

Dear Sairah

I have been asked to respond to this consultation document on behalf of Ofcom's Advisory Committee for Scotland who met yesterday.

The Committee note that many of the self-help schemes are in Scotland. It is thought that a number of people once connected to these schemes may have already made the switch to alternative digital technologies such as Sky. Those who have not yet migrated already may be attracted by the recently announced BBC Freesat offering. But the Committee recognise that some communities/individuals may be 'holding out' for DTT and therefore this consultation document is relevant to this category of viewer if connected currently to the analogue service via a self-help. In terms of specific responses to your questions, the Committee would comment as follows;

Self help TV relays and digital switchover

Question 1: Do you agree with Ofcom's proposal to license digital self helps for areas currently served by a self help relay, and how we propose to make available licences? If not, please give your reasons.

The Committee is supportive of Ofcom's proposals to licence digital self-help schemes, many of which serve small and remote communities in Scotland.

Question 2: Do you agree with Ofcom's proposal to license digital self helps for areas not currently served by a self help relay, and how we propose to make available licences? If not, please give your reasons.

The Committee support the proposal to licence self helps for areas not currently served in this way.

Question 3: Do you agree with how Ofcom proposes to deal with the frequency planning for self help relays? If not, please give your reasons.

The Committee agrees with Ofcom's proposals and hopes that frequencies can be found for self help relay systems.

Question 4: Do you agree with Ofcom's proposed fee for WTA licences for self help relays? If not, please give your reasons

The Committee is concerned about the potential impact of fees on those communities which depend on self help relays. They note that prior contact had been made with Highlands and Islands Enterprise, who had offered help to Ofcom in thinking through the implications of the DSO process for those communities served by self-help schemes, but regret that this offer does not seem to have been pursued. The Committee would now ask that contact be made with HIE, who have also been involved in providing financial support for some of these schemes in the past.

Vicki Nash

Director Scotland, on behalf of Ofcom's Advisory Committee for Scotland