

## Edinburgh independent local radio licence applications

# Questions and responses: 107 FM The Rock

*These are the responses from 107 FM The Rock to the non-confidential questions asked by Ofcom regarding the group's application for the Edinburgh licence.*

### **1. Did the findings of your research programme identify dissatisfaction amongst the target audience with current provision, and if so, how?**

Our desk research and analysis of RAJAR data highlighted that “the heritage that Forth One and Forth 2 have, and the broad based programming of Real Radio, produces an overall audience profile in Edinburgh like few other markets in the country. Their broad appeal gives them wide support across many demographics” (page 37). It is because of this heritage that we have sought “to fulfil a music gap in the market that defined its own demography, rather than seek to satisfy any one age group that appeared to be less well served than another” (page 49).

Our consumer research, which analysed interest in the sub rock genres highlighted that the format proposed by The Rock would attract listeners of all ages, but where its core was aged 35 to 54. In exploring the genres of rock music and interest in each by a variety of age groups, we concluded that a service targeting the 35 to 54 age group would provide the maximum choice to the maximum number of people in Edinburgh.

As our spider diagrams show, all ILR performs better with under 35s than over 35s both in reach profile and market share. By comparison, the BBC collectively shows a broad reach appeal but a particular strength in terms of listener loyalty (market share) with 45 pluses. It is our belief that The Rock would have a very beneficial effect for ILR as a whole in the Edinburgh market. It will increase total time spent listening to the radio and more importantly attract back lapsed radio listeners to the medium. The net result will be to improve the total market share for commercial radio and to increase the average number of commercial radio stations listened to by a significant group within the broader community. Our research also identified that no single ILR station was recalled by more than 22% as one which plays rock music.

In conclusion, our research did not look to identify if and to what extent there was dissatisfaction with existing commercial services. Our objective was to provide a service that would complement the output of the existing ILRs to ensure that collectively ILR would continue to grow from strength to strength.

**2. Roger Lewis has now left GWR but is named on page 4. Who will replace him on this board?**

Roger Lewis was appointed to bring his experience at operating a stand-alone radio station within the GWR Group and his status as a main board director of GWR Group plc. If we are successful, Steve Orchard, GWR's Local Operations Director, would replace Roger on the Board. Steve also sits on the main PLC board, and he himself was the Programme Director of Classic FM before Roger Lewis and shares many of his attributes. We have attached the regular director's information to this letter.

**4. Your statement that “[all programming] will be originated locally 24 hours a day, save for the occasional syndicated, commissioned or outside broadcast” seems slightly at odds with the one that follows (that “a maximum of 24 hours of non-locally produced and presented programming may be broadcast per week, outside of peak-time”). Please could you confirm what your intentions are in this respect.**

We are sorry that the two sentences are not as clear as we had intended. What we were trying to describe was that whilst the station intends to broadcast locally 24 hours a day, there may be the occasional syndicated programmes and that this occasional syndicated programming would never exceed 24 hours during a week and would not fall within peaktime programming.

The 24 hours describes a 'worst-case scenario' if, for some reason, all of the 'Passions' programming for one week was made up of a selection of specialist shows from independent production companies and that the station was conducting an 'outside broadcast' of a number of concerts in the area. This is, however, likely to be highly unusual.

If you believe that there is a better way to describe the spirit of this commitment we would be happy to work with Ofcom to codify it within 107 FM The Rock's format.

**5. What is the maximum extent to which you plan to automate programming?**

The only place that traditional automation could be broadcast on the station is during the 2am to 6am part of the schedule. We would balance the station's ongoing financial performance and the demand from listeners before we made that decision.

As discussed above, occasional 'Passions' programming may be traditionally 'built' programmes made by 107 FM The Rock or independent production companies, some of these may be wholly pre-recorded.

