

itfc Response to 2009 Review of Television Access Services

Q1. Which of the three options do consultees favour, and why?

As one of the major providers of Audio Description in the UK to the broadcast, DVD and cinema markets, **itfc** does not feel it appropriate to give an opinion about the options set out in this consultation. These are better answered by: broadcasters, end users and lobby groups representing those with hearing and sight impairments. However, **itfc** looks forward to continuing to provide a quality audio description service no matter what option is adopted

*Q2. Do consultees have any further suggestions for future access service provision?
If so please provide the rationale for these suggestions*

It is clear from Ofcom's research that the promotional period in 2008 had a marked effect on the awareness and consequent use of audio description. Whatever Option is chosen, **itfc** consider that further regular promotion is a necessity. In addition to repeating the successful format of 2008 the following is suggested:

Ofcom should do all it can to:

- Encourage broadcasters to display a suitable audio description logo at the commencement of audio described programmes (in a similar manner to the subtitling logo)
- Encourage manufacturers and distributors to promote audio description at points of sale for receivers of all platforms
- Encourage manufacturers to do more to highlight audio description in their instruction booklets and on packaging
- Encourage Sky, Virgin and now Free Sat to promote audio description

We invite comments on Ofcom's decision to re-examine the current exemption of non UK facing licensees from providing access service provision.

Itfc suggests that where broadcasters are already providing access services in English for their UK channels, these could be translated into the languages required for the foreign channels, thus making the provision less onerous than if starting from scratch.