

OWEN SMITH MP  
SHADOW SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WALES



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Oli Bird  
Ofcom  
Commercial Content and Consumer Affairs Group  
Riverside House  
2A Southwark Bridge Road  
London  
SE1 9HA

23 April 2013

Dear Mr Bird

**Re: Renewal of Channel 3 licences: proposed changes to licensed area for Wales and West of England Licence and South West of England Licence**

I'm writing in response to Ofcom's proposal to create a stand-alone licence for Wales for Channel 3 Services and I would be grateful if my comments could be taken into consideration as part of the "Renewal of Channel 3 licences: proposed changes to licensed area for Wales and West of England Licence and South West of England Licence" consultation.

I support the proposal set out in Question 1 of the consultation that a single Channel 3 licence for Wales would be preferable to the existing licensing arrangements, which currently includes the West of England with Wales.

I agree with Ofcom's view, reached as part of the preparatory work for this proposal, that licensing arrangements in Wales should seek to "respond to the importance attached by audiences to programming designed to reflect the distinct cultures, histories and interests."

My own view is that devolution has strengthened Wales' identity and amplified the demand for Wales-specific programming content. Given that the next opportunity to change the boundaries of the licence will not fall until 2023, I agree with Ofcom that

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now is the right time to make this change, which although administrative in nature, does, I think, reflect Wales' need for programmes that are culturally relevant as well as improving accountability, as has also been noted by Ofcom.

I know that the Welsh Government also welcomes this proposal and I understand too that the Broadcasting Advisory Panel, which advises the Welsh Government on broadcasting issues, also supports the view that a Channel 3 licence for Wales is welcome.

I would be grateful if these comments could be taken into consideration as part of the aforementioned consultation and I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Owen Smith".

**Owen Smith**  
**Member of Parliament for Pontypridd**  
**And Shadow Secretary of State for Wales**