

Title:

Mr

Forename:

Gareth

Surname:

Hart

Representing:

Self

What do you want Ofcom to keep confidential?:

Keep nothing confidential

Ofcom may publish a response summary:

Yes

I confirm that I have read the declaration:

Yes

Ofcom should only publish this response after the consultation has ended:

You may publish my response on receipt

Comments:

My thoughts into this consultation and the DAB relevant proposals are also tied into a hope and a recommendation for a migration from DAB to DAB+ on VHF band III and DRM+ (Hybrid Mode) on the FM band, particularly considering the wider European and worldwide implementation of DAB+ as a standard for digital radio and DRM+ as a solution for stations which cannot obtain carriage on DAB(+) multiplexes as well as growing anger of FM listeners about DAB.

Proposal 1: regional stations allowed to share programming to become national stations:**Proposal 2: creation of a new national multiplex from existing regional multiplexes:**

I would welcome any proposal to allow more stations which broadcast on a number of local and regional multiplexes to join a new national multiplex.

To state an example, I like listening to jazz music, and was happy to hear that Jazz FM was to relaunch last year. When Jazz FM announced which DAB multiplexes they would launch on, I was disappointed to hear that Jazz FM would not be available in Yorkshire and the North Midlands via MXR Yorkshire. A new regionalised national multiplex would allow Jazz FM to continue its regional advertising strategy whilst being available nationally. At the moment, the fact that a unique genre such as jazz can only be made available in select areas is a scandal and happily, is being recognised by Ofcom.

Many stations on local and regional multiplexes do not provide much or any local content or have a desire to go national. It would be better for listeners across the UK to ensure these stations are able to broadcast nationally.

I personally would prefer to see two new national multiplexes, this would bring in more space for all the stations on local and national multiplexes who wish to do so, to launch nationally as well as with supply and demand, reduce the cost of carriage. I would also recommend the expansion of Digital One in Northern Ireland when it is possible to do so, so that listeners there don't lose out as they currently do.

This would most benefit DAB in the fact that stations which provide unique genres of music to be able to broadcast more cheaply across the UK and make DAB an more attractive proposition to listeners who feel let down by the current narrow choice of genres on FM and currently on DAB multiplexes. It would also allow well known and popular stations which do so on other platforms to broadcast nationally, further increasing the choice and desirability of DAB.

Proposal 3: co-location within a new set of defined areas:

Proposal 4: programme sharing within the newly defined areas:

Proposal 5: mergers of local multiplexes:

I welcome the proposal to merge local multiplexes along with proposal 2 as long as there is no loss of local services as a result of any merger and that bitrates of existing stations do not drop.

My only concern is where multiplexes are merged, cheaper capacity and space needs to be found for local stations not currently able to get onto DAB and enjoy the benefits that digital broadcasting can offer. DAB+ and DRM+ (Hybrid Mode) on the FM band may help in this regard.

Proposal 6: an enhanced news option for local FM stations:

Proposal 7: AM stations:

Proposal 8: Limited redefinition of contemporary music Formats: