

Title:

Mr

Forename:

Robert

Surname:

Hooson

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

Mr Robert Hooson

Representing:

Self

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:

Yes

Question 1: To what extent do you consider that DTT, DSat, cable and IPTV are in competition with one another for subscribers of pay TV services ? either at present or in the future?:

Competition clearly exists between platforms for pay tv content. There is however only limited opportunities to access a range of high quality free to air digital tv content with some platforms offering the service with high initial costs and only limited high quality free services.

Question 2: To what extent do you consider the Proposal is likely to deliver benefits to the consumer?:

The proposal is likely to reduce the quality of free services available to the consumer and unlikely to provide any significant benefits to the consumer.

The removal of three free channels to be replaced by pay tv channels is unlikely to add to choice. The additional channels provided would be available on other platforms at a more competitive cost. The reduction in the range of free services available on DTT will therefore have the effect of REDUCING competition.

Question 3: To what extent do you consider that there is scope for sustainable competition in pay TV on the DTT platform and, more broadly, across all pay TV platforms?:

Due to the limited capacity of the DTT there is little scope for sustainable competition, competition should be encouraged across pay tv platforms and within platforms that have a larger capacity eg. DSAT and Cable services.

Question 4: What are likely to be the key aspects of competition between providers of retail pay TV services on the DTT platform? E.g. what is the role of premium sports and movies content?:

Providers will initially provide competition in premium sports content, but due to the limited capacity this is unlikely to be sustainable in the longer term. Customers with an interest in such content will prefer the wider range of content available on DSAT for only a marginally increased payment. DTT should be used to provide a platform to help sustain high quality non subscription services.

Question 5: Do you consider that if Sky were to become the only provider of pay TV on the DTT platform it would be likely to have a significant detrimental effect on competition in the long term? How might this affect the development of other platforms for the delivery of pay TV services?:

This would certainly be the case. Sky tv's almost monopoly control of DSAT services in the UK at the moment limits existing competition on that platform. On DSAT, there should be a separation of platform ownership and provider content, with different companies being able to offer bundled content. Allowing SKY tv to dominate other platforms would severely limit competition.

Question 6: To what extent, if at all, do you consider that the Proposal would be likely to lead to any of the public policy concerns outlined at Section 4?:

Acceptance of the proposal by Ofcom would lead to a great deal of concern and confusion by members of the public.

Question 7: Specifically, to what extent do you consider that the Proposal would be likely to lead to consumer confusion?:

Standard changes, and the requirement to purchase new equipment would lead to confusion at the time of digital changeover and at a time when customers need confidence in the DTT system. Customers have essentially welcomed Freeview (DTT) as a free service.

Question 8: To what extent do you consider that it is beneficial for consumers to be able to obtain Sky and existing DTT pay TV content without having to purchase separate STBs?:

The advantage would be marginal as there is overlap of services and customers would not need both boxes to receive the services.

Question 9: Do you consider that the Proposal might lead to any additional public policy concerns:

There would be additional concerns about the control of a significant part of DTT by a multinational corporation.

Question 10: If Sky becoming the only provider of pay TV services on the DTT platform were likely to have a significant detrimental effect on competition, do you consider that it is possible to address this through a set of additional conditions and/or directions? If so, what form should those conditions/directions take?:

I do not consider that additional conditions could negate the significant detrimental effects on competition of Sky becoming the only provider of pay tv services on DTT.

Additional comments:

I would recommend Ofcom adopt option3 - not to consent to the proposal.