

Question 1: Which of the three options do consultees favour, and why?:

Option 2, raising the requirement to 20%.

Question 2: Do consultees have any further suggestions for future access service provision? If so please provide the rationale for these suggestions:

The descriptive portion of programmes should be shared between service providers as required. Just last week, at least one of the movies broadcast on Five was transmitted without description, despite it having been described on ITV some months previously. Similarly, BSkyB's in-house description, though undeniably useful, is highly monopolistic - both movies and other content are branded by the Sky describers and the content then becomes useless for other networks.

perhaps the most expedient way of ensuring this works well is by selling the audio description along with the programme to whichever network buys it, so that if something has been described once that description can continue to be used wherever the programme is shown. Given the overwhelming number of movies that are described in cinema but then shown without (or with a different) description on Sky, Bt vision or cable, a proportion of programming could be presented with description without any extra recording needed.

Finally, it would be quite helpful if the networks took care when placing ad breaks so that the description was not chopped off mid-sentence. This could be accomplished without having to adjust the programme in any way, simply by allowing the describer to finish (or start) in the few seconds of silence used on either side of the advert breaks.

Comments:

As a blind person I am indescribably grateful for the level of audio description currently present and am proud to reside in the UK, who lead the world in both cinematic and televisual description. I admire the work put in by MCS, ITFC and all the other describing agencies, and my only concern is the fragmentary nature of the described tracks. I firmly believe that if a programme has been described by one agency for a particular channel, that description should be made available to any other channel screening that programme. This would go a long way to increasing the number of programmes shown with audio description, whilst freeing the describers to record new content, rather than re-describing content already done by someone else.