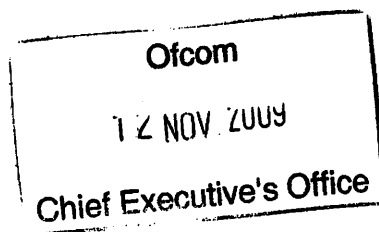


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HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

DAI DAVIES
Member of Parliament for Blaenau Gwent



4th November 2009

Dear Chief Executive,

I am writing in support of the Royal National Institute for the Blind campaign to increase the amount of audio description on Television and on behalf of my Constituents who are blind or partially sighted..

The present situation within the Communications Act (2003) requires that broadcasters audio describe 10 per cent of their programming on digital TV. I am reliably informed that Ofcom has issued a review of TV access services which makes three proposals for the future of audio description which is very welcome progress.

The three proposals are: 1. No change - audio description remains at 10 per cent 2. Increase audio description targets to 20 per cent on all digital TV channels 3. Increase audio description targets to 20 per cent on 10 PSB channels (BBC 1,2,3,4 CBBC, Cbeebies, ITV1, C4. Five, S4C)

I would urge Ofcom to accept the recommendation of the experts namely the RNIB and blind and partially sighted people and adopt option 2. Blind and partially sighted people, just like sighted people, have a wide range of interests and would like to choose from a wider range of programs on all channels. Blind and partially sighted people often tell me that audio description has revolutionized TV for them and that they are now able to fully understand and follow programs which they can't without audio description.

The proposal is that Broadcasters would be required to phase in this increase over five years so that broadcasters would not have to double their increase at this time of lower revenue. Broadcasters with a very small audience share and turnover do not have to meet these targets.

I would urge Ofcom to accept option two which would make a significant positive difference to the quality of life to those individuals who are blind and partially sighted.

Yours sincerely

Dai Davies MP