

Title:

Mr

Forename:

Steve

Surname:

Buckley

Representing:

Organisation

Organisation (if applicable):

Sheffield Local Television Ltd

What additional details do you want to keep confidential?:

No

If you want part of your response kept confidential, which parts?:

Ofcom may publish a response summary:

Yes

I confirm that I have read the declaration:

Yes

Additional comments:

Sheffield Local Television Ltd (SLTV) is the successful applicant for the digital local television programme service licence (L-DTPS) for Sheffield. SLTV is a not for profit company formed by a consortium of Sheffield stakeholders including independent producers, community broadcasters and educational bodies. SLTV aims to provide a service that reaches audiences in the Sheffield City Region, while retaining a core editorial focus on the City of Sheffield. SLTV has been making representation to DCMS and Ofcom since March 2011 and has consistently set out our coverage objective.

In our licence application to Ofcom we explained:

"Our editorial area will be the entirety of the technical coverage area (which consists of parts of the local authority areas of Sheffield and Rotherham). We aim to maintain a core focus on the city of Sheffield but to carry local editorial content relevant to the wider Sheffield City

Region (which includes Sheffield, Rotherham, Barnsley, Doncaster, Chesterfield, Worksop and other smaller towns). We will enhance coverage through other platforms (cable, Internet and IPTV) and will also explore technical coverage extension with the local multiplex operator."

In May 2012, Ofcom responded to SLTV representation on Sheffield coverage, by adding Sheffield to the list of pioneer locations in their May 2012 statement on Licensing Local Television. On the issue of the coverage available for a Sheffield local TV channel, the statement said:

"There is no transmission frequency available that would allow Sheffield to be reached by signals from Emley Moor. It may be possible to find an alternative transmission site closer to Sheffield that lies in line with aerials pointing at Emley Moor. Ofcom would consider proposals for use of an alternative site from a multiplex applicant." (Ofcom, 12 May 2012)

Since the decision to award the Sheffield local television licence to SLTV we have requested Ofcom and Comux UK re-examine the assessment of frequency availability from Emley Moor in case a channel can be found to serve Sheffield City Region. Our own technical assessment, which we have provided to Ofcom and Comux UK, indicates this as the preferred technical solution.

Question 1: Do you have any comments on the proposed order?:

We welcome plans to make use of the 600MHz spectrum band on a temporary basis for digital terrestrial television services.

We also welcome and support the submission to Ofcom by Comux UK on the use of this spectrum. In their response to the previous consultation, Comux UK stated:

"We would like Ofcom to consider the use of a single 600MHz channel to assist the local television area of Sheffield. Coverage of Sheffield from the local Sheffield transmitter is very limited and there is no other available frequency from Emley Moor at this time. Comux would like to register interest in use of a 600MHz channel as a temporary solution to improve television coverage of the Sheffield area."

We note the principal use proposed by Ofcom for temporary DTT services in the 600 MHz spectrum band consists of a number of quasi-national channels.

We believe, in the absence of a channel being found in another part of the band, that allocation of a single 600MHz channel on Emley Moor to improve local television coverage in Sheffield is a potential interim solution consistent with the terms of the Order.

We support the terms of the proposed limitation Order in so far as they would permit this use. In particular we note the limitation is not restricted to just one licence but for "a limited number" of licences.

We also support the criteria set out in paragraph 2(3) of the Order both in principle and in terms of their reasonable practical interpretation with particular respect to the availability of local television services.

We also welcome the fact that the proposed Order does not impose any a priori restrictions with respect to the technical parameters of use of the 600 MHz spectrum for digital terrestrial television that would limit the usefulness of this band for local television in comparison to DTT in other bands.

We request that Ofcom ensure, in making the Order, that the desirability of the 600MHz spectrum being available for local television in Sheffield, and any similar local television needs elsewhere, is taken into account.