

Yvonne Matthews
5th Floor
Content and Standards
Ofcom
Riverside House
2A Southwark Bridge Road
London
SE1 9HA

16 October 2007

Dear Ms Matthews

Participation TV: protecting viewers and consumers and keeping advertising separate from editorial.

Emap Radio welcomes the opportunity to comment on the above consultation and, in particular, those proposals that will impact upon our radio services.

As responsible broadcasters we recognise that listeners (and viewers) who wish to participate in programmes should be able to decide whether or not they wish to do so by the availability of clear and concise terms and conditions and the cost that will be incurred. These must be set out in an accessible and unambiguous manner to avoid any room for misunderstanding which would ultimately damage the trust that exists between radio services and their audiences which will have taken many years to establish.

We believe that Ofcom's proposal to enhance consumer protection by including appropriate obligations as part of the broadcasting licence and making us directly responsible for PRS compliance right through the supply chain, is a sensible move. We also support the proposal that there should be a requirement for independent third party verification of such activity. As a large radio group, audits will provide us with regular opportunities to review the compliance processes that are in place and to take appropriate action to remedy any ineffective systems, or identify weaknesses within systems and take appropriate action to rectify matters. However, given that the scale of PRS activity on radio is neither of the same magnitude as that on many TV services and is often used for no other purpose than to provide interaction with the station (such as listener requests or comment) we urge Ofcom to adopt Option A – regular verification by audit with reports provided to Ofcom only upon request. Anything beyond this would be disproportionate given the innocuous





nature of much PRS activity and the relatively small size of the radio industry.

Turning to the regulatory options to ensure separation of editorial and advertising content, we agree that Option 2 clarifies the existing rules in a way that will allow most existing PRS activity to continue as long as there is a clear relationship between the interaction and the editorial content of programming or that it falls within the definition of programme related material. We therefore welcome this proposal.

Yours sincerely

Mike Phillips
Head of Regulatory and Public Affairs
Emap Radio

