

Appendix 1

Ofcom's consultation on programming options for ITV Border

ITV has been discussing with Ofcom proposals to introduce an enhanced, more distinct news service for the Border region. These discussions are part of the Channel 3 licence renewal process to secure a strong and sustainable future for ITV regional news

Ofcom has recently launched a consultation¹ asking for views on two options (below) for the ITV Border region.

ITV's preference is for Option 1 and, if it is approved by Ofcom, we would hope to have the new services in place by the Autumn of this year, allowing us to fully cover the run up to the referendum on independence for Scotland.

Option 1: ITV's proposal

An enhanced nightly Border news programme *Lookaround* providing 30 minutes of news from Cumbria and Southern Scotland, not including stories from the north east of England.

In addition, a new weekly 30 minute current affairs and politics programme for the Border region that will focus on the stories, issues and concerns of viewers in Border. It will have a particular emphasis on matters dealt with by the Scottish Parliament. It would be broadcast at 10.35pm for 30 minutes, in most weeks of the year and could be repeated during the weekend.

This proposal is based first and foremost on the needs of viewers. It is clear from both our and Ofcom's research² that viewers in Border want news about their local area rather than news dominated by the urban agendas of either Central Belt Scotland or the North East of England.

Option 2: an alternative

The same new nightly Border news programme as Option 1.

An extra 90 minutes of current affairs programming each week that could be shared with STV and could result in the retransmission of the STV *Scotland Tonight* programme in Border. Ofcom is also asking for views on whether, if this option was adopted, ITV would be required to split the signal for Border so that

¹ Ofcom's consultation: <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/consultations/c3-c5-obligations/summary/c3-c5-obligations.pdf>

² Ofcom's viewer research into news provision in Border Scotland: <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/broadcast/tv-ops/tv-border-news.pdf>

viewers in Border Scotland see *Scotland Tonight* (or similar) while viewers in England would see programming shown on the rest of the ITV network³.

Background

- In November 2012 the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport announced that the Government will renew the Channel 3 Public Service Broadcasting Licenses for a full 10 year term from their expiry at the end of 2014.
- As part of the licence renewal process ITV has been discussing with the regulator, Ofcom, a future Border service that allows viewers to retain a news programme that provides news about their area as well as more programming about Scotland (particularly the South of Scotland).
- ITV currently provides 15 minutes Border news plus 15 minutes of Border/Tyne Tees news per weekday evening for the Border/Tyne Tees region.
- Even the current Border regional news service, Lookaround, is far more popular than the comparable services in Scotland. Furthermore, Lookaround enjoys the highest viewing figures of any ITV regional programme (and higher than most network programmes).

Share of viewing weeks 1-47 of 2012 ITV1: 18.00 and 18.29	
ITV average	19.2%
ITV Border Region (Scotland and England)	38.5%
ITV Border (Scotland only)	41.5%
STV (Central and Northern regions)	26.5%

³ para 4.21 of Ofcom's consultation:
<http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/consultations/c3-c5-obligations/summary/c3-c5-obligations.pdf>