

Sara Winter  
Ofcom  
Riverside House  
2a Southwark Bridge  
London  
SE1 9HA

Dear Sara Winter

Re: 2009 Ofcom Access services review

Audio description is a brilliant service that has completely revolutionised my enjoyment of television. It's a narrative that describes the action, body language, facial expressions or scenery - all things that I might otherwise miss.

I understand the Ofcom Access Services review includes three options for the future of audio description. I am requesting that Ofcom choose option two and increase audio description to 20% across all channels.

My husband and I are registered blind so we purchased a large flat screen TV to increase our enjoyment of TV programmes and despite sitting very close to the set, we still miss out on a lot of programme content. We both like BBC's new Dr Who series and have some of the audio described DVD box sets. The Dr Who DVD's also have audio menu navigation, which is another significant enhancement to our access to the DVD's and I would congratulate the BBC on their accessibility options. If there were more programmes screened with AD we would enjoy TV programmes on a more equitable basis to non-visually impaired viewers. We would not have to constantly ask our son and other relatives and friends who characters are on screen and what is happening when programmes have scenes that are dark, or there is no dialogue to support screen action.

I am a Rehabilitation Worker for people who are blind or partially sighted and I have provided many people with information about how to set up AD on SKY and Cable sets. Feedback has confirmed that AD has become a valued aspect of their TV viewing and significantly increases their viewing pleasure. Furthermore as a sight loss professional, I might add that most people who experience sight loss invariably find reading incredibly problematic – if not impossible, so TV becomes their main source of media for leisure. Sight loss often engenders feelings of anxiety and loss of confidence in their ability to go out and about, so they become isolated and TV is regularly cited to me as their greatest source of pleasure since loss of vision. Please take onboard my request for an increase of audio description to 20 per cent.