

LOCAL RADIO SERVICE UNDERGOING CHANGE OF CONTROL: REVIEW OF EFFECTS OF CHANGE OF CONTROL

(in accordance with sections 355 & 356 of the Communications Act 2003)

97.4 COOL FM (Greater Belfast) AL121B

EXISTING FORMAT

Description of Service:

A ROCK AND POP STATION AIMED AT 15-35 YEAR-OLDS IN THE BELFAST AREA

Detail:

Cool will play a mix of current tracks, mixed with heritage/80s/90s tracks. In non daytime the schedule should include some specialist music programmes which complement the main mix (eg dance, indie, oldies etc).

Speech (which will normally make up at least 10% of daytime output) should include regular lifestyle/leisure features as well as travel, weather and so on. Bulletins containing local/regional news should run hourly at least during peaktime, with national features featured at other times.

REVIEW OF EXISTING PROGRAMME SERVICE

Scheduling and duration of any specific programmes or features required by the Format (e.g. specialist music shows, extended news bulletins, output for a specific ethnic minority, religious output, alternate language output etc).

*A dance show on Saturday evenings (The Source) runs from 18:00 – 21:00
An indie show on Sunday evenings (The Z) runs from 19:00 – 21:00
Oldies shows on Sunday 11:00 – 13:00 and 90's @ 9 (21:00 – 22:00)*

Scheduling and duration of any such programmes or features not specifically required by the Format, but which the station is currently (or has until recently) been broadcasting regularly.

A Soul, Hip Hop and RnB show now runs every Saturday night from 21:00 to midnight

Quantity of programming that is currently automated (if any), and when this is scheduled. (Note: information about the precise scheduling of automated sequences may be supplied to Ofcom in confidence).

*Cool FM is automated from Monday to Friday 01:00 - 06:00
(02:00 – 06:00 Saturday and 00:00 – 07:00 Sunday)*

Quantity, scheduling, duration and nature of programming currently being broadcast that is syndicated and/or networked (if any).

Hit 40 UK Chart Show which is broadcast every Sunday from 16:00-19:00

Arrangements currently in place for the compilation, production and presentation of local news.

*Locally compiled and read bulletins run from 06:00 – 19:00, 22:00 (Monday to Friday)
08:00 – 14:00 and then 17:00 and 18:00 (Saturday)
08:00 – 14:00 and then 19:00 and 22:00 (Sunday)*

ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS OF CHANGE OF CONTROL IN RELATION TO:

i) local material and locally-made programmes:

It appears to Ofcom that the relevant change of control would not be prejudicial to the provision of local material or locally-made programmes.

ii) character of the service:

It appears to Ofcom that the relevant change of control would not be prejudicial to the character of service.

iii) quality and range of programmes included in the service:

This station is delivering its Format obligations.
The specialist programmes listed vehicles for part of the Format delivery. In themselves they represent but one method of providing a wide-ranging programme choice as part of that delivery. It would not be prudent to tie the station to this one particular method. It appears to Ofcom that the relevant change of control would not be prejudicial to the quality or that range of programmes.

OFCOM'S CONCLUSION AFTER MONITORING/PLAYLIST ANALYSIS AND VERBAL SCRUTINY. SUGGESTED VARIATIONS TO THE LICENCE (IF ANY)

None

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