

Arqiva submission to Ofcom's General Policy on Information Gathering

About Arqiva

Arqiva is a communications infrastructure and media services company operating at the heart of the mobile and broadcast communications industry. Arqiva provides infrastructure for television, radio, mobile and other wireless communication in the UK.

Arqiva operates shared radio site assets throughout the UK, including masts from under 30 to over 300 metres tall. We have worked with the mobile industry over two decades to deliver mobile services to consumers with a significant presence in suburban and rural areas. Our portfolio includes over 8,600 active, and more than 16,500 marketable sites. These include radio and television broadcast sites, BT telephone exchange rooftops and use of National Grid pylons.

Arqiva enables the Airwave emergency services network in remote areas through ca. 1,000 of our sites. We are working with DCMS to build new shared sites for villages in 'not-spots' as part of the Mobile Infrastructure Programme (MIP). We also own and operate 50 In-Building Systems to extend the MNOs' coverage and capacity into challenging environments such as Canary Wharf and the ExCel Centre.

We are one of the UK's largest public WiFi providers, enabling us to offer unique propositions for venue WiFi and small cell networks, including at Heathrow airport and Central London.

Arqiva is building a national Internet of Things ("IoT") network, starting with 10 of the UK's largest cities. Our smart metering service, connecting 10 million homes using long-range radio technology, will be one of the UK's largest machine-to-machine deployments.

Arqiva is a founder member and shareholder of Freeview. We broadcast all eight Freeview multiplexes, are the licensed operator of four of them and we own Connect TV, the first company to launch a live IP streaming channel on Freeview. Arqiva is the licensed operator of Digital One – the national commercial DAB digital radio multiplex.

Arqiva is a major player in the UK's satellite industry, operating over 80 antennas to geostationary satellites, and providing Telemetry, Tracking and Command support services to some of the leading satellite operators. We are a major provider of permanent satellite services to both Freesat and Sky customers. Arqiva also provides global satellite based services to the broadcast, communications, security, oil & gas and exploration sectors.

Our major customers include EE, H3G/Three, Telefónica/O2, Vodafone, BBC, ITV, Channel 4, Five, Sky, Global Radio, Airwave, Heathrow and Whitbread/Premier Inn.

Arqiva is owned by a consortium of long-term investors and has its headquarters in Hampshire, with major UK offices in London, Buckinghamshire and Yorkshire.

Our response

Arqiva welcomes the opportunity to contribute to Ofcom's consultation on General Policy on Information Gathering.

We are grateful that Ofcom has requested views on this issue. We have a single observation on the issue of whether information requests are issued to parties in draft form before they are, then, formally issued afterwards.

Our experience from providing information to Ofcom is that there is significant benefit in Ofcom issuing a draft request when it relates to providing more technical information. For example, when providing information to Ofcom in support of its Infrastructure Reports, we find that it is useful to identify which information we are actually in a position to provide. This saves time for both parties. Moreover, by engaging informally with Ofcom on the provision of large quantities of data, we are in a better position to assist with identifying the most appropriate format for providing the required information.

We would therefore request that Ofcom continues to issue draft requests for technical information so that we can continue our constructive engagement with it most effectively in the future.