

22nd May 2007

Peter Davies
Director of Radio and Convergent Media
5th Floor
Riverside House
2A Southwark Bridge Road
London SE1 9HA

Dear Peter Davies

THE FUTURE OF RADIO

BECTU notes the issues set out in the consultation document.

We do not propose to make a detailed response. Our initial views on some of the issues covered were set out in our response to the earlier Ofcom consultation 'Radio - Preparing for the Future' - including the regulation of local material and the broader strategic framework for radio.

In relation to the current discussion document, we hold the following general views:

- We remain unconvinced about the case for not re-licensing analogue stations and for switching to digital services.
- Regulatory requirements for local material (specifically including news) should be retained, whether via analogue or any replacement form of digital broadcasting.
- A framework of ownership requirements to ensure plurality should be retained for analogue services or for any alternative digital services. We accept that ownership regulation may need amendment to adapt to the growth of digital radio. We do not accept that this should imply a further reduction or even removal of ownership regulation.
- We retain a strong underlying preference for a continuing framework of regulation which seeks to ensure listeners' access to a wide range of high quality programme material on commercial radio as well as the BBC; which can address any potential market failure to provide such material; and which does not accept as inevitable that 'market forces will prevail'.

We look forward to the proposed further statement from Ofcom on these issues.

Yours sincerely

Gerry Morrissey
General Secretary