[GB] Sale of television sports rights

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As part of its contribution to the debate over whose interests should prevail in the sale of television rights to sports events, the Department of National Heritage has recently published a consultation paper on the subject, which summarises the key issues and main options for change. In 1994, the National Heritage Select Committee proposed that the 1990 Broadcasting Act's controls be extended and that there be regular review of the situation in the light of technological developments.

The Government's view is that the debate is not really over terrestrial versus subscription television. Rather, the public interest must balance the legitimate interests of the broadcasting and sport industries, viewers and listeners, and those who play sport. However, the Government believes that 'the weight of responsibility should be with the sport authorities' in balancing the maximisation of revenue and audience.

The issues are to be discussed with interested parties, so that a suitable consideration to the matter can be given in Parliament during the passage of the Broadcasting Bill.

'Broadcast Sports Rights: Informing the Debate'. Available from the Broadcast Policy Division, Department of National Heritage.

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