

Freesat accessibility report for Ofcom

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Freesat
22-23 NEWMAN STREET, WESTMINSTER W1T 1PJ

Core functionality for accessibility

The Code of Practice on Electronic Programme Guides requires that EPG providers should use reasonable endeavours to secure so far as practicable that their EPGs include facilities for users to do all or as many as possible of the following, or to introduce accessibility features that would be equally effective:

1. Render text needed for EPG navigation and the provision of information on channels and programmes included in the EPG as speech;
2. Highlight or list separately programmes with audio description, and with signing;
3. Adjust the display of EPG information so that it can be magnified, or the text enlarged; and
4. Select a 'high contrast' display.

Freesat Response

2020 proved to be an exciting and challenging year for Freesat with the launch of its new range of next generation 4K set top boxes in unprecedented times. As with our existing Freesat branded televisions and set-top boxes, the next generation set-top boxes have a range of accessibility functions to ensure that customers can enjoy television, as follows:

- Audio description and subtitles are available for selected programmes on Freesat where a broadcaster makes them available, all Freesat products allow access to audio description and subtitles for both live and recorded programmes.
- When a programme is highlighted in the EPG, metadata flags are used to indicate subtitles, audio description and sign language support. In addition, when a user navigates the EPG, or browses channels on one of our set top boxes, and has the feature enabled, an audio beep will sound to indicate when audio descriptions are available for the highlighted or selected programme.
- Dedicated SUB and AD remote control buttons also provide an easy on/off toggle function for customers.

In addition, our next generation set-top boxes now include the standard version of the full EPG with a contrast ratio of at least 7:1 (around 7.7:1), as well as a dedicated high contrast UI with a contrast ratio of at least 18:1 (around 18.15:1).

With regard to the implementation of other EPG accessibility features as set out above, Freesat will continue to use reasonable endeavours to evolve the accessibility features in its products going forward, as far as reasonably practicable.

As mentioned in our last statement, Freesat's next generation of set top boxes are easier to update and hence to incorporate accessibility features over time. [Redacted ✂]

Freesat's ongoing work to improve EPG accessibility in the wider context includes:

[Redacted ✂]

Please note that sections of this response in italic typeface are confidential and no element of those sections can be disclosed to a third party without the prior written approval of Freesat.