

# CONTENT SAMPLING REPORT

**Station :** Time 107.3

**Dates Sampled :** 17 August 2006

**Station Character of Service :**

**TIME 107.3 IS A FULL SERVICE SPEECH AND MUSIC STATION FOR LEWISHAM AND THE SURROUNDING AREA, REFLECTING THE LOCAL INTERESTS OF LISTENERS WITH A PREFERENCE FOR SOUL/MOTOWN, R'n'B, REGGAE AND DANCE HITS.**

**Station Format Detail :**

Speech and information is an important part of the service, and speech will account for at least 20% of daytime output Monday to Friday (and at least 10% at other times). Speech items will include regular and frequent daytime community affairs advice and/or information and crimestoppers features aimed at the tastes and interests of the target audience. Hourly bulletins containing local news will run at least during weekday and weekend daytime with headlines, business news and sport. National news will feature at other times.

These genres of music will be represented across the station output: Soul/Motown; R'n'B; Reggae; Dance; and current/recurrent chart hits, the latter must not account for more than a third of the music output. Specialist music programmes, amounting to at least 7 hours each week outside daytime, must be aired (eg Global/African, Gospel, Reggae). (\*Co-location arrangement involving Time 106.8 at Abbey Wood agreed March 2006. This agreement does not allow for programme sharing.)

**Format Obligations :** Pre-sampling observations ...

Time 107.3 serves the London Borough of Lewisham and surrounding areas with a full service music and speech station. With modest speech obligations (minimum of 20% weekday daytime, falling to 10% at weekends) the range of speech features, including hourly news bulletins, should make these targets easily achievable. Significantly, the station's musical direction is defined in the Format's 'Character of Service' box, in that the output should reflect the interests of local listeners who favour Soul/Motown, RnB, Reggae and Dance Hits. With a cap on current/recurrent chart hits (no more than a third of music output), this service should have a distinct musical sound. Daytime music is complemented by a requirement for at least 7 hours of specialist music programming each week, outside of daytime.

**Localness and General Format Findings** (excluding news)

See Sampling Conclusion.

**News**

See Sampling Conclusion.

## Music :

See Sampling Conclusion.

## Content Sampling Conclusion :

This Sample Report was triggered following a listener complaint which raised concerns about Time 107.3's Public File and general music output. We therefore carried out a spot check to assess both the content of the Public File, as well as the station's compliance with its music Format requirements.

In this case, the complainant felt that the information contained in Time 107.3's Public File about the amount of automation at the station was misleading. The Public File stated that there was no automation during the station's daytime output and the listener queried whether the content of the Public File was intended as a "guideline" to a station's output, or if it was supposed to give a full and accurate account of the service. We checked the station's Public File which said, "we are committed to as much live programming as is practicable and as such we promise no automated programming during daytime." We queried this with the station and it confirmed that outside of 'breakfast', daytime output was automated. Under the new regime of output regulation, this statement represents a significant error in the content of the Public File. The station has informed us that it has now updated the Public File information to accurately reflect its use of automation.

The musical direction of Time 107.3 is clearly defined within the Format. Notably, this Format is one where the station's musical obligations are set out within the 'Character of Service' box. The listener claimed that there was little evidence of the stated genres within daytime output. We examined the music log for one weekday and asked the station to indicate how the music selection met the Format obligations. While the station felt that its output adequately reflected the stated genres, we did not agree. Firstly, it seemed that the station's assessment included the track selection of a specialist non-daytime programme and secondly, we did not accept the station's categorisation of some other tracks aired during daytime, e.g. Cyndi Lauper, *Time After Time* – **Soul**, Michael Jackson, *Black or White* – **Soul**, Avril Lavigne, *I'm With You* – **Soul**, All Saints, *Pure Shores* – **RnB** or Anastacia, *I'm Outta Love* – **RnB**. We therefore calculated that over 50% of the daytime output fell within the Hits/Pop genre. The station has told us that there are ongoing programming changes "designed to bring the music output on the station closer to the community". While we welcome these steps, in our view, it cannot be argued that the musical direction of the station is so open to interpretation as to allow the stated genres to comprise only the minority of the station's daytime music output, especially when the musical direction of the service is so clearly stated within the 'Character of Service'.

For the reasons stated above, the station is in breach of its Format and a Yellow Card has been issued.

While we note that the matter of the Public File has now been rectified, the Yellow Card will remain in place until future monitoring, or music log study demonstrates that the music issue has been rectified, i.e. that the music is comfortably within Format.

**This station is not operating within its Format**

## Notes on Content Sampling

Ofcom's Content Sampling Procedure :

*In Ofcom's move of emphasis from input regulation towards output regulation, content sampling has become an important regulatory process. Ofcom has already published the methods to be applied when formally listening to local commercial stations to create a content sampling report. These methods and processes are published at <http://www.ofcom.org.uk/radio/ifi/contentssampling/>.*

#### Background Information

*Content sampling is a major Ofcom tool in judging the level of station compliance with regard to*

- a) Public File*
- b) Localness*
- c) Music*

*Content sampling may be carried out as part of an organised process, or may be as the result of a complaint.*

#### Public File

*Public File obligations are enshrined within each station's Licence. The Public File and/or station website will, in many cases, not only support the findings of content sampling, but signpost monitors to output that enhances specific aspects of localness and music, whether or not it involves the specific days being monitored.*

#### Localness and Music

*Localness guidelines are available on Ofcom's website at [www.ofcom.org.uk/radio/ifi/rbl/car/localness/](http://www.ofcom.org.uk/radio/ifi/rbl/car/localness/) and station localness and music obligations will vary considerably from Format to Format.*