

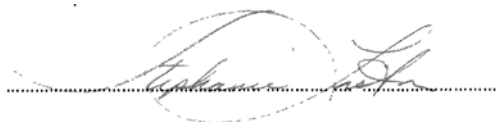
EQUALITY OF ACCESS BOARD INDEPENDENT MEMBERS
RESPONSE TO OFCOM'S
DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS REVIEW CONSULTATION

Introduction

1. Ofcom has sought responses to its Strategic Review of Digital Communications. The full Equality of Access Board (EAB) has provided a response to questions 13, 14 and 15 in the consultation which has our full support. We determined that it is appropriate for the independent members only to provide input separately on the question of EAB independence. This paper has been prepared with the help of the Equality of Access Office (EAO).

EAB Governance

2. We can genuinely say that we have at all times, and on all issues, believed that the EAB has operated independently under the current arrangements.
3. We would thus be comfortable retaining a BT Chair, but we acknowledge the potential benefits to external perceptions of having an independent chair.
4. We would in all scenarios prefer to retain a BT NED on the EAB, as this provides a direct route to the BT Board to relay messages and apply pressure when required.
5. The structure, mode of operation and current leadership of the EAO, which combines independence and objectivity with the benefit of being inside BT, has been key to the EAB's independence and effectiveness. If Ofcom decides that functional separation is to be maintained we would urge that this model remain unchanged.
6. **The opinions above are the collective and unanimous consultation response from all the EAB independent members.**



- **Stephanie Liston, Independent Member**



- **Edward Astle, Independent Member**



- **Emin Gurdenli, Independent Member**

7th October 2015