

Rt Hon Peter Hain MP for Neath
Please Respond to Constituency Address

Ed Richards,
Chair
Ofcom
Riverside House
2a Southwark Bridge Road
London
SE1 9HA

Our Ref:

PGH/CM

18 July 2008

Dear Ed,

I am writing with regards UTV Radio's proposals to co-locate Valleys Radio, Swansea Sound and 96.4FM the Wave to a single media centre in the county borough of Neath Port Talbot.

I wish to support their bid and understand that the proposal comes following continued audience and revenue losses for Valleys Radio as a direct consequence of a move of listeners onto stations able to transmit on FM; this followed a period of strong audience growth and profitability. There is also the need to move from two tired buildings to a more suitable facility.

Since reaching its peak in 2004 when Valleys Radio listeners were tuning in for 1,334,000 hours a week this figure has dropped to just 540,000 hours a week in 2008. At the same time they have recorded financial losses each year since 2006.

The business plan suggests that re-location and a switch from AM to FM would help take Valleys Radio back to a profitable position in the medium term.

The switch from AM to FM will mean clearer stereo output for listeners and provide job security and new opportunities for training and development.

I have sought re-assurances that the co-location project will not mean a reduction in the number of journalists and that the work force will be kept fully informed throughout the whole process.

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