



transmediale Statement regarding the partial disablement of the work "PRISM: The Beacon Frame" by Julian Oliver and Danja

As a festival that this year deeply engaged the topic of surveillance and artistic practice and invited some of the most radical artists, activists and researchers in the field, it is with great sadness that we confirm that *PRISM: The Beacon Frame* by Julian Oliver and Danja Vasiliev was indeed disabled by our technical team halfway through the *Art Hack Day : Afterglow* exhibition. Our technical partner for the festival did not act out of disagreement with the basic premise of the work, but out of the possibility of being held legally accountable for its possible violation of privacy rights and frequency regulation. The disablement of the work, however, was an act done without any authorisation from the festival director or the other curators, administration and communication department. As the damage was already done when the artists, the transmediale artistic director and the technical staff had the opportunity to sit down and discuss the matter, the decision was taken together with the artists not to restore the work to its original functioning. The reasons being that the artists were told they would be reported to the Federal Network Agency for Electricity, Gas, Telecommunications, Post and Railway for violation of data privacy laws and frequency assignment laws. This is a charge that can result in heavy fines and possible jail time in Germany. In fact no data was collected from the visitors and the work was a timely comment on the current meta-data paranoia through the medium of surveillance itself. As others have already pointed out, it is absurd that this work would even risk being reported in these times of highly illegal surveillance operations carried out by governments on entire populations. The credit certainly goes to those who keep revealing these structures rather than those who seek to target artists who contribute to our awareness of them.