz Age," on March 29. Comedian Shelly Berman will take on a dramatic role in the March 27 episode of NBC-TV's Ellery Queen. ABC-TV's Sammy Kaye has three former Arthur Godfrey Talent Scout winners in his band—singer Larry Ellis, accordionist Johnny Lapadula and trumpeter Johnny Amaroso.

**FRIDAY MARCH 20 1959**

**LEWISTON EVENING JOURNAL LEWISTON-AUBURN MAINE**



## VIDEO VERSIONS

★ *by Johnny Robinson* ★



THE PILOT FILM OF A PROJECTED new half-hour television series based on Rex Stout's popular "Nero Wolfe" detective stories is being produced in New York. The series is being produced by the CBS Television Network in association with Edwin Fadiman. Two of the top performers of the Broadway stage, Kurt Kasznar and William Shatner, have been signed for the starring roles, with Kasznar playing the title role of the dilettante-detective and Shatner playing Archie Goodwin, his young and breezy colleague. The first program, dealing with the mysterious death of a guided missile scientist at a Cape Canaveral launching, was written by Sidney Carroll and will feature Alexander Scourby. Kurt Kasznar and William Shatner are currently featured in two Broadway shows: Kasznar in Noel Coward's "Look After Lulu" and Shatner in "The World of Suzie Wong." Mr. Fadiman will be executive producer of the "Nero Wolfe" series, an assignment he also handled during the radio career of the program. Gordon Duff will be the producer and Tom Donovan will direct. To date, more than 30,000,000 copies of Stout's Nero Wolfe stories have been sold, including translations into foreign languages—among them Japanese and Chinese. The stories are currently appearing in the Saturday Evening Post.

## Bernstein Closes Season; Critic Hopes for His Return

By WILLIAM EWALD

The Channel Swim: Kurt Kasznar and William Shatner will film the pilot of CBS-TV's upcoming series, *Nero Wolfe*, next week in Manhattan. ABC-TV will shove Traffic Court into the Monday night Patti Page slot after Miss Page's show folds on March 16.

further down in the article

Kurt Kasznar, hired for the title role in CBS-TV's upcoming series about the fat detective, *Nero Wolfe*, partly because he weighed 280 pounds, recently dropped 70 pounds and will now have to be padded around his middle . . . CBS-TV's Desilu Playhouse, faced with the tough competition of NBC-TV's academy awards show on April 6, has decided to throw in the towel and slot a repeat show, "The Time Element," with William Bendix.



# NEWS OF TV AND RADIO

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## Sixty-Minute Shows Will Go Like Thirty Next Season—Items

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By VAL ADAMS

**T**WO time periods that traditionally have featured hour shows on two television networks will be turned over next fall to half-hour productions. They are the Columbia Broadcasting System's 10 to 11 P. M. hour on Mondays and the National Broadcasting Company's 8 to 9 hour on Saturday evenings.

"Desilu Playhouse," now televised by C. B. S. on Mondays, will switch to a 9 to 10 P. M. Friday schedule in September. The Monday evening hour from 10 to 11 o'clock was the home of "Studio One" from 1948 until it left the air last season.

"Nero Wolfe," a filmed detective series based upon the character created by Rex Stout, may be the new entry for C. B. S. on Mondays from 10 to 10:30 P. M. A proposed sponsorship deal is under consideration by the P. Lorillard Company and the General Foods Corporation. There has been no indication what the other half-hour show might be.

The New York Times

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# Music Heads on Exchange Program

## Record Tabs Foreign Yen for Jukes, Popcorn, Hamburgers

By MILDRED HALL

WASHINGTON — "Come as you are," musically, gastronomically, and every other way, is the invitation of foreign peoples to U. S. performers and exhibitors to exchange programs, trade fairs, and wherever U. S. wants and ways are in display.

This is one of the strongest points made in the fifth semi-annual report on the President's Special International Program of Exchange which has been showing American life in an exchange of performing artists. The program also includes performances and exhibits at international fairs, and wherever the co-acting State Department, USIA and Commerce Department can manage it on their limited budgets.

Music has featured most strongly in exchanges of performing arts, and the program report is frank to point out that due to lack of money and co-ordination, Uncle Sam has not always sent the right piece or performer most suited to the particular country. The reason is transportation costs. Sending a band or ballet or jazz group on tour is more economical when the travel is confined to one geographical area, no matter how the countries within that area may differ culturally.

The situation will be partly remedied, the report notes. Comment from State and USIA field personnel has made it clear that Latin Americans want big presentations—symphony and ballet, while most other areas want jazz and popular music as played by soloists and small groups. However, the report says that in 1958, South America went for Woody Herman's 16-piece jazz band in a big way, successfully following up Armstrong and Leonard Bernstein tours.

### 141 Presentations

Overall, the President's International Program, with the aid of American National Theater and Academy, has managed to get a total of 141 performing artist (and sports) presentations, shows, in 92 countries, since 1956. All this, plus U. S. exhibitions in international fairs, plus the Brussels extravaganza, has been accomplished for a total of less than \$50 million—a pittance, as Congressional appropriations go. The talent has been all top-notch.

The report says part of the "come as you are" aspect is the overseas yen for juke boxes, popcorn machines and hamburgers, along with hi-fi, stereo, and other things that are everyday in American life.

Field reports from trade fairs, embassy posts, USIA, say small bits were registered by stereo in Yugoslavia; popcorn and juke boxes in Tunis; records pressed on-the-

spot in Vienna; Good-boreds glowing along with fine, folk and popular music by the Golden Gate Quartet in the Near and Far East.

At Brussels, Uncle Sam played in capacity with an infinite variety of performers: Goodson's orchestra, hi-fi demonstrations, jazz bands; folk songs and dances; Army and Navy concerts. Special performances of the exhibit's character included every kind of musical symphony; musical comedy, chamber music, choral music; soloists.

### Back Seat for Hot Dog

One note of nostalgia comes from the report. The traditional hot dog bowed to the hamburger in popularity, two million hamburgers to 500,000 dogs. Another tipper at the American Brass Band Restaurant was an urban concert of two million of those, too.

The increasing need for performing arts at international fairs is summed up in the report by Brussels fair impresario, Commissioner General Howard Cullinan.

"The attendance of 42 million at the fair was conclusive proof that the Belgian people were absolutely right in creating a world's fair that veered sharply from the traditional commercial or trade fair, and gave the peoples of the world their first opportunity to view on a mass scale, international cultures and international achievements in science and technology."

## TV THEMES SPARK DISK OUTBREAK ON CHARTS

Continued from page 1

gle featuring TV jazz tunes—"The D.A.'s Man Theme" backed by "The Richard Diamond Theme" by the Frank Condon orchestra. Ray Anthony's single, "The Peter Gunn Theme," is still on the best-selling chart, and his new waxing "Walkin' in Mother's" (also from "Peter Gunn") hit the chart this week.

Stereo Fidelity is making "TV Jazz Themes," which will also be released on its \$1.98 monaural Somerset label, its key promotion item for April and May, via extensive promotion on the deejay level and a national consumer advertising campaign. Special deejay EPs will be mailed to more than 1,000 radio stations.

The Skip Martin group includes such jazz soloists as Shelley Manne, Don Fagerquist, Pete Candoli, Red Mitchell and Conrad Gozzo. Side features themes from "Peter Gunn," "Richard Diamond," "77 Sunset Strip" and "The Thin Man."

Newest TV jazz theme is one penned by Alex North for the new "New Wolfe" detective series, which will debut on TV shortly. (See separate story in this issue.) The complete list of current TV

## CAP LP TOPS GOODYEAR AD

HOLLYWOOD — Capitol Records stereo album of its original cast "Music Man" recording dominates a full page ad campaign by Goodyear's chemical division running in Business Week, U. S. News & World Report and Fortune magazine. Approximately three-fourths of the page layout is devoted to the Cap album while the ad copy touts Goodyear's vinyl resin.

## Merc Extends 'Save-O-Rama' Deadline

CHICAGO — Mercury Records extended the deadline for its "Stereo Save-O-Rama" to May 1 and hinted that another extension might be in the offing. Response to the plan, announced Irving B. Green, Mercury president, instead of hitting a peak and then declining, has continued to build showing "no sign of slackening."

The plan allows the consumer to buy a stereo disk for one dollar for every one he buys at the list price of \$3.95.

The success of the plan, said Green, has industry-wide significance as a measure of the rising tide of stereo interest. He reported that letters have come to company headquarters from consumers asking that the plan be extended so they can build stereo libraries at the advantageous price. These letters, he observed, reflect a "healthy association between manufacturer and market that goes far beyond immediate sales figures."

series featuring jazz themes include "Peter Gunn," "D.A.'s Man," "77 Sunset Strip," "M Squad," "The Thin Man," "Richard Diamond," "Elmer Fudd," "Perry Mason," "Naked City" and "Pete Kelly's Blues." Even the "Mickey Mouse" theme is served up with a jazz beat in Warner's new "TV Themes" LP.

Artists who have recorded themes from the above shows as singles and/or albums include Ray Anthony, Shelley Manne, Leith Stevens, Pete Rugolo, Pete Candoli, Don Ralke, Frank Ortega, Henry Mancini, Count Basie, Aaron Bell, the Page Boys, Warren Barker, Skip Martin, Keith Williams and Frank Condon.

## Lawrence Exits Sunbeam

NEW YORK — Bernie Lawrence, recently appointed sales manager of Sunbeam Records and with the Valando firm for the past four years, left the label last week. He intends to take a new post shortly with another record label.

## DOT, CAPITOL FLIP FOR FLIP

NEW YORK — At last the truth is out. The "Flip Black" playing cabinet on the new Bergen label release of "Fic

## IRS Rules on Diskery Excise Responsibilities

WASHINGTON — Internal Revenue has set up a rule-of-thumb to decide who pays the record manufacturers' excise when several firms are involved in processing the disks. In response to industry inquiry, IRS puts the responsibility for tax on the one who not only owns or leases the master, but also controls production and sale of records therefrom.

It follows that when a master is leased to a firm which produces and sells the records therefrom, the original owner of the master is no longer responsible for manufacturers' excise — the tax stays with the firm which controls production and sale of the disks.

To make the plot thicker, if the original music from which the master itself is made, is on tape, the excise will stay with the one who produces and uses the master record. No manufacturers' excise attaches to the royalty payments made to the owner of the copyrighted music on the tape, and the latter is considered merely to "permit its use under special arrangements."

Treasury gives these examples to illustrate the variety of possible combinations: Firm X owns master recordings, and Firm Y presses, labels and ships the records back to X, who then sells them. The manufacturers' excise stays with Firm X. However, if Firm Z leases a master from another company, presses and sells the records itself, the tax remains with Z.

In the tape case, Mr. A owns magnetic tape recordings of copyrighted music, and contracts with Z Corporation for the latter to make a master record from the tape, then produce and sell the disks. In return, Z Corporation pays Mr. A a royalty on each record produced. Again, the tax sticks with the company that controls production and sale—in this case, Z Corporation.

Also, in this case, Z becomes the owner of the master record made from the tape, but Mr. A retains ownership of the tape of the copyrighted music. Mr. A does not incur any manufacturers' excise on the royalty he gets from the records made and sold by Z.

In a slightly more complicated case, IRS cites a tape owner, Y, who contracts with record man-

ufacturing company X, to have a master record and tapes made, which final disks will be made. X, in turn, gives part of the job out to a processing firm which makes up the master, then processes a so-called "pre-master," from which final disks will be made. The processing firm sends the "pre-master" to firm X, and the latter presses the records and ships them on to the original tape owner, firm Y.

In this case, the original tape owner, Y, controls sale and distribution of the disks he had made—therefore he is responsible for the manufacturers' excise. Y also retains actual ownership of the tape recording, the master record, and the "pre-master." Confusion about tax responsibility has arisen in some cases because the master record is stored by the processor, in the name of "N" corporation, for possible further use in making additional "masters."

IRS makes it clear that no matter where the master records are stored, or in whose name, the rule of thumb keeps the manufacturers' excise on the one who actually controls the sale and distribution of the disks.

## Italian Jukes Combo Film With Disks

ROME — A new type of juke box which gives the feeling of television is the new juke box the Cinebox. It is the invention of Pietro Caselli, a newspaperman, with the technique work being done by two brothers, Raffaele and Paolo Nutri in the Milan factory of Otten Mercurio Italiana, the outstanding manufacturer of movie projection machines in Italy. It is expected that the Cinebox will operate at a price of not more than 100 lire (16 cents) per play. Demonstration records with film have been made by Nilla Pizzi, Tina De Mola and Pappalardo Capri With His Pockers.

Each box contains space for as many as 50 16mm. films and an equal number of records. Each is adaptable to use film ranging from 8 mm. to 35mm. According to the promoters, recordings used are specially made for these boxes. In some cases, the performers will be invited to re-enact their own records for exclusive use in this media.

Customers need only insert a coin and the rest of the work is done by an electromagnetic system. An alternate system provides for all of the film on one reel instead of separate reels. In the alternate method the film is run off at high speed until it reaches the playing spot required by the person using the machine.

## 1st Quarter Decca Sales 10% Over '58

NEW YORK — First quarter net sales for Decca Records, Inc., rose about 10 per cent over a like period in 1958, Milton Rackmil, Decca president, told stockholders at the company's annual meeting here this week. Earnings, at the same time, were slightly higher than in 1958, at 11 cents a share.

Rackmil, who is also president of Universal Pictures, of which Decca owns \$1.4 per cent of the stock, said there was no immediate prospect of merging Decca and Universal.

Last last year, Universal realized \$3,676,510 after taxes from the sale of its studio properties on a lease-back arrangement. Rackmil said alone \$1,500,000 of

## TRUST FUND'S 10-YR. SPENDING

BOSTON — AFM President Herman D. Krim, speaks

## Green Joins Marks Promotion Staff

NEW YORK — Ray Green, as



APRIL 27, 1957

THE BILLBOARD

TV PROGRAMMING

3

## Revlon Eying Comedy Series

NEW YORK—With the dropping of its Wednesday, 10-11 p.m., slot on CBS-TV, Revlon has set aside its search for a replacement for "20th Century-Fox Hour," postponing decision on three mystery shows it has been mulling until it has examined the field for a half-hour situation-comedy series.

"The \$64,000 Question" and "Challenge" and the new Guy Mitchell show are set for CBS-TV and ABC-TV, with Revlon seeking a fourth buy for next season, preferably on NBC-TV. "Crime Club," an MCA-TV mystery hour, would find a berth on NBC if Revlon reconsiders it. The other mysteries being mulled by the advertiser have been "Nero Wolfe," a CBS-produced series based on the Rex Stout stories, and "Mystery Street," the M-G-M anthology headed for ABC.

October 22, 1949

RADIO-TELEVISION

The Billboard

5

Communications to 1564 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.

# McConnell Outlines NBC Plans

## Predicts 50-100 Pic Houses With TV in Half Year

HOLLYWOOD, Oct. 18.—Tele had its day at the 66th semi-annual convention of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers (SMPE) which ended here Friday (14) following a week of technical discussions, awards and predictions. Sparked by ever mounting video activity, SMPE members paid special heed to tele's future, exploring camera possibilities, prospects of theater television, and winding up with a field trip to the Mt. Wilson transmitter site where the main address of the convention was delivered by Dr. Vladimir Zworykin, Radio Corporation of America research director.

Most encouraging for tele boosters was the prediction that 50 to 100 theaters thruout the nation would be converted to large-screen television within six months. This prophecy came from Don Hyndman, chairman of SMPE's theater tele committee and Eastern manager of the motion picture department, Eastman Kodak Company.

Hyndman stated that commercial success of the recent World Series

### Brief and Important Last-Minute Digest of AM-TV News

#### Bracken Pitch for KWKW

Film comic Eddie Bracken will petition the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for permission to buy Pasadena indie station KWKW in partnership with the Jenkins and Lodge ad agency. Sale is contingent on approval of KWKW's plan to buy out rival Pasadena indie KAGH and KARS-FS, both owned by attorney Andy Haley.

#### "TV Ad Medium" Booklet Sells

"Television as an Advertising Medium," the Commerce Department's comprehensive summing up of the TV marketing situation (The Billboard, August 20), is becoming one of the Government Printing Office's best-sellers. Priced at 60 cents, the pamphlet is back in stock after the first printing of 10,000 copies was exhausted two weeks ago.

#### Fadiman Preps TV Packages

Fadiman Associates this week announced plans to package a TV series featuring Rex Stout's **Nero Wolfe** detective characters. The firm is also readying a pitch on the First Piano Quartet, a top box-office group, for TV this season.

#### "Ruthie" To Hang Up

"Ruthie on the Telephone," by Goodman Ace, now sponsored by Philip Morris cigarettes, is being dropped after its November 5 telecast, but the time is being retained. The program is on the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS)-TV five nights each week from 7:55-8 p.m. Among the shows being considered as a replacement is one starring Herb Shriner, who once did an AM show for the same account.

## New Concept In Assignment Of Staff's Jobs

### Three Big Divisions

By Jerry Franken

NEW YORK, Oct. 18.—An entirely new concept in the assignment and evaluation of work by its staffers will be effected by the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) within the coming months, Joseph H. McConnell, newly named president of the network, revealed this week.

McConnell assumed the presidency of NBC this week—coming from the web's parent organization, the Radio Corporation of America (RCA) where he was executive vice-president. Niles Trammell, McConnell's predecessor, is now NBC's board chairman.

In brief, the new NBC policy will be to apply a specific yardstick against each job, thus enabling bot

The Billboard

6 RADIO-TELEVISION

August 26, 1950

### **Nero Wolfe** Readied To Caper on NBC's Air

The Rex Stout mystery character, **Nero Wolfe**, probably will be airborne this fall. NBC is cutting an audition platter and is said to have a few sponsors interested in bankrolling the series. Package is owned by Ed Fadiman, and is represented by Ted Ashley. If the show should not sell before the fall, NBC is believed prepared to sustain the series next season.



**RADIO-PHONO-TV  
MERCHANDISING**

October 28, 1950

**NBC To Shift  
Tele Emphasis  
On Radio Seg**

(Continued from page 5)

station, nor would he risk repeating TV material to AM listeners who might have seen the shows on TV.

Plans for the program were outlined to this week's NBC convention by Charles R. Denny, executive vice-president of the network, as part of NBC's plans to develop new and aggressive AM sales plans. Other new show-sales plans revealed by Denny were titled "Night and Day" and "Sight and Sound."

"Night" will offer a daytime show, *Break the Bank*, and *Nero Wolfe* on Friday nights, to three sponsors, each of whom will pay a third of the costs or around \$11,500 each. "Sight" will offer a TV-AM combination, either as a simulcast or via tape on AM. The combination is based on the theory that advertisers will get unduplicated audiences.

Denny also declared that even if "operation tandem"—the first of the NBC-AM sales gimmicks—does not succeed, it is the sort of sales approach necessary under current sales conditions.

Some affiliates are cold to the tandem plan. One school argues that it may hurt national spot business—which pays them full card rate as against the reduced network compensation. Others say that it is in effect a rate cut, since the stations are to be paid at the hourly rate, rather than the higher half-hour rate, even tho the shows are all half-hour programs.

# MUSIC

Communications to 1564 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.

NOVEMBER 18, 1950

## AFM Probes Canned Music on Networks

### Waxed Cues, Bridges To Claim Attention in Contract Huddles

HOLLYWOOD, Nov. 11.—Solution to the problem of waxes' increased use of recorded bridges and cues is being asked by Local 47 in the American Federation of Musicians (AFM) contract renewal negotiations with the nets. Local's vice-president and radio-recording rep, Phil Fischer, estimated that approximately 100 musicians are being denied employment by waxes' use of disked music. Sponsored air shows using canned bridges and cues include Screen Directors' Playhouse and Take It Or Leave It, both on NBC, and ABC's Mr. President. Sustaining shows include NBC Theater of the Air, The Saint, *Nero Wolfe* and *Texas Rangers*. CBS has a Coast regional

ing, *Nero Wolfe* from Hollywood, relying on waxed music.

Problem of networked canned music is relatively young. Prior to the introduction of taped shows by Bing Crosby, both NBC and CBS had a set policy against recorded shows, and ABC and Mutual used canned fare sparingly. With competition forcing both NBC and CBS to lower its price barriers as a result of the widespread use of tape, AFM feels nets have been cutting down on use of live talents in favor of waxed music. According to Fischer, AFM will not oppose use of canned bridges and cues provided musicians are protected.

Issue of recorded bridges and cues is expected to be one of the major points to be considered during the forthcoming AFM-net contract renewal negotiations.