

Cover sheet for response to an Ofcom consultation

BASIC DETAILS

Consultation title : Television Multiplex Licence Renewal – Multiplex B

To (Ofcom contact) : kathleen.stewart@ofcom.org.uk

Name of respondent : Arqiva

Representing (self or organisation/s) : Organisation

Address (if not received by email) :

CONFIDENTIALITY

What do you want Ofcom to keep confidential?

Nothing Name/contact details/job title

Whole response Organisation

Part of the response If there is no separate annex, which parts?

If you want part of your response, your name or your organisation to be confidential, can Ofcom still publish a reference to the contents of your response (including, for any confidential parts, a general summary that does not disclose the specific information or enable you to be identified)? Whole response is confidential

DECLARATION

I confirm that the correspondence supplied with this cover sheet is a formal consultation response. This cover sheet requests that it is not published. If I have sent my response by email, Ofcom can disregard any standard e-mail text about not disclosing email contents and attachments.

Ofcom seeks to publish responses on receipt. If your response is non-confidential (in whole or in part), and you would prefer us to publish your response only once the consultation has ended, please tick here.

Name Peter Couch Signed (if hard copy)

Head of Strategy & Regulation, for and on behalf of Arqiva Digital Platforms

About Arqiva

Arqiva is a media infrastructure and technology company operating at the heart of the broadcast and mobile communications industry and at the forefront of network solutions and services in an increasingly digital world.

Arqiva provides much of the infrastructure behind television, radio and wireless communications in the UK. In this role it has almost completed implementing UK Digital Switch-Over from analogue television to Freeview – a huge logistical exercise requiring an investment by Arqiva of some £700m and which is successfully being delivered to time and budget.

Arqiva is also a founder member and shareholder of Freeview, and operates two of the UK's three Freeview commercial multiplexes, providing over 40 services on Freeview to 20 million homes.

In addition Arqiva provides end-to-end capability for broadcasters, media companies and corporate enterprises, with services including:

- outside broadcasts (10 trucks including HD, used for such popular programmes as *Question Time* and *Antiques Roadshow*);
- satellite newsgathering (30 international broadcast SNG trucks);
- 10 TV studios;
- spectrum services for Programme-Making & Special Events (PMSE)¹; and
- satellite distribution (over 1200 services delivered).

Specifically in respect of the Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) platform:

1. The “TransCo” team within Arqiva Broadcast & Media is contracted to all current DTT multiplex operators to provide their transmission networks, where access to Arqiva’s broadcast sites and Managed Transmission Services is regulated by Ofcom;
2. Arqiva Digital Platforms represents the Multiplex Licence operations of Arqiva, and has a contract for Managed Transmission Services with Arqiva Broadcast & Media; and
3. Arqiva’s spectrum planning and antenna design team provides a consultancy service to Ofcom.

¹ Such as the wireless cameras operated by the BBC and Sky News, and the radio mics used in virtually all television production and many West End shows.

Consultation Questions and Arqiva Responses

Question 1: Do you agree that Ofcom should not seek a supplementary technical plan in respect of Multiplex B prior to considering whether or not to renew the Mux B Licence?

Response Question 1

Arqiva agrees that Ofcom should not seek a supplementary technical plan in respect of Multiplex B prior to considering whether or not to renew the Mux B Licence.

Question 2: Do you agree that in renewing the Mux B Licence, it is appropriate not to require supplementary proposals in relation to the promotion of, or assistance with, the acquisition of DTT receiver equipment?

Response Question 2

Arqiva agrees that there is no longer a need for supplementary proposals in a renewed Mux B Licence for the promotion of, or assistance with, the acquisition of DTT receiver equipment.

Question 3: Do you agree with our preference not to apply a charge for PMR in a renewed Mux B Licence, in light of our stated intention to charge AIP for spectrum used for broadcasting?

Response Question 3

As per the recent renewal of Multiplex Licences C & D, where PMR charges were not applied, we agree with Ofcom's preference to not apply a PMR charge to the Multiplex B Licence.

Whilst Arqiva recognises that this consultation is not a consultation relating to Administered Incentive Pricing (AIP), but as we have previously noted with Ofcom, we have serious concerns regarding plans to apply AIP to broadcast spectrum and the negative effects on investment and the future of the DTT platform. We understand that Ofcom are developing their thinking with regard to the application of AIP to broadcast spectrum and we urge Ofcom to engage early with the relevant stakeholders on this issue.

Question 4: Do you agree that Ofcom should vary any renewed Mux B Licence in order to remove the provisions set out in paragraph 3.21?

Response Question 4

Arqiva agrees with Ofcom's proposals to vary the renewed Mux B licence to remove the provisions set out in paragraph 3.21. Arqiva are also keen to note that a wide ranging update of the multiplex licences is warranted to bring them up to date and we are keen to work with Ofcom to ensure that they are current and address existing regulatory arrangements.