[GB] The BBC Responds to the Government's Proposals for Digital Terrestrial Broadcasting

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In August 1995 the UK Government announced its proposals for Digital Terrestrial Broadcasting (see IRIS no. 8, p. 13). The BBC has now issued its response. It suggests that it will be in a position to act as a catalyst to attract investors and other service providers because of its production capability and archive base to develop high-quality British programmes though the new delivery systems. This will however require the Government to create an open digital environment guaranteeing service providers access to conditional access and subscriber services on all digital delivery systems on fair and reasonable terms and to guarantee continuing universal access to the BBC's licence fee-funded services. Broadcasters and broadcasting consortia should be licensed directly as multiplex operators and a single conditional access standard should be developed for digital terrestrial television. There should be a clear requirement for transmission operators to achieve national coverage, and transmission should be separated from supply and subject to a common carrier requirement. Most politically controversially, a timetable should be set for the switch-off of existing analogue transmission. Universal access to BBC licence fee-funded services should be guaranteed by 'must carry' status on wire based systems and 'must offer' status through satellite conditional access boxes.

Britain's Digital Opportunity: The BBC's Response to the Government's Proposals for Digital Terrestrial Broadcasting.

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