



“Expanding access to the 6 GHz band - Our approach to future mobile use in high density areas and incumbent users”

Consultation response

6 July 2026

Introduction

The BBC welcomes the opportunity to respond to Ofcom's proposals on the introduction of mobile in high density areas of the UK. The BBC is a large operator of PMSE systems in the band being considered, and relies on fixed links in parts of the UK for its content distribution to terrestrial transmitter networks.

Question 1: Do you agree with our proposed set of 88 high density areas for 6 GHz authorisation? If you disagree, please provide your reasoning and evidence.

The BBC supports a high density areas approach to balancing concentrated spectrum demand while preserving shared use elsewhere, particularly for 26 GHz and 40 GHz following licences awarded in the 2025 mmWave auction.

Ofcom's December 2022 Conclusions paper, "Ofcom's future approach to mobile markets and spectrum" identified three primary measures for meeting future mobile data demand up to 2030 and beyond: (1) more extensive deployment of existing spectrum and planned releases; (2) investment in technology upgrades to increase data capacity per unit spectrum; and (3) network densification through additional sites. Ofcom also indicated a preference for "No Change" for Upper 6 GHz in relation to an IMT identification at WRC-23.

Subsequent consultations and statements now propose high-power mobile services in Upper 6 GHz for IMT in high density areas but it is not made clear on what basis Ofcom have revised their 2022 position that these previously identified measures will be sufficient. Given that mmWave (26/40 GHz), small cells, technology upgrades and densification are already existing options, introducing high-power mobile in Upper 6 GHz now risks unnecessary disruption to existing Fixed Link and PMSE users before further high-power services in Upper 6 GHz can be justified.

Licence data from the recent 'Ofcom Call for Input: Sector Spectrum Review - Programme Making and Special Events (PMSE)' showed a rise in 7GHz spectrum assignments for Wireless Cameras of 260% since 2018, including within Upper 6GHz. Ofcom now propose immediate removal of PMSE from 7110-7125MHz across the entire UK, not just high density areas. Additionally the remainder of the 7GHz band could be lost to IMT as a consequence of WRC-27 Agenda Item 1.7. Alternative 2GHz for Wireless Cameras, 2010-2025MHz is also under threat from WRC-27 Agenda Item 1.12.

7GHz Wireless Cameras are routinely deployed at top tier football, horseracing and festival venues, not just for high demand exceptional events such as the Eurovision Song Contest in Liverpool and F1 Grand Prix at Silverstone. The BBC and other broadcasters' world class coverage will be severely restricted by the loss of access to 7GHz spectrum. It therefore appears premature to allocate and clear the Upper 6 GHz band for further mobile services now, even if limited to high density areas. The BBC consider it would be reasonable to only consider clearing the Upper 6 GHz in high density areas following take up of 26 GHz and 40 GHz bands for further mobile services.

Question 2: Do you agree with our proposal to clear fixed links from the Upper 6 GHz band in and around high density areas, and to leave the band open to new fixed link licence applications outside of high density areas, subject to coordination?

Making Upper 6 GHz available to mobile services in high density areas leaves no alternative to clearing Fixed Links in and around these locations. The BBC agrees the band should remain open to new Fixed Link applications outside these areas alongside existing links.

The links subject to revocation indicated in Figure 4.1 are extensive and appear to include a number upon which the BBC relies. Costs to move links to alternative bands should not be borne by the

licensees or users of these links, including the BBC, and a compensation scheme to cover operators' costs should be considered.

Question 3: Do you agree with the approach we have set out to identify the links which will be affected by the proposed revocation?

No comment

Question 4: Do you agree with our proposal to remove access to the frequencies 7110-7125 MHz for PMSE use, but to retain the option of allowing users to “borrow” spectrum from the Upper 6 GHz band for occasional major events?

The BBC agrees that once Upper 6 GHz is in use for mobile services in high density areas, PMSE use of 7110-7125 MHz in those areas will become impractical. However, the BBC believes it would still be possible to make good use of this band for PMSE outside the high density areas, and doesn't believe that UK wide PMSE access to 7110-7125 MHz needs to be removed. By retaining PMSE access outside the high density areas, Ofcom can preserve the significant benefits for citizens and consumers from the use of Upper 6 GHz for mobile services within those high density areas, while maximising the benefits of PMSE elsewhere. This is especially relevant considering the expected increased pressures to use more of the 7 GHz band for mobile following WRC-27. The BBC addresses this point at more length in its response¹ to Ofcom's recent Call for Inputs on PMSE.

New and existing Fixed Links continue to be permitted in Upper 6 GHz away from high density areas. Similarly, we believe that PMSE access to 7110-7125 MHz outside high density areas should remain on the current basis without the additional requirement for exceptional clearances.

We welcome no change to exceptional clearances in Upper 6 GHz below 7110 MHz and that Ofcom are reviewing arrangements to 'borrow' spectrum outside core PMSE bands. The BBC would be happy to contribute to discussions. Additional access to 7250-7300 MHz for major events would also be a welcome addition.

Question 5: Do you agree with our proposal to require mobile base stations to protect RAS usage of the band at the levels specified?

No comment

Question 6: Do you have any comments on how we should manage coexistence between mobile and any other users in the Upper 6 GHz band (i.e., RAS, EESS, SRDs, FSS and MOD use)?

The BBC continues to rely on the FSS in the 6 GHz band for uplinks (earth-to-space). The BBC is grateful for Ofcom's reassurances that these proposals should not lead to harmful interference to satellite receivers, and notes that these incumbent services will continue to be required.

¹ <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/siteassets/resources/documents/consultations/category-3-4-weeks/call-for-input-sector-spectrum-review---programme-making-and-special-events-pmse/responses/bbc.pdf>

Question 7: Do you have any comments on our assessment of the impacts of our proposals (to the extent not covered by previous questions)?

No comment

Question 8: Do you have any comments on our Equality impact assessment?

No comment

Question 9: Do you have any comments on our Welsh Language impact assessment? Please provide evidence in support of your views.

No comment