

Title:

Mr

Forename:

Alastair

Surname:

Witts

Representing:

Self

Organisation (if applicable):

Email:

What additional details do you want to keep confidential?:

No

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:

I am a councillor for Dumfries and Galloway Council, representing the Scottish National Party. However, the views expressed are my own.

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? :

Yes

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? :

Yes

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? :

Yes

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? :

Yes

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? :

Yes

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? :

Yes

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? :

No

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

I agree with option 2. The situation has changed since the creation of the Scottish Parliament in 1999. Decisions taken there impact on the South of Scotland area covered by Border TV, and it is vital that people in this area are kept informed about these decisions. The current news provision is grossly unsatisfactory, but a return to the pre 1999 provision would also be undesirable for the reasons stated above.

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? :

Yes

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

N/A

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? :

Yes- this will be inevitable as the Border region is an artificial construct which came into being as it was appropriate for the technology then available. This scenario has now been overtaken by events, both technological and political.

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?:

I would approve of such a proposal, subject to the provisions as expressed in question 9.