

TV12. txt

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From: Sara Clark at Blue Heaven Productions

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Sent: 11 March 2002 11:12

To: catherine.smajda@culture.gsi.gov.uk; Humphreys Jane (Mrs JE)

Cc: Jacques Delacave; Shaie Selzer; Paul Kalwa; Paul Topping; David Morris

Jones, Merlin Broadcast Ltd

Subject:

Dear Catherine and Jane,

I write, as before, to comment on digital planning - specifically, The Principles for Spectrum Planning - as Chairman of TV12 Isle of Wight, Coast to Coast, and Capital Television and a non-executive director of Prime Ent plc. My

area of concern and particular interest is, of course, RSL broadcasting which I have been involved in since "day one".

It's early history, like that of local radio, is peppered with teething problems, casualties and uncertainty. The long term future can be assisted enormously, both in terms of investment - attraction and broadcast consolidation

and expansion, by a firm commitment to space for this essential area of local television is the next stage of digital spectrum planning. Without this assurance, life will get increasingly difficult, maybe impossible, for operations such as our's. With the decline in major broadcaster involvement in regional coverage RSL's become the vital link with communities across the UK. Additionally, it's vital contribution to social inclusion, participation in local democracy and the training and employment of young people is of immeasurable value.

We need, as I've said before, longer license periods, a higher priority in both existing analogue and future digital planning and a realistic understanding of our "position at the table" when the digital switchover plan - and the period that follows - is choreographed and agreed.

RSL operations believe strongly and passionately in their role in the UK broadcasting firmament. It should be possible for an interleaved Local Television Channel(s) to exist between the national multiplexes within the six multiplex plan. A new multiplex created specifically to carry local television services and interactive opportunities, is also offered up as a solution.

We sincerely hope due consideration will be given to these realistic and

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urgently required commitments.

Thankyou.
Graham Benson

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