

Ian Katz
Chief Content Officer: Channel 4
124 Horseferry Road
SW1P 2TX

Vikki Cook
Director, Broadcasting and Media Group
Email: Vikki.Cook@ofcom.org.uk

11th December 2024

Dear Ian,

Updated guidance on preparation of Channel 4's Statement of Media Content Policy

We write further to our recent [Statement](#), which set out our decision to renew the licence for Channel 4 for 10 years and the conditions for the renewed licence ('the Statement'). We would like to confirm our guidance in relation to how Channel 4 Corporation ('C4C') should report on its approach to commissioning in each of the nations.¹

In our Statement, we highlighted serious concerns raised by some stakeholders about C4C's engagement with the production sector outside of England. We said that it is important that C4C is much more open and transparent about its activities in the nations and publishes more information on its approach to commissioning. This additional information will provide greater transparency and enable Ofcom to better scrutinise and report on C4C's performance and strategy for production in the nations.

C4C's duties under the Communications Act 2003 (the Act)

Under section 266 of the Act, C4C must prepare an annual statement of programme policy setting out its proposals for securing that, during the following year, Channel 4's public service remit and licence obligations will be delivered, and reporting on its performance over the past year. C4C must have regard to [Ofcom's guidance](#) in preparing this document. C4C must prepare a similar statement in relation to the delivery of its media content duties under section 198B of the Act. In our guidance, we ask C4C to combine the statements in a document which we refer to as C4C's Statement of Media Content Policy ('SMCP').

We have responded to each of C4C's annual SMCPs and set out our views on its performance, which we publish alongside C4C's SMCP for that year. This allows us to hold C4C to account for the delivery of its remit and media content duties.

How we expect C4C to report on its approach to commissioning in the nations

Further to our decision at paragraph 5.234 of the Statement, we are now providing guidance that C4C should set out in its SMCP:

- how its approach to commissioning outside of England supports and stimulates the TV production sector in the nations, including how it enables access to commissioners;
- its strategy for commissioning in each individual nation over the next year and how it delivered its strategy for the previous year; and
- its plans to engage with stakeholders and audiences in the nations in the next year and how it engaged with them over the previous year.

¹ 'Nations' refers to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

This guidance is additional to the existing [guidance](#) for completion of the SMCP and applies from 1 January 2025.

As is the case currently, C4C will also report annually on its progress towards meeting the increased 'Made outside England' quotas that apply from 2030, in terms of the proportion of hours and spend allocated to the nations. We will continue our monitoring of this and scrutinise C4C's progress.

Implementation of the Media Act 2024

The additional guidance that we set out here is issued as part of our renewal of the Channel 4 licence, which we are doing under the current statutory framework. Over the next year, we will be consulting on various updated and new guidance in order to implement changes made by the Media Act 2024. This will include new guidance for C4C on preparing its SMCP. We will consult on this guidance next year and expect it to apply from 2026.

I look forward to continuing to engage with you and your team on the issues raised in this letter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vikki Cook', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Vikki Cook