



Comunn na Gàidhlig

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12 July 2017

Jacquie Hughes
Riverside House
2a Southwark Bridge Road
London
SE1 9HA

Dear Ms Hughes,

I, as Chairman of, and on behalf of Comunn na Gàidhlig Ltd (CnaG) write to offer our views on the current consultation on the BBC's operating licence.

This is clearly a significant undertaking and we wish you well in the work. CnaG would wish to respond specifically and particularly on the question of Gaelic language programming and broadcasting.

Before going any further I can confirm that this is a formal consultation response. It can be published in full on Ofcom's website, and we authorise Ofcom to make use of the information in this response to meet its legal requirements.

There is no doubt that the current 'BBC Alba' TV channel and its output is of enormous significance and benefit to the Gaelic language and to the efforts being made to maintain and develop the language into the future. For this effort to succeed it is important that the language has a visible and up-to-date presence, with new programme capacity, particularly within Scotland – and having a dedicated TV channel which its vibrant and attractive output certainly achieves that.

The majority of CnaG's own work is at a community level, particularly among young people, and for that demographic it would be almost impossible to over-estimate the significance and appeal of the BBC/MG Alba partnership.

Having said all of that, there is equally no doubt that the provision ought to be enhanced. It is CnaG's view that BBC Alba could increase its reach and impact, of its contribution in sustaining and developing the Gaelic language, if there was more new programming capacity through increased budgetary provision.

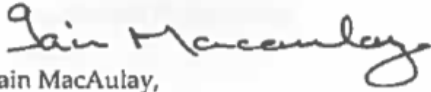
We note that in other similar circumstances the BBC provides a greater 'first run origination' contribution to BBC channels. A reasonable comparator would be the BBC's contribution to S4C in Wales, for which it provides 2,900 hours/annum of 'first run originations'. Our understanding is that there is currently no formal 'first run originations' quota specified for BBC Alba.

A' cruthachadh chothroman dhan Ghàidhlig

Therefore, our first suggestion is that there should be such a specified first run originations quota for BBC Alba; our second being that this should be set at 1,095 hours/annum, and reviewed regularly.

We believe these recommendations are reasonable and realistic, and would reflect the significance of BBC Alba to enhancing the Gaelic language revival in Scotland.

Leis gach deagh dhùrachd



Iain MacAulay,
Chairman,
Comunn na Gàidhlig Ltd.