

Title:

Forename:

Surname:

Representing:

Self

Organisation (if applicable):

Email:

What additional details do you want to keep confidential? :

Keep name confidential

If you want part of your response kept confidential, which parts? :

Ofcom may publish a response summary:

Yes

I confirm that I have read the declaration:

Yes

Additional comments:

Question 1: Do you agree that the existing obligations on Channel 3 and Channel 5 licensees in respect of national and international news and current affairs, original productions, and Out of London productions should be maintained at their current levels? If not, what levels do you consider appropriate, and why? :

I believe the current levels are fairly acceptable and maintained if not increased. These levels allow for a rich mixture of programming on both Channels 3 and 5 for the convenience of viewers - however, a reduction in these levels would be extremely unwelcome and could potentially reduce plurality in British television.

Question 2: Do you agree with ITV's proposals for changes to its regional news arrangements in England, including an increase in the number of news regions in order to provide a more localised service, coupled with a reduction in overall news minutage? :

I welcome a more localised ITV regional news service - this is a very good move. However, the reduction of overall regional news content is completely unnecessary. Weekend regional news updates, at the existing length, are not sufficient enough at covering stories of a local nature and are more akin to "sports bulletins". A more localised service is welcome, but not at the expense of the overall minutage.

Question 3: Do you agree with UTV's proposal for non-news obligations should be reduced to 90 minutes a week? If not, what alternative would you propose and why? :

As a separate franchise to that of the English ITV service, one would expect UTV to maintain a high standard of fully regional content. A reduction in their obligations could result in a growing lack of interest in regional programming, and a possible unwillingness to cover specific matters of interest to the Northern Irish audience unless funding was offered to them.

Question 4: Do you agree with the proposals by STV to maintain overall minutage for regional content in the northern and central licence areas of Scotland at 5 hours 30 minutes a week, as detailed in Annex 3? If not, what alternative would you propose, and why? :

Question 5: Do you agree with the proposals by ITV to maintain the overall minutage for regional content in Wales at 5 hours 30 minutes a week, as detailed in Annex 3? If not, what alternative would you propose, and why? :

Maintaining regional content is hugely preferred to reducing it.

Question 6: Do you agree with the proposals by ITV to reduce the overall minutage for regional content in the Channel Islands from 4 hours a week to 3 hours 20 minutes as detailed in Annex 3, while maintaining the present provision of a 30 minute early evening regional news programme? If not, what alternative would you propose, and why? :

This is rather unacceptable. The strain on finances is no excuse for viewers to feel that ITV is connecting less and less with them as the years go on. Programming that matters to audiences of a political and social nature needs to be a fixed and rigid part of ITV schedules in every region, and reducing the overall minutage is an option totally unnecessary. Perhaps ITV should invest in a partnership with another organisation in order to fund prosperous regional content.

Question 7: Do you have any views on any other aspects of the nations and regions programming and production obligations of the Channel 3 licensees? :

The non-news regional programming (such as "Last Orders" on ITV Yorkshire) needs to be increased. Issues relating to politics are topics of great interest to viewers, as the success of ITN's political panel show "The Agenda" only goes to show. The regional discussion shows are not broadcast on a regular enough basis and are transmitted at inconvenient times of the evening, such as 23:00 or thereabouts. Such programming ought to be broadcast at times convenient for viewers in an attempt to capture the largest amount of viewers possible.

Question 8: Which option would you prefer in respect of the news and current affairs in the Border region, and why? :

Question 9: If option 2 were to be adopted, should ITV be required to provide separate transmission for the Scottish and English parts of the region on DTT? :

Question 10: If you would prefer a different option to those set out in Questions 8 and 9 above, please explain what, and why:

Question 11: Do you agree that the Border licence should be amended to reduce the proportion of regional production required to a sustainable level? If not, what proposals would you like to make? :

Question 12: What views do you have on the proposal by STV and UTV to extend peak time to 11pm, which would extend the window in which they could schedule regional content that must be shown in peak time? :

This comes across as a thinly-veiled attempt to push regional content closer and closer into what one might term "graveyard timeslots", such as the post News at Ten-slot at 22:30, until ratings decrease to a point that the broadcasters can legitimately request leniency from Ofcom because no-one watches this type of programming. For this reason, I completely and profoundly disagree with the intention to extend peak time later into the evening. Such regionally-specific content should be broadcast to as wide an audience as possible in order to maintain its viability.