



**Response to Prominence and Accessibility on Connected TV Platforms:
Ofcom Consultation on draft Code of Practice and draft Guidance on the Agreement
Objectives**

March 2026

About us

1. [Directors UK](#) is the professional association of UK TV and film directors representing over 8,500 members.
2. Film and TV are a great British success story, and directors are key to the creation of what is seen on our screens. The directors' role is to bring a script or story to life, their creative vision draws together all the different creative elements – scripts, actors/contributors, technical crew, designers – to create compelling films and TV.
3. Directors UK is both a membership organisation and a Collective Management Organisation (CMO). We negotiate, collect and distribute residual and royalty payments to directors and provide a range of services including campaigning, legal advice, events, training, and career development opportunities.

The implications for directors of the new prominence rules

4. We welcome the opportunity to respond to this consultation, which is important to our members on several levels. The UK's screen directors are the central creative force for many UK PSB (Public Service Broadcaster) productions and are keen to ensure their work is as widely seen as possible. In addition, the PSBs fund a large percentage of overall UK production – their survival is crucial to ensuring the continued commissioning of a wide range of content, some of which is underserved elsewhere, often because it is not seen as not commercially viable.
5. As Ofcom has stated in past reports, it is crucial to make sure that PSB services are prominent on connected TV platforms. With the Government having now legislated on the matter, it needs to follow through on the intention of the Media Act. The Code and Guidelines must be designed to *ensure* prominence for the PSB designated internet programme services (DIPS) on the connected TV platforms/regulated television supply services (RTSS).
6. Directors UK is concerned that Ofcom's Code and Guideline Agreement do not go far enough in terms of securing prominence for PSB programming services and we have outlined briefly below why we think this is the case.
7. RTSS and DIPS stakeholders will be best placed to respond in detail to the Code and Guidelines, we have therefore focused on addressing some key high-level points in our response.

Consultation question 1: Do you agree with our approach to considering appropriate prominence and our analytical framework?

8. As stated above we have concerns that the initial intentions of both Ofcom and Government have not been sufficiently upheld in the draft Code. In its 2019 review of prominence for public service broadcasting, Ofcom stated that: *'It is not enough to simply make sure a range of quality programmes are made and available, they must also be easy to find, watched and enjoyed by*

viewers. *The importance of ease of discovery is recognised by Parliament, and the prominence rules aim to ensure that channels which deliver valuable public service content are easy to find*¹. In subsequent PSM (public service media) reviews, Ofcom has continued to stress that PSBs require prominence in order to continue to serve their audiences and compete with the large international competitors whose services are also provided to audiences by the RTSS, describing the situation as ‘urgent’ in the following PSM review, Small Screen Big Debate².

Allowing alternative options

9. In the above context, a concern we have is that the ability Ofcom permits in paragraph 1.9 of the Code, for RTSS to choose alternative options rather than the recommendations for achieving prominence for the PSBs³ risks the Code being treated as optional (albeit Ofcom has to approve any alternative arrangements). With Ofcom having taken the trouble to set out a workable solution to ensuring prominence (with some suggested firming up as outlined below), we believe it will be much simpler if Ofcom stipulates the methods by which RTSS must ensure prominence. Otherwise, we risk having a patchwork landscape across many devices which will surely be significantly more challenging for Ofcom to monitor and regulate, in order to ensure that visibility for PSB content is fully protected.

Allowing users to alter the order of apps on an RTSS

10. Ofcom proposes to allow users of an RTSS the option of re-ordering the apps⁴, in the process giving them the ability to demote the PSB services in terms of their visibility. This appears to run directly counter to Ofcom’s previous recommendations, when calling for legislation, that it was important to ‘ensure’ prominence. We also note the Government’s stating during the Bill’s passage that its intention was that the PSB services would be *‘the first thing [viewers] see’*⁵. We believe Ofcom must remove this flexibility from the Code, instead requiring that PSB apps remain prominent and the user does not have the option to demote them.

Prioritising PSBs

11. We note that the Code stipulates that where an RTSS service operates without variance across the UK, the main PSBs - BBC, ITV/STV, Channel 4, Channel 5 and S4C - must appear within the first nine tiles on a platform app⁶. However, there is a danger with some RTSS that there are not as many as nine tiles shown, either at all or in their entirety. Clearly if some PSBs are not immediately or wholly visible as a result, this could prove to be a significant disadvantage and would not appear to ‘ensure’ that PSBs are prominent in the way Ofcom called for or that the Government intended when tabling the Media Act. The first six tiles need to be secured for the PSBs so that their prominence is ensured.

¹ [Review of prominence for public service broadcasting: Recommendations to Government for a new framework to keep PSB TV prominent in an online world. Ofcom, July 2019, p9 para 3.6](#)

² [Small Screen Big Debate: Recommendations to Government on the Future of Public Service Media. Ofcom July 2021](#)

³ [Consultation Prominence and Accessibility on Connected Platforms, Ofcom, P18, para 3.6; Draft Code of Practice for Regulated Television Selection Services. Ofcom, January 2026, p5 para 1.9](#)

⁴ [Draft Code of Practice for Regulated Television Selection Services. Ofcom, January 2026, p6, A1.6](#)

⁵ Sir John Whittingdale MP OBE, Minister of State at DCMS, Media Bill Commons Committee Stage, 7 December 2023. [House of Commons Official Report, Public Bill Committee, PBC \(Bill 8\) 2023 - 2024, col. 100](#)

⁶ [Draft Code of Practice for Regulated Television Selection Services. Ofcom, January 2026, p6, A1.3 c iii](#)

Length of time for introduction

12. Ofcom is currently proposing that once the Code and agreement guidance are finalised, the RTSS will have twelve months to meet the requirements. We are greatly concerned that this will lead to well over a year's delay from now until these urgent changes are introduced. Given the importance of prominence, and the fact Ofcom has now set out its draft requirements, we would argue that RTSS stakeholders should already be looking to ensure they can meet these requirements and therefore from the conclusion of Ofcom's work to the requirements being introduced can be a shorter time period. We would suggest that Ofcom gives RTSS stakeholders six months from the final Code and guidance being published, to focus the industry on introducing these important prominence changes as soon as possible and protecting UK PSBs and the directorial and other creative talent they support.

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