BT's comments on Ofcom's consultation paper:

"Re-prioritising BT's remaining Undertakings commitments on information systems separation"

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BT's overall position

BT remains committed to the two key principles which form the basis of its Undertakings: Equivalence of Inputs and Openreach operational separation.

We acknowledge the recognition in this consultation, and Ofcom's 29th May 2009 document *Impact of the Strategic Review of Telecoms,* of the significant achievements made by BT since the Undertakings came into existence in September 2005 and the positive benefits of these for all industry players and their end-user customers.

While remaining committed to the two key principles we believe that it is important that their practical implementation recognises the changing needs of customers, their Communications Provider suppliers, and the rapidly evolving competitive, technology, and economic environment; as well as benefits from the learning obtained from the implementation of the Undertakings to date.

Overall the package of proposals upon which Ofcom is consulting represents a pragmatic approach to the remaining major Undertakings requirements. The amended approach to systems separation recognises the detrimental impact on customer experience which would result from individual product migrations rather than approaching migrations on a customer basis. The approach creates the scope for Openreach to be more responsive to the needs of its Communications Provider customers and their end users through focussing upon delivering an industry agreed set of priorities rather than being driven primarily by regulatory requirements.

Accordingly BT supports fully the proposed variation and exemption agreements and therefore responds in the affirmative to all the specific questions in Ofcom's consultation. We will be committed fully to the successful delivery of the proposals detailed in Ofcom's consultation.

Consultation questions

Question 1   Do you agree with our proposed changes to BT's systems separation obligations? If not, why not?

Yes.

Question 2   Do you agree with our proposed change of approach to measuring BT's progress on product EOI? If not, why not?

Yes.

Question 3   Do you agree that the package of additional Openreach developments and the new Undertakings commitments that relate to them are appropriate? If not, why not?

Yes.

Question 4   Do you agree that, as a consequence of the revised approach to customer migration to EOI products, Ofcom should agree to this request from BT to remove the IBMC date of 1 July 2010 for Featureline?

Yes.

Question 5   Do you agree that, as a consequence of the revised approach to customer migration to EOI products, Ofcom should agree to this request from BT to remove the IBMC date of 1 July 2010 for Featurenet?

Yes.

Question 6   Do you agree that, as a consequence of the revised approach to customer migration to EOI products, Ofcom should agree to this request from BT to remove the IBMC date of 1 July 2010 for Megastream Ethernet using ASDH2 technology?

Yes.

Question 7   Do you agree that, as a consequence of the revised approach to customer migration to EOI products, Ofcom should agree to this request from BT to remove the IBMC date of 1 October 2010 for Wavestream Connect and Wavestream Regional?

Yes.

Question 8   Do you agree that, as a consequence of the revised approach to customer migration to EOI products, Ofcom should agree to this request from BT to continue to maintain the installed customer base with contracts entered to prior to 31 December 2007 on the non EOI legacy Media & Broadcast products?

Yes.

Question 9   Do you agree that, as a consequence of the revised approach to customer migration to EOI products, Ofcom should agree to this request from BT to remove the IBMC date of 1 July 2010 for Redcare CCTV services?

Yes.

Question 10   Do you agree that Ofcom should agree to an exemption for the cabling of Featurenet connections to existing small customers' sites to allow for Featurenet SRUs to be exempted from equivalence until the SRUs are withdrawn from service or replaced?

Yes.

Question 11   Do you agree that Ofcom should agree to this request from BT for an exemption to allow the Messaging & Bill Direct support team to continue to access data from Openreach's OSS until such time as Openreach's OSS physical systems separation is completed? Please also state whether you agree for Director level review of the operation of end user access controls to be revised from a quarterly basis to a six-monthly basis.

Yes, and also agree the revised periodicity of Director level review given the success of the controls and process since the original exemption was agreed.

Question 12   Taking into account all of the analysis and considerations in this document, do you agree that we should grant the variation to the Undertakings as set out in Annex 5?

Yes.