

REVIEW OF SIGNING ARRANGEMENTS FOR LOW-AUDIENCE TV CHANNELS

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ORGANISATION: Independent

Producer & Film Maker & also a Deaf viewer and TV License payer

Additional comments:

- Television is important to me and it is a great thing for Deaf people. I watch films and soaps with subtitles, and I also really want to see more programmes made in BSL which reflect my culture and identity.
- I work in Television & Film and employ both hearing and Deaf talent. We are currently trying to make high quality programmes for the whole of the Deaf Community (adhering to difficult conditions because of the time that our programmes are aired) at a minute fraction of what producers of Gaelic/Welsh language programmes have in their budget.
- The standard of live subtitling on TV is frequently appalling and I have to ask people to interpret into BSL what is being said on TV.

Question 1:

Do you agree that it would be appropriate to increase the minimum contributions to alternative signing arrangements to bring them back to the 2007 level in real terms, and to make annual adjustments for inflation thereafter? If not, why not?

- Yes, I agree that these increases should happen immediately.
- There should have been increases for inflation every year between 2007 and now. Broadcasters have 'saved' quite a lot of money over the last seven years.
- Deaf people have had *fewer* programmes because these increases did not take place. But there has been *more* subtitling, *more* audio description – and more sign-interpreted programmes on channels with bigger audiences.
- I think Ofcom should also look again at whether £20,000 is the right figure to start with.

QUESTION 2:

Do you agree that it would not be appropriate to base adjustments to the minimum level of contributions to alternative arrangements on comparisons with the costs of existing sign-presented programmes, or with general TV production costs? If not, why not?

- I accept that it is difficult to base adjustments on the costs of existing sign-presented programmes or general TV production costs.

QUESTION 3:

Do you agree that it would be appropriate to make annual adjustments to the minimum contributions in line with the Consumer Price Index, and to make consequential change to the Guidance, as set out in Annex 4? If not, why not?

- Yes, I think this is acceptable.

QUESTION 4:

Do you consider that minimum signing requirements for relevant channels should remain fixed at 30 minutes a month or should they rise progressively over a ten year period to 75 minutes a month? If the latter, do you agree that consequential changes should be made to the Code, as set out in Annex 4? Please explain the reasons for your preference.

- Yes, the minimum signing requirements for relevant channels should rise.
- 30 minutes of programming a month, or 7.30 minutes per week, is *much* too low. If a channel repeats a programme then that means there would be even less for us.
- 75 minutes a month is much better but does not go far enough.
- There should have been increases over the last seven years so I think the increases should go to 120 minutes a month or more.

QUESTION 5:

Do you consider that transitional arrangements set out in Figure 4 would be appropriate if relevant channels are made subject to rising obligations? If so, do you agree that consequential changes should be made to the Code, as set out in Annex 4?

- No, the proposed increases should take effect in full from 2015. No more delay.
- All other access services have gone up in the last seven years. Now it's time for sign-presented programmes to catch up.
- Broadcasters' revenues went up 112% between 2008 and 2012, and are likely to have gone up further through 2013 and 2014. The trend is certainly going up.

QUESTION 6:

Do you consider that minimum contributions by relevant channels to alternative arrangements should remain fixed at £20,000 a year (adjusted for inflation) or should rise progressively over a ten-year period to £50,000 a year (also adjusted for inflation)? Please explain reasons for your preference.

- Contributions should go up progressively over a ten-year period.
- Contributions should rise in line with the increases in content over time.
- I want to see more programmes made in BSL, especially in 2015 when there will be a General Election so that Deaf people can participate in a more informed way.
- The extra money will mean that more Deaf people can learn to make programmes and develop their skills. BSL programmes must be made by Deaf people who use BSL.
- There should be fewer repeats – and more new programmes. We need news and more children's programmes.