

## **Peter Frey to become new ZDF editor-in-chief, Bettina Schausten to head Berlin studio**

Dr. Peter Frey, ZDF's current Berlin studio chief, will be the corporation's new editor-in-chief from April 1, 2010. This appointment follows a unanimous vote on the ZDF Administrative Council in favour of Director-General Markus Schächter's proposal for the post.

Frey has worked at ZDF in a variety of roles since 1985. In the early 1990s he built up and established "ZDF-Morgenmagazin" as the editor of this flagship breakfast programme. He has served as the Washington correspondent, head of the foreign affairs section and, since 2001, head of the Berlin studio. Working in the German capital, he has presented a number of programmes, including "Berlin direkt" and "Berliner Runde". Frey takes over from Nikolaus Brender, whose contract was not extended beyond March 31, 2010. A proposal to continue with Brender had been rejected by the Administrative Council when he failed to receive the necessary support of three fifths of the board's members.

Following the Administrative Council's evening session in Mainz, Markus Schächter said, "In Peter Frey, we have an outstanding and widely respected first-class journalist as ZDF's new editor-in-chief. He stands for the credibility, professionalism and journalistic independence of our information programming. Frey is a team-oriented manager with strong leadership skills and a very clear grasp of what is needed to succeed in a digital world."

Responding to his appointment, Peter Frey said, "The main task of the new editor-in-chief is now to restore ZDF's credibility, which has suffered in the eye of the public. This is what I shall be working for - together with my colleagues, the programme-making departments, the management and our governing bodies. We will now be focusing on the core: making informative, relevant and innovative programmes that reflect the diversity of our society, that show our country in all its colourfulness, and that have makers who are inspired by this diversity."

Peter Frey's successor in Berlin as studio chief will be Bettina Schausten, who has been head of the home, social and educational affairs section at ZDF since 2003. She is known to viewers Germany-wide as a presenter, fronting a number of programmes that include "ZDF-spezial", "Was nun, ...?" and the ZDF election specials. As section head she also has responsibility for ZDF's political documentaries and oversees the editorial teams for "Länderspiegel", "blickpunkt", "ML - Mona Lisa" and "Maybrit Illner". This year she received the German Television Award for the 'Wahlforum' series that was broadcast in the run-up to the 2009 federal elections.

ZDF Director-General Markus Schächter commented, "I'm delighted that, with Bettina Schausten's appointment, we will for the first time have a woman heading ZDF's Berlin studio. As one of our country's leading television journalists, she proved to be a highly informed and critical observer of the political scene for many years."

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