

Welsh Assembly Government

Review of the Universal Service obligation: statement and further consultation. The Welsh Assembly Government responded to the consultation earlier this year. I am now providing the response to the statement and further consultation issued on 30 June 2005.

Q1 Section 4.29 - no additional comment

Q2 Para 5.51 annex E - no additional comment

Q3 annex G public bodies with local veto:
Could this be amended to 'county/county borough councils in Wales' - the current description at para 5.25 would exclude about half the unitary authorities in Wales since they are deemed as county boroughs.

Q4 annex H no additional comment

Q5 annex F no additional comment
Cont'd

Q6 annex I no additional comment

Q7 annex J no additional comment

Q8 annex K no additional comment

Q9 Annex M

The Welsh Assembly Government recognises that Ofcom still does not believe that the case for extending USO to cover broadband is strong, either on the basis of economic efficiency or equity. We believe that there may be a case for introducing first generation broadband into the USO. The Broadband Wales Programme Strategy, launched in January 2005, defines 1st generation broadband access as asymmetric speeds of 512kbps to 2Mbps downstream (ie. to the customer) and 256kbps to 512kbps upstream (ie. from the customer). We continue to stress that we do not necessarily agree with Ofcom's assessment in this matter and urge Ofcom to set in place a mechanism for continued review of the speeds that Ofcom defines as 'functional internet access'.

Yours sincerely

Christine Cook
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