

3 December 2008

Yiannis Thoedorou
Ofcom
Riverside House
2a Southwark Bridge Road
London
SE1 9HA

Dear Yiannis,

Ofcom's Second Public Service Broadcasting Review - Phase 2:
preparing for the digital future.

I am writing with regard to the above consultation, which is of
extreme importance to Scotland's broadcasting industry.

As an independent membership network which strengthens
Scotland's competitiveness by influencing Government policies to
encourage sustainable economic prosperity, SCDI is seeking to
ensure that the needs of Scotland and our broadcasting industry are
included in Ofcom's final proposals.

We understand that a number of options are being considered to
maintain a healthy broadcasting system in the UK. It is our
opinion that any solution must include provision for a strong
independent STV which, whilst being part of a wider ITV
Network, is distinctly different and recognisable as Scotland's
channel.

We want to make the following contributions to your
considerations:

- Scottish programming, in particular news and current
affairs, is greatly valued by Scots.
- News programmes are not a commercially attractive
option for broadcasters but given their value, we would
argue that some form of funding should be made available
to maintain these services.
- Given our national, cultural, social and economic
distinctiveness we believe Scotland must be considered
and treated differently to the English regions. We also
consider that Scottish television services should be
available, in a prominent channel 3 position, to provide
effective competition to the BBC.

- We have the talent in Scotland to make excellent television but it has been acknowledged that Scotland suffers a ‘talent bleed’ to London. We need to ensure that we have a strong broadcasting system within Scotland, which will nurture and develop talent, and will in turn be of benefit to the wider Scottish creative community and economy.
- We do see the attraction of a Scottish digital channel, as suggested by the Scottish Broadcasting Commission, which would be appealing to viewers in Scotland and could make excellent use of new and archive material. However, this should definitely not be at the expense of a strong STV which we consider must be the overriding priority.

I have met with Rob Woodward, Chief Executive of STV, who assures me that STV is completely committed to being a public service broadcaster. STV is putting strong, relevant programming at the core of what it does, at the same time creating jobs, developing and retaining talent and all the while serving some 4 million viewers per week.

A strong STV is crucial for Scotland’s creative industry and economy, and indeed its television viewers, and I would urge you to consider these views when reaching a conclusion on your review.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Lesley Sawers
Chief Executive