

Question	Your response
<p>We are seeking views, where possible supported by evidence, from stakeholders on the issues we have discussed in this document, in particular whether the revised time allocated to news programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) would still constitute an appropriate proportion of time;</li> <li>b) would still split in an appropriate manner between “peak viewing times” and other times; and</li> <li>c) would still ensure that news programmes are broadcast for viewing at intervals throughout the period for which the channel is provided.</li> </ul>	<p>ITN produced 5 News for Channel 5 went it launched in 1997 – it’s continued to do so for most of the years since then, with one break in the mid to late 2000s.</p> <p>5 News has carved out a unique role, attracting harder to reach audiences that other programmes and services don’t connect with.</p> <p>Audiences, particularly women, in the north of England and Scotland are drawn to the programme’s unique style of news which focusses on people-led stories.</p> <p>The programmes cover key events of the day as well as highlighting stories that may not be covered on other national programmes. It also has a strong following on social media where highlights from the programme are shared. Over 470,000 people follow the programme on Facebook and it also has over 25,000 followers on Twitter.</p> <p>During the pandemic the 5 News team gained access to hospitals, care homes and schools. It exclusively reported on the financial impact of Covid-19 on struggling care homes, oxygen shortages in hospitals and supply shortages of life saving medical supplies.</p> <p>The editorial team has also broadcast a special programme about Everyday Racism – including an exclusive report about racism experienced by NHS patients. 5 News’ coverage of mental health care, including a documentary based on long-term access to a mental health unit, has won a number of awards and been nominated for many more. It has also reported on the problems faced by care leavers and kinship carers, and covered stories about many under-reported subjects like stillbirth, menopause, and men’s mental health. In recent months the programme has also covered the experience of disabled people who, after Grenfell, are living in tower blocks with no safe way out in a fire and to a perpetrator of</p>

domestic abuse being helped to change his behaviour.

ITN also makes the national news for ITV and Channel 4 as well as making the Jeremy Vine on Channel 5. ITN has a deep understanding of the broadcast news market underlined by a commitment to accurate and impartial news and it is with this experience and overview that ITN is responding to the consultation.

**a)**

As the producer of 5 News, ITN believes that the revised time would be appropriate and strengthen the programme's appeal to viewers by increasing the scope of the journalism provided. As already outlined by Channel 5 the current format of the news is a programme at 5pm presented by Sian Williams, followed by a narrative repeat at 6.30pm.

By moving to an hour-long programme, the 5 News editorial team would have the ability to cover more stories in greater depth than they are currently able to. The programme has a unique editorial approach, its agenda is designed to connect with under-represented audiences who can feel disenfranchised by more metropolitan-focused programmes. Recent focus groups suggest that the female section of the audience at 5pm (around 60% of the total audience) will only watch one TV news programme a day – so extending the duration would expand the amount of quality news content targeted directly at them.

The recent Reuters Digital News Report 2021 found that during the pandemic trust in news grew by 6 points with 74% of respondents saying that they preferred news that reflects a range of opinions despite greater choice to have opinionated news than ever before. Not only this, but the UK focussed element of the report found that trust in UK broadcast news brands were trusted because of strict impartiality rules.

In an interview earlier this year reflecting on the role 5 News played during the pandemic, health correspondent Catherine

Jones said: "What I actually feel most proud about in a way is because Channel Five's audience is really the people who are not watching any other mainstream news.

"...I feel a deep responsibility to get out that authoritative facts to them."

5 News is an important part of the plurality of voices in UK broadcast news. This proposal would not see any reduction in the number of hours of news broadcast on Channel 5. It would focus the team's newsgathering resources at a time when it is able to serve the largest share of audience. It would allow for the programme to adapt and develop at a time when audience habits are changing. Therefore, we believe the proposal would constitute an appropriate amount of time.

**b)**

The current schedule offers viewers two 30 minute programmes at 5pm and 6.30pm, which is largely a narrative repeat of the 5pm bulletin.

This schedule offers viewers one bulletin in prime time, however, it is currently competing with two other news programmes; ITV Evening News and the BBC regional news with respective audience shares of 21% and 30% compared to 0.72%.

ITN supports Channel 5's assertion that by producing a one-hour programme audiences will be able to seamlessly choose to watch high-quality and impartial news from 5pm-8pm across the UK's public service broadcasters; and that this would only benefit audiences.

Looking at the news scheduling landscape overall, despite less news content being offered during peak viewing times ITN believes that this is offset by the positive impact of three hours of news being offered in various styles and tones throughout the early evening.

There maybe people whose working patterns have changed during the

pandemic are more frequently based at home may benefit from a slightly earlier bulletin. ITN also makes ITV News bulletins and during the pandemic programmes such as the Lunchtime News have seen an uplift in audiences which can only be attributed to more people working from home.

**c)**

ITN agrees with Ofcom's recommendation that a peak time requirement should remain in place and that short headline updates at regular intervals has value for many viewers.