

Title:

Mr

Forename:

Austin

Surname:

Reeves

Name and title under which you would like this response to appear:

Austin Reeves

Representing:

Self

Organisation (if applicable):

Email:

austin@reeves10049.freemove.co.uk

What do you want Ofcom to keep confidential?:

Keep nothing confidential

If you want part of your response kept confidential, which parts?:

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

Question 1: Do consultees agree that these are appropriate policy objectives for Ofcom in considering possible alternative arrangements for signing on television?:

1. I fully agree that analogue -only viewers should be protected. However this may not be due only to economic reasons for not having digital channels, but deaf people may reject digital due to insufficient access provisions.
2. It is absolutely essential that subtitle service and sign language are separate. A decision on one must not effect the other, since one is an access point and the other is a language point.
3. Para 3.6 in my view gives a clear summary which I fully support.

Question 2: Do consultees agree that Ofcom has identified appropriate options?:

1. The proposals refer to 'low-audience channels'. There is no reference to channels with greater audiences thus I am not clear about Ofcom's pros and cons for channels with more than 1% audience where they may wish to support the sign zone. I suggest this is an option, but probably only as a voluntary arrangement subject to Ofcom's agreement

Question 3: Do consultees agree with Ofcom's reasons for rejecting the ideas described in paragraph 3.18?:

Agreed

Question 4: Do consultees agree with the proposals outlined in paragraph 3.32?:

Point e) I am not sure if this applies to any channels which have higher audience figures than 1%. If it does, then it answers my point above. However I would propose that if a channel wishes to consider alternative arrangement (not the public service channels), discussions be held with all stakeholders before Ofcom reaches a decision.

Question 5: Do consultees agree that the aim should be to put any new arrangements in place from the start of 2008?:

I can understand the urgency of pushing for the start of 2008. I have one major concern which is that it does not leave much time to set up the new arrangements and start the service by then. A rushed input could lead to a poorer service and thus be rejected at the next review. Assurance should be given that adequate time and resources are put in place.

Question 6: Do consultees have any comments on the impact assessment? Where possible, it would be useful for arguments about the cost of different options to be supported by relevant data.:

I do not have sufficient information to make constructive comments.

However I am concerned that a choice is being given to the channels to either produce their own programmes, or to contribute to the sign zone. It is a bit of a chicken and egg situation as it would be great if a channel DOES produce a presented programme. Yet the more that does that, the less resource would be available for the sign zone. As a result the sign zone may fail due to lack of resources.

Some safeguards is required here.

Question 7: Do consultees consider that the proposed revisions to the Code are sufficiently clear?..:

1. There is no mention of what happens if a channel with more than 1% audience share would like to consider contributing to the sign zone. I feel that option should be available.
2. Channels may do their own sign presented programmes. A positive step forward, but such a service should also be shown on the sign zone to increase audience share. This applies particularly to people who only have Freeview.

Comments:

Other comments.

1. I congratulate Ofcom for understanding the wishes of deaf people to have more sign presented programmes. I understand that Ofcom is restricted in what it can do, but this message is very important.
2. In many places reference is made to research which makes it appear that deaf people are not watching sign interpreted programmes. As a result it often appears that deaf people are not keen for sign language on TV. The research should have been weighted in such a way that the results would show up the difference between numbers watching interpreted and those watching presented programmes. Discussions I have had with many people show that far more watch presented programmes in the past (now only SEE HEAR). As a result I feel that research findings are not reflecting the reality.