Title:

Mr

Forename:

Barry

Surname:

Jones

Representing:

Self

What additional details do you want to keep confidential?:

No

If you want part of your response kept confidential, which parts?:

Ofcom may publish a response summary:

Yes

I confirm that I have read the declaration:

Yes

Additional comments:

I am responding to this consultation as a visually impaired TV viewer and not as a professional within the TV or consumer electronics industry.

I welcome Ofcom's input regarding this issue and feel that the introduction of speaking EPGs would certainly enhance my enjoyment of TV services and enable me to enjoy more of the facilities available to sighted TV viewers.

Question 1:Do respondents agree with Ofcom?s initial assessment that apps for mobile devices have the potential to be useful for those people with visual impairments who feel confident using touch-screen technology and can afford a suitable mobile device? If not, why not? :

Yes, so long as the accessibility issues highlighted within Ofcom's consultation document can be resolved.

This will give visually impaired TV viewers the same level of choice in accessing TV services as those without sight loss.

Question 2:Do respondents agree with Ofcom?s initial assessment that apps for mobile devices are less likely to meet the needs of the majority of visually-impaired people who are 65 or older, both because they are less likely either to own a suitable mobile phone and because touch-screen apps present a number of actual and perceived barriers to use. If not, why not?:

No, as many older visually impaired people use smart phones and this number is sure to increase, as younger smart phone users may experience visual problems as they get older.

Question 3:Do respondents consider that it would be reasonable for visually-impaired viewers to pay more than sighted viewers for the ability to use EPGs or substitutes for the same purposes as sighted viewers? If so why? :

I strongly disagree that visually impaired people should have to pay additional costs for integration of speaking EPG software or additional devices to accommodate this facility.

This cost should be included as part of the free service or within the standard subscription price if for pay TV.

Question 4:Do respondents agree with Ofcom?s initial assessment that the speaking EPGs integrated into TVs and set top boxes may be easier for people with visual impairments to use than touch-screen apps? If not, why not? :

Yes, as many visually impaired people prefer to use devices with physical buttons, rather than touch screen devices, which at the moment are not completely accessible.

Question 5:Do pay TV service providers such as Sky, Virgin, Talk Talk and BT TV see additional obstacles that would prevent them from committing to including text to speech capabilities in the next planned upgrades to the receivers they offer to subscribers? If so, what are these obstacles? Absent regulation, would these obstacles make it impossible on commercial grounds to commit to the necessary investment?:

Question 6:If the cost of providing speech-enabled receivers to all those who subscribe to particular pay TV services would entail a substantial delay to the roll-out of such receivers to all subscribers, would it be feasible, quicker and more cost-effective to offer suitable equipment first to viewers with visual impairments?:

Question 7:Do respondents consider that it would be reasonable to expect visually-impaired viewers to pay extra for equipment that allows them to use EPGs or substitutes for the same purposes as sighted viewers? If so, why? :

Question 8: Do licensors such as Freesat and Freeview see obstacles to using their leverage to require manufacturers to incorporate speaking EPGs in future versions of products authorised to use their brands, such as Freetime and Freeview Connect?:

Question 9: What are the main types of cost that pay TV service providers would face in incorporating speaking EPG features into the next generation of their set top boxes?:

Question 10: What is the scope for connected platforms to avoid the need for specific TTS provision within consumer equipment by using cloud-based resources (e.g. speech files on a central server delivered to the device as required)?: