

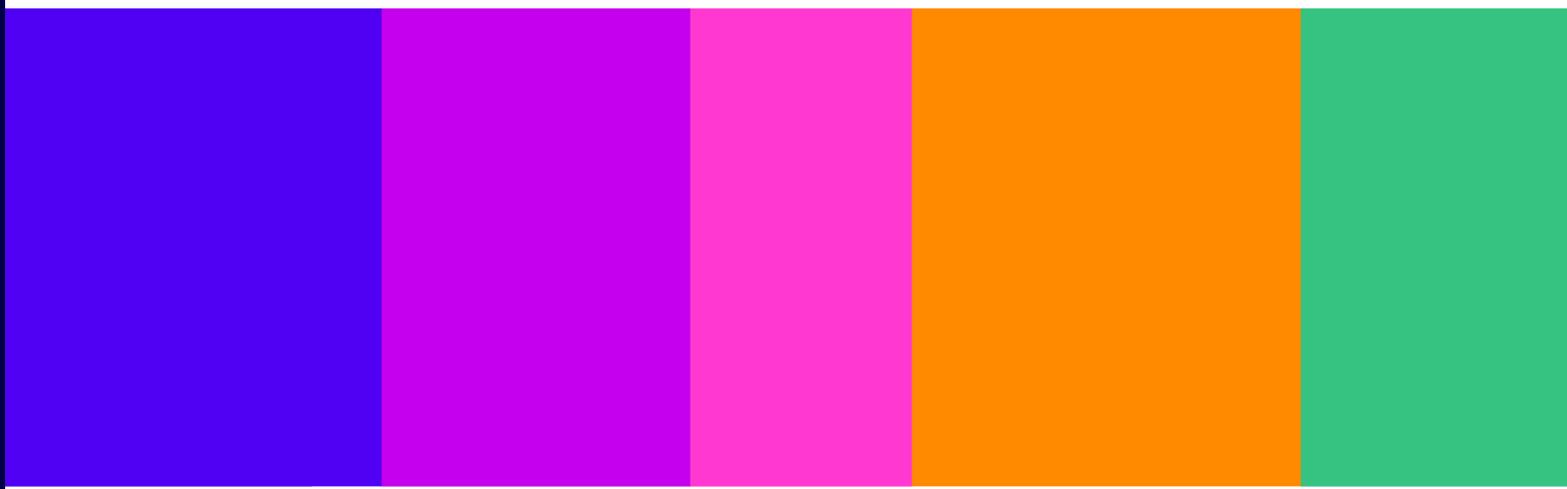
Listed Events

Rugby League Challenge Cup Final 2024-26

Consultation

Published 8 April 2024

Closing date for responses: 6 May 2024



Contents

Section

1. Overview	3
2. Rugby League Challenge Cup Final 2024-26	4

Annex

A1. Responding to this consultation	6
A2. Ofcom's consultation principles	8
A3. Consultation coversheet.....	9

1. Overview

What we are consulting on

Ofcom has received a request from the BBC for consent to broadcast exclusive live coverage of the Rugby League Challenge Cup Final in 2024, 2025 and 2026 (“the Finals”). The 2024 Final is due to take place on Saturday 8 June 2024.

The Rugby League Challenge Cup Final is designated as a Group A listed event for the purposes of the Broadcasting Act 1996. Under the Act, Ofcom’s consent is needed for exclusive live coverage of listed events.

Ofcom is provisionally minded to grant this consent for the 2024, 2025 and 2026 Finals, subject to considering any comments received in response to this consultation.

2. Rugby League Challenge Cup Final 2024–26

Background

- 2.1 Ofcom has received a request from the BBC for consent to broadcast exclusive live coverage of the Rugby League Challenge Cup Final in 2024, 2025 and 2026 (“the Finals”). The 2024 Final is due to take place on Saturday 8 June 2024, while the 2025 and 2026 Finals’ dates are yet to be confirmed.
- 2.2 The Rugby League Challenge Cup Final is designated as a Group A listed event. Under the Broadcasting Act 1996, Ofcom’s consent is needed for exclusive live coverage of listed events.

Proposed coverage

- 2.3 The BBC plans to broadcast full live coverage of the 2024, 2025 and 2026 Finals on BBC One or BBC Two.
- 2.4 The BBC noted that it has also acquired the rights to broadcast live radio coverage.

Rights acquisition

- 2.5 Ofcom assesses requests for consent to broadcast live coverage of listed events on the basis set out in our [Code on Sports and Other Listed and Designated Events](#) (“the Code”). In deciding whether to grant consent, Ofcom will wish to be satisfied that broadcasters have had a genuine opportunity to acquire the rights on fair and reasonable terms.¹
- 2.6 The BBC explained that, while it is currently the only broadcaster with rights to broadcast live coverage of the Finals, it does not have exclusive rights and that the Rugby League’s RL Commercial has reserved the right to license live rights to the Finals to other broadcasters.
- 2.7 RL Commercial has confirmed that the live rights to the Finals were marketed to a number of prospective broadcasters, including ‘non-qualifying’ services for the purposes of the Act, at the same time as they were marketed to the BBC, as part of a package of rights to provide coverage of Rugby League matches. The BBC holds rights to provide coverage of the Rugby League Challenge Cup (including the Final) for 2024, 2025 and 2026, as well as other Rugby League matches.²

Proposal to grant consent

- 2.8 Based on the information provided by the BBC and RL Commercial, our provisional view is that broadcasters of both qualifying and non-qualifying services had an opportunity to

¹ See paragraphs 1.13-1.17 of the Code.

² [‘BBC Sport secures historic Super League TV rights deal and expands Challenge Cup Digital Offering’](#), Rugby League, February 2024.

acquire the rights to live coverage of the Finals on fair and reasonable terms. We note that as the BBC's rights are non-exclusive, it remains possible for another broadcaster to acquire rights to the Finals.

- 2.9 We also note that the BBC's plans would secure full, live and free to air coverage of the 2024, 2025 and 2026 Finals.
- 2.10 Ofcom is therefore provisionally minded to grant consent to the BBC for exclusive live coverage of the Finals, subject to considering any comments received from interested parties.³

Responding to this consultation

- 2.11 If you would like to make any comments about the BBC's request for consent, these should be sent to Ofcom by email to listedevents@ofcom.org.uk no later than 5pm on 6 May 2024. Further details about responding to this consultation can be found in the annexes.

³ We do not consider that it is necessary to carry out an impact assessment or equality impact assessment in relation to this proposal, as it falls within the scenario given at paragraph 3.6(b) of our impact assessment guidance (published 19 July 2023). See also paragraph 3.19 of that guidance in relation to equality impact assessments.

A1. Responding to this consultation

How to respond

- A1.1 Ofcom would like to receive views and comments on the issues raised in this document, by 5pm on 6 May 2024.
- A1.2 You can download a response form from <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/consultations-and-statements/category-3/rugby-league-challenge-cup-final-2024-26>. You can return this by email or post to the address provided in the response form.
- A1.3 If your response is a large file, or has supporting charts, tables or other data, please email it to listedevents@ofcom.org.uk, as an attachment in Microsoft Word format, together with the cover sheet.
- A1.4 Responses may alternatively be posted to the address below, marked with the title of the consultation:
- Listed Events
Ofcom
Riverside House
2A Southwark Bridge Road
London SE1 9HA
- A1.5 We welcome responses in formats other than print, for example an audio recording or a British Sign Language video. To respond in BSL:
- > send us a recording of you signing your response. This should be no longer than 5 minutes. Suitable file formats are DVDs, wmv or QuickTime files; or
 - > upload a video of you signing your response directly to YouTube (or another hosting site) and send us the link.
- A1.6 We will publish a transcript of any audio or video responses we receive (unless your response is confidential).
- A1.7 We do not need a paper copy of your response as well as an electronic version. We will acknowledge receipt of a response submitted to us by email.
- A1.8 It would be helpful if you could explain why you hold your views, and what you think the effect of Ofcom's proposals would be. We also welcome joint responses.
- A1.9 If you want to discuss the issues and questions raised in this consultation, please contact the Broadcast Licensing team by email to listedevents@ofcom.org.uk.

Confidentiality

- A1.10 Consultations are more effective if we publish the responses before the consultation period closes. This can help people and organisations with limited resources or familiarity with the issues to respond in a more informed way. So, in the interests of transparency and good regulatory practice, and because we believe it is important that everyone who is interested in an issue can see other respondents' views, we usually publish responses on the Ofcom website at regular intervals during and after the consultation period.
- A1.11 If you think your response should be kept confidential, please specify which part(s) this applies to and explain why. Please send any confidential sections as a separate annex. If you want your name, address, other contact details or job title to remain confidential, please provide them only in the cover sheet, so that we don't have to edit your response.
- A1.12 If someone asks us to keep part or all of a response confidential, we will treat this request seriously and try to respect it. But sometimes we will need to publish all responses, including those that are marked as confidential, in order to meet legal obligations.
- A1.13 To fulfil our pre-disclosure duty, we may share a copy of your response with the relevant government department before we publish it on our website.
- A1.14 Please also note that copyright and all other intellectual property in responses will be assumed to be licensed to Ofcom to use. Ofcom's intellectual property rights are explained further in our Terms of Use.

Next steps

- A1.15 Following this consultation period, Ofcom plans to publish a statement in May 2024.
- A1.16 If you wish, you can register to receive mail updates alerting you to new Ofcom publications.

Ofcom's consultation processes

- A1.17 Ofcom aims to make responding to a consultation as easy as possible. For more information, please see our consultation principles in Annex 2.
- A1.18 If you have any comments or suggestions on how we manage our consultations, please email us at consult@ofcom.org.uk. We particularly welcome ideas on how Ofcom could more effectively seek the views of groups or individuals, such as small businesses and residential consumers, who are less likely to give their opinions through a formal consultation.
- A1.19 If you would like to discuss these issues, or Ofcom's consultation processes more generally, please contact the corporation secretary:
- A1.20 Corporation Secretary
Ofcom
Riverside House
2a Southwark Bridge Road
London SE1 9HA
Email: corporationsecretary@ofcom.org.uk

A2. Ofcom's consultation principles

Ofcom has seven principles that it follows for every public written consultation:

Before the consultation

A2.1 Wherever possible, we will hold informal talks with people and organisations before announcing a big consultation, to find out whether we are thinking along the right lines. If we do not have enough time to do this, we will hold an open meeting to explain our proposals, shortly after announcing the consultation.

During the consultation

A2.2 We will be clear about whom we are consulting, why, on what questions and for how long.

A2.3 We will make the consultation document as short and simple as possible, with an overview of no more than two pages. We will try to make it as easy as possible for people to give us a written response.

A2.4 When setting the length of the consultation period, we will consider the nature of our proposals and their potential impact. We will always make clear the closing date for responses.

A2.5 A person within Ofcom will be in charge of making sure we follow our own guidelines and aim to reach the largest possible number of people and organisations who may be interested in the outcome of our decisions. Ofcom's Consultation Champion is the main person to contact if you have views on the way we run our consultations.

A2.6 If we are not able to follow any of these seven principles, we will explain why.

After the consultation

A2.7 We think it is important that everyone who is interested in an issue can see other people's views, so we usually publish the responses on our website at regular intervals during and after the consultation period. After the consultation we will make our decisions and publish a statement explaining what we are going to do, and why, showing how respondents' views helped to shape these decisions.

Consultation coversheet

Basic details

Consultation title:

To (Ofcom contact):

Name of respondent:

Representing (self or organisation/s):

Address (if not received by email):

Confidentiality

Please tick below what part of your response you consider is confidential, giving your reasons why

- > Nothing
- > Name/contact details/job title
- > Whole response
- > Organisation
- > Part of the response

If you selected 'Part of the response', please specify which parts:

If you want part of your response, your name or your organisation not to be published, can Ofcom still publish a reference to the contents of your response (including, for any confidential parts, a general summary that does not disclose the specific information or enable you to be identified)?

Yes No

Declaration

I confirm that the correspondence supplied with this cover sheet is a formal consultation response that Ofcom can publish. However, in supplying this response, I understand that Ofcom may need to publish all responses, including those which are marked as confidential, in order to meet legal obligations. If I have sent my response by email, Ofcom can disregard any standard e-mail text about not disclosing email contents and attachments.

Ofcom aims to publish responses at regular intervals during and after the consultation period. If your response is non-confidential (in whole or in part), and you would prefer us to publish your response only once the consultation has ended, please tick here.

Name

Signed (if hard copy)