



**Voice of the
Listener & Viewer**

Bulletin

Working for Quality and Diversity in Broadcasting

Spring 2008

Issue 92

Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport to speak at VLV Evening Seminar

Tuesday, 24 June – The Palace of Westminster



The Rt Hon Andy Burnham has accepted an invitation from VLV to speak and take questions from members and guests at a VLV seminar in the Grand Committee Room in the House of Commons on Tuesday, 24 June, starting at 6pm. Mr Burnham, who was elected to Parliament in June 2001 as the MP for Leigh, served as Chief Secretary to the Treasury before his present appointment in January. Prior to that he was at the Department of Health and the Home Office. In 1998, before being elected to Parliament, Mr Burnham was Special Adviser to Chris (now Lord) Smith, when he was Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, and later worked as a researcher for Lord Smith's successor Tessa Jowell MP.

Mr Burnham gained an MA in English at Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge. He is 38, married with three young children and a keen supporter of Leigh Centurions Rugby League Club and Everton Football Club.

The seminar takes place a few days after Ofcom's consultation on its review of public service broadcasting closes but at a time when the future of the BBC, Channel 4 and the other terrestrial channels is high on the public agenda. In addition to broadcasting, his department is responsible for the arts and sport, including the 2012 Olympics. It is also responsible with the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform, for delivering digital switch-over across the UK by 2012.

The Future of Public Service Broadcasting – the last debate?

VLV Evening Seminar,
Tuesday, 3 June

In association with the LSE
media think-tank, Polis

SPEAKERS:

Stewart Purvis

Senior Partner, Content and Standards, Ofcom

Patrick Barwise

Emeritus Professor, Management & Marketing,
London Business School

Chairman: Professor Ivor Gaber
VLV Board member

The consultation phase of Ofcom's Review of Public Service Broadcasting closes on 19 June. This review looks at the future funding of the BBC and asks whether the licence fee should be shared with Channel 4 and other commercial broadcasters. Its outcome has implications for the whole ecology of British broadcasting and will shape VLV's work and campaigning for at least the next twelve months.

To raise public awareness and debate, and to provide a last chance for VLV members and guests to learn about Ofcom's proposals at first hand, VLV has arranged for Stewart Purvis, who is leading the consultation for Ofcom, and the economist Professor Patrick Barwise to speak and take questions at an evening seminar in London on Tuesday, 24 June. The seminar is being held in association with the London School of Economics media think-tank, Polis, at the LSE, Kingsway, London WC2 from 6.30 – 8.30pm followed by a reception.

Entry to the seminar is free but tickets must be obtained in advance from linda.forbes@vlv.org.uk, via the VLV website www.vlv.org.uk or by contacting the VLV office: 01474 352835



Patrick Barwise



Stewart Purvis

There is no charge for entry but tickets must be obtained in advance from linda.forbes@vlv.org.uk or by contacting the VLV office.

See item on page 4 for more about the consultation and how to respond.

Inside

- New Executive Director
- Student Essay Competition
- VLV 2007 Awards Presentation
- Ofcom Consultations
- BBC Trust
- New Freesat Service
- Editorial Comment
- VLV's Spring Conference
- Letters
- Book Reviews
- Competition
- Diary Dates



Voice of the Listener & Viewer

Working for Quality and Diversity in British Broadcasting

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Voice of the Listener & Viewer Ltd (VLV) represents the citizen and consumer interests in broadcasting and works for quality and diversity in British broadcasting. VLV is free from political, sectarian and commercial affiliations. VLV is concerned with the issues, structures, institutions and regulation that underpin the British broadcasting system and in particular to maintain the principles of public service in broadcasting. VLV does not handle complaints.

Design & Production

High Profile Ltd, Tel: 01474 533077

Published by Voice of the Listener & Viewer Ltd,

A private company limited by guarantee

(Registered in England number 4407712)

Registered address:

101 Kings' Drive, Gravesend, Kent DA12 5BQ.

Tel: 01474 352835 Fax: 01474 351112.

E-mail: info@vlv.org.uk

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New Executive Director Anne Diack



VLV are pleased to announce that Anne Diack is joining them as Executive Director on a part-time, short-term contract. For many years a producer with the BBC's Open University Production Centre, Anne has also been a teacher, teacher trainer, researcher and education adviser. She has worked at the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) TV Centre, on the BBC's Blue Peter production team, in BBC Education Policy, and, more recently, she helped to set up Teachers TV. The post of Executive Director is supported by the Esmée Fairburn Foundation.

Students Quiz Chairman of Broadcasting Commission at VLV Scottish Conference

Blair Jenkins, who chairs the Scottish Broadcasting Commission, spoke to members and guests at VLV's 17th annual Scottish conference in Edinburgh on 1 May. The Commission was set up by First Minister, Alex Salmons, to investigating the economic, cultural and democratic contribution that broadcasting makes to Scottish life and will conclude its work by the end of the summer. Professor Neil Blain of Stirling University elaborated on the theme, contributing some valuable insights to the session.

The event provided a rare opportunity for students and young people to make their views known in presentations and questions. Students from Napier and Stirling Universities spoke of their wish for more programmes to be made by young people so that their need to understand and become engaged in politics could be met by broadcasting which provided a truly public service. They condemned the patronising view that many have of young people saying that they were interested in much more than celebrity culture.

Emma McGaughin of the Hansard Society, Scotland, confirmed this view and explained how the Society engaged successfully with young people, schools and colleges. Professor Bernard Crick, rapporteur, provided some trenchant thoughts on 'dumbing-down' and the need for broadcasters and audiences to be aware of values beyond the market and money.

We are most grateful to Professor Blain and Dr Mathew Hibberd for organising the day, and to Stirling and Napier Universities and the Scottish Broadcasting Commission for their support.



David Law and Gemma Scott, speakers from Napier

VLV Student Essay Competition 2008

Last call for entries which must be submitted by 30 May.

Jon Snow and Roger Graef lead the judging panel. Broadcasting is changing more rapidly than ever before. The switch to digital is well under way and an



explosion of new services is threatening not only the commercially funded terrestrial broadcasters but also the BBC. At the same time, new forms of delivery enable more and more people to generate their own content, podcasts, webcasts, vlogs and blogs. How is this affecting listeners, viewers and new media users in their roles as citizens and consumers? Is there any longer any difference in these roles?

VLV invites entries for its 2008 Student Essay Competition from students studying for a UK registered undergraduate or postgraduate degree or similar qualification on the following subject:

Do citizens and consumers need different things from their communications environment, or is this a meaningless distinction?

Winning entrants at undergraduate and postgraduate levels will each receive a cash prize of £500 donated by Channel 4. The two winners and the two runners-up will also be offered two weeks' work experience with a leading television or radio production company.

Entries may be submitted as an essay of up to 2,000 words or as a video or radio feature of no more than 10 minutes length, by 30 May 2008.

Full details and an entry form, which must be completed, are available at www.vlv.org.uk or in writing, enclosing an sae, from VLV, 101 King's Drive, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 5BQ. There is no entry fee.

Letters to the Editor

Letters do not necessarily represent the views of the Association and may be shortened for publication.

BBC NEWS

I am relieved that VLV is devoting its spring conference to this subject. I have written to Sir Michael Lyons, Chairman of the BBC Trust about the subject. It is deeply disturbing that the bulk of the population dependent on the News on the Hour and other normal news programmes are calculatedly being denied access to important and balanced news. It cannot but affect the ability of Britain to function as a democracy in the modern world, especially given the deterioration in the coverage of the national newspapers. I particularly dislike the provision of specialist programmes, eg, the BBC foreign news, which I consider may be a smokescreen with the shocking underlying message that only a minority should be provided access to news from outside the UK. Virtually all my friends and acquaintances seem to feel the same but any protests are totally shrugged off. Why? And is this the action of a public broadcaster? Other national providers, eg, the Netherlands, give full coverage to foreign and other important news.

Jean Currie, Cambridge

I am appalled by the reported Tory proposal to allow Fox News, the American TV station (for example) to broadcast politically-biased US-style 'news' in the UK with NO requirement for balance, thereby destroying a long-held British tradition. Just like China – except that they can't switch channels. Maybe we'll still be free to do so. As a former member of the VLV Management Committee and VOL Trustee, I trust VLV will fight this.

Professor Henry Rishbeth, Southampton

Editor's note

Yes, VLV is very concerned at proposals to reduce the impartiality rule.

DAB RADIO

I agree with a number of comments in the press and Radio Times, regretting the recent withdrawal of DAB only stations such as One Word, The Jazz, DNN and Primetime (the oldie station promoted by SAGA). There could be a number of reasons why listening figures and therefore advertising revenue made their closure necessary.

First, there is the excellence of the BBC equivalent with no advertising to irritate (though Classic FM manages to be sufficiently different from Radio 3).

Second, that a successful new Channel 4 DAB radio network will provide a welcome stimulus and a possible return of some of my lost favourites.

Dr Geoffrey Woodcock, Aigburth, Liverpool

VLV CAMPAIGN FUND

I am including a donation with my subscription which represents part of my TV licence fee rebate – due to age I no longer pay for this, sad to say! Please put it towards your Campaigning Fund on the future of public service broadcasting.

John Harvey, Basingstoke

I enclose a small donation which I have been prompted to send because of the quality of Radio 4. (I am an addict). Some of its programmes are very interesting – Beyond Belief and Book Club, to name two. On the other hand I was appalled at the quality of language used at the Brit Awards on TV recently. They were an insult to viewers and an example of the worst type of Awards programmes on offer.

Cynthia Firman, Uttoxeter, Staffs

Thank you for the information about VLV's Scottish conference. I was sorry I could not attend but I enclose a little cheque as a thank you for the work you do to support public service broadcasting in this country.

Miss A Duffy, Greenock, Renfrewshire

Editor's note

We are most grateful to these and other members who kindly send donations or pass on part of their licence fee rebate. Funding is vital to our campaigning and what is at risk now is the whole future of public service broadcasting.

THE VLV BULLETIN

We are very pleased with the continuing good work of VLV, especially the encouragement of BBC radio broadcasting. The breadth of work being undertaken by VLV is impressive. Long may it continue!

But may we suggest a way to celebrate VLV's 25th anniversary might be to brighten up the Bulletin? It carries a lot of useful information but the presentation is unexciting, perhaps even old-fashioned.

Graham and Bridget Gosney, Balcombe, West Sussex

Editor's note

We do hope to refresh the Bulletin and all our publications later in the year but what do other members feel? Especially about the content – are you getting the information you would like from the Bulletin? What else would you like to see? Please let us have your suggestions.

Deadline for next issue:

1 July, 2008

Write, fax or e-mail your letters to the Editor at:
info@vlv.org.uk

Book Reviews

The Dream That Died The Rise and Fall of ITV

By Raymond Fitzwalter
Published by Troubador
Publishing Ltd. Available
from Raymond Fitzwalter
ray@fitzwalter.co.uk
or 115 Holcombe Old Road,
Holcombe, Bury, Lancs BL8 4NF
ISBN s/back 978-1-906221-836 £14.99
The book will be available later from bookshops.



Based on over 90 exclusive interviews with the key players (broadcasters, businessmen and politicians) this book tells the story of 25 years of ITV seen through the fate of Granada Television but with many references to the impact of events at the station on the BBC, Channel 4 and Channel Five. BAFTA awarding Ray Fitzwalter was editor of Granada Television's World In Action for 11 years before becoming their Head of Current Affairs.



Diversity in the Media
History of the Cultural
Diversity Advisory Group
to the Media 1992-2007
Compiled by Anver Jeevanjee;
edited by Werner F Menski
Waterside Press £18.00
ISBN 1-904380-42-5
Available from bookshops or
www.waterside-press.com

The Cultural Diversity Media Group is an independent voluntary organisation that seeks to ensure quality and diversity in TV, radio, newspapers and other print media, constantly challenging unfair portrayal of members of ethnic minority groups as well as raising issues of access and involvement. This book chronicles their story in relation to the BBC, ITV, Newsquest, DCMS and Parliamentary Select Committees.

The Price of Plurality

Edited by Tim Gardam and
David A. L. Levy, published by the
Reuters Institute for the Study
of Journalism, Department of
Politics and International Relations,
University of Oxford, in association
with Ofcom.
ISBN 978-0-05-188890-8
For a free copy please contact
thesla.breban@ofcom.org.uk
or phone her on 020 7981 3000



Tim Gardam, former Chief Executive at Channel 4 and David Levy, former Director of BBC Policy, have assembled more than 30 essays by leading players in the broadcasting, political and economic arena which look at the future role and financing of the communication industries in the UK. The book is intended to inform public debate as Ofcom conducts its review of public service broadcasting. It includes a wide range of views and ranges widely from questioning the purpose of plurality and its necessity in the new media age, to the more specific and differing needs of children and audiences in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Silver Surfers' Day – 23 May

Silver Surfers' Day on May 23 provides an opportunity for the ten million older people in the UK who have yet to taste the delights of email and the Internet to do so in a safe and friendly environment.

A good first experience is the key to having the confidence to take part in the information revolution that is transforming all our lives. So the Silver Surfers' Day Campaign encourages individuals and organisations to invite older people in for a first taste of how, for example, to exchange emails and photos with friends and family overseas.

Whether you have computing skills or not, could you help to organise an event at a local library or other venue? Perhaps the company you work for might be willing to provide facilities for a few hours? Or are you a novice who would like to benefit from such an event? Either way, the people who organise Silver Surfers' Day would like to hear from you. And you'll have the chance to nominate or become a Silver Surfer of the Year and maybe join the award-winners at the Palace of Westminster in October.

For details, please visit www.silversurfersday.org or, if you are not a web surfer yet, phone their helpline: 0800 100 900.

Presentation of VLV's 2007 Awards



Howard Goodall (pictured left), the broadcaster, composer and musician and himself a winner last year, presented VLV's 2007 Awards for Excellence in Broadcasting during VLV's spring conference in London on 23rd April.

Michael Wood (pictured right), the author, broadcaster and historian, received VLV's Special Award for Educational Broadcasting. We were delighted that Lord McIntosh of Haringey was able to join us for the presentation in memory of his wife and former VLV Board member, Naomi Sargant.

We were also pleased to welcome Leslie Burrage, Chief Executive of Roberts Radio who sponsored a new Special Radio Award. It went to Donald Macleod, presenter of Radio3's Composer of the Week.

Now in their 16th year, the Awards were organised by VLV members John and Carey Clark with support from The Voice of the Listener Trust. They went to:

VLV RADIO AWARDS 2007

- Best Radio Programme:
the Today Programme, BBC Radio 4
- Best New Radio Programme:
The Making of Music, BBC Radio 4
- Best Individual Contributor to Radio:
Melvyn Bragg

VLV TELEVISION AWARDS 2007

- Best Television Programme:
Dispatches, Channel 4
- Best New Television Programme:
Cranford, BBC 1
- Best Individual Contribution to Television:
Andrew Marr

The Work of the BBC Trust

During the past year the BBC Trust has been reviewing all aspects of the BBC's work and performance. Major reviews and reports expected in 2008 include its services for children and young people, on editorial controls and the BBC's 27 service licences.

CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

The first part of the process begins on 12th May with a review of the BBC's provision for children under 13 and their needs in future. The Trust will consult with a wide range of relevant groups, including parents and children.

PUBLICATION OF REVISED BBC SERVICE LICENCES

In order to set standards and measure quality, all BBC services are issued with a licence by the Trust. On 7 April, the Trust announced it had issued revised licences to 26 BBC services following public consultation in 2007. VLV is concerned because the consultation ran from January to April 2007 and it has taken a year for the Trust to report. More disturbingly, it provoked very few responses – only six were published from the general public – and VLV is one of only 14 organisations whose responses have been published. Most of the published responses were on high level issues as it was not clear in early 2007 that there would be no further consultations on the detail of the licences. Given the time lag and poor initial response, VLV believes the Trust should have re-opened the consultation to enable events in 2007 to be included.

The effect of the changes has been to simplify the wording and, more crucially, remove some of the detailed conditions and commitments. It is difficult to assess the changes using the summary provided as it only gives typical examples. No detailed budget changes are included, several of which are significant as they show where cuts have occurred. For instance, between December 2006 and April 2008, the budget for Radio 4 increased from £74.5million to £86 million whereas the budget for Radio 3 increased only from £35.9 to £36.6 million.

REPORTS BY PRICEWATERHOUSE COOPERS AND RONALD NEIL ON EDITORIAL CONTROLS AND COMPLIANCE

In July 2007 the BBC Director General announced a 10 point action plan to address editorial failings during the year. The BBC Trust undertook to review the plan once it had been implemented.

The Trust's report says that significant progress has been made by BBC management and staff in putting the BBC's house in order and further measures are planned. A new Code of Practice has been introduced to prevent further abuse of premium telephone line use and £106,000 raised from calls when voting lines were closed has been paid to charity plus interest.

More information about the Trust's work and reports can be obtained from its website or by contacting the Trust Secretariat at 35 Marylebone High Street, London W1U 4AA. 020 7208 9386

Ofcom Consults on TV Advertising and the use of Premium Phone Lines in TV Programmes

In addition to its review of PSB, Ofcom invites responses to consultations it has launched on TV Advertising, teleshopping and the promotion of Premium Telephone Services in TV programmes. More information and details of how to respond can be found in the box on page 4.

TV ADVERTISING

Ofcom is proposing to simplify the rules on TV advertising, including the intervals between advertising breaks and restrictions on breaks in certain types of programmes. The regulator seeks views on a range of proposals, including:

- Removing the rule requiring a 20 minute interval between advertising breaks within programmes, although rules limiting the number of advertising breaks within programmes would be maintained pending further consultation about the overall amount of TV advertising.
- Removing or relaxing the rules on advertising in particular types of programming. Restrictions on advertising breaks in documentaries, current affairs and religious programmes (other than religious services) would be removed. Breaks in films would be allowed once every 30 minutes, rather than every 45 minutes.

Ofcom is also considering changes to the rules on the amount of TV advertising. Although it has no firm proposals at this stage, Ofcom is seeking views

on how much advertising and teleshopping should be allowed on television and whether stricter rules should continue to be imposed on the amount of advertising on the PSB channels and if so, what those rules should be. Deadline for all responses on advertising: 28 May 2008.

PREMIUM RATE TELEPHONE PARTICIPATION IN PROGRAMMES

Following the outcry over premium phone line scandals last year, Ofcom is proposing new rules for programmes involving participation by viewers or listeners via premium rate services (PRS). The regulator is proposing rules to help achieve three important objectives:

- that audiences and consumers are adequately protected;
- that advertising is kept separate from programme content (editorial); and
- that broadcasters do not circumvent advertising prohibitions by using programmes to promote services that cannot be advertised.

The proposed rules would apply to all programmes with a viewer competition element which feature PRS in a secondary manner. These would continue to be classified and regulated as editorial under Ofcom's Broadcasting Code. The proposed rules would apply to radio as well as television.

Deadline for responses: 3 June.

BBC & ITV launch New Free-to-air Satellite Service

The new Freesat service, for which VLV has lobbied for several years, will bring access to over 80 TV, radio and interactive channels plus high definition TV from the BBC and ITV for a one-off payment of less than £150 to the 28% of UK homes currently unable to receive the digital terrestrial TV service Freeview. Up to 200 channels should be available by the end of the year. For more information call 0845 0990 or visit www.freesat.co.uk

Editorial Comment – VLV's focus in the next year



The focus for much of VLV's work in the next year has been set by Ofcom's review of Public Service Broadcasting. Indeed, the theme for our spring conference in April was on one of its most important genres: the future for news and current affairs.

The provision of high quality, impartial news services from a plurality of sources is an essential element of British democracy but all the services we currently enjoy – from the BBC, ITN and ITV – are vulnerable to funding cuts. Calls for the impartiality rules to be dropped are also deeply disturbing. Sky's excellent News service, although governed by the impartiality rule, is not an obligatory part of its licence, as are those of the terrestrial broadcasters.

The theme of our Scottish conference on 1 May was chosen to inform the inquiry by the Scottish National Commission, set up in response to the Ofcom review. We shall be focusing on other aspects and genres in the coming months, including the future of children's programmes, the needs of older people, education and the arts.

The findings of Ofcom's review will be immensely influential. It is of huge concern, therefore, that the review only covers television. Radio is not included, an astonishing omission when you realise how much BBC Radio contributes to the cultural life of the nation, to social cohesion and the democratic process at local, national and international levels. Moreover, Ofcom, when quoting the BBC's licence fee income as a potential source of funding which might be shared with Channel 4 or commercial broadcasters who may wish to make 'public service' programming, consistently fails to mention that nearly a quarter of the licence fee income currently goes to fund BBC Radio. How can you consider the funding of the BBC, or the potential for sharing the licence fee income with commercially funded broadcasters without taking into account the cost or the contribution that BBC Radio makes through its patronage of the arts, its educational programmes, its news or its contribution to social cohesion at local and national levels?

The next year will be crucially important to securing the future for the radio, television – and online – services we value and currently take for granted. It will also be a very busy one for VLV. We are delighted, therefore, that our new Executive Director is in now place to help us meet the challenge.

The Future for Broadcast News in a Broadband/Digital Environment

Over 150 people attended VLV's 25th spring conference in London on 23 April. They gathered to hear the views of key decision makers from the UK's broadcast news providers about their future viability.

Despite cuts in the the funding of BBC News Services, ITV's desire to shed its regional news obligations, the rapid growth in rolling news and online news, most of the speakers seemed fairly sanguine about their ability to survive in a multi-channel future. The exception was the future for ITV's regional news and the ability of commercial licensees to maintain the range and quality of their news for viewers in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Perhaps it was salutary then that the two independent voices, Roger Graef and John Owen were more outspoken in their fears about the future and the ability of the broadcasters to maintain the range of services necessary to inform the democratic process.

THE SPEAKERS WERE:

Helen Boaden, Director of News, BBC; Dorothy Byrne, Head of News, Channel 4; Simon Bucks, Associate Editor, Sky News; Robin Elias, Managing Editor, ITV News; Clive Edwards, Executive Editor, BBC Television; Roger Graef, CEO, Films of Record; Mike Lewis, Editor, ITV Tonight; Kevin Sutcliffe, Editor Dispatches, Channel 4; Ceri Thomas, Editor, Today, BBC Radio 4; Nigel Chapman, Director, BBC World Service; John Owen, Visiting Professor, City University; The conference was chaired by Steven Barnett, University of Westminster, John Lloyd, Contributing Editor, The Financial Times and Paddy Coulter, Partner, Oxford Global Media.

A recording of the proceedings is available price £25 plus post & packing.

HOW TO RESPOND TO OFCOM CONSULTATIONS

Ofcom prefers responses by email with a cover sheet available on its website: www.Ofcom.org.uk Non web users can phone Ofcom inquiries on 020 7981 3000 or textphone 020 7981 3043. Or send responses to the relevant person at Ofcom, Riverside House, 2A Southwark Bridge Road, London SE1 9HA. For responses to Ofcom's review of PSB, contact: Rhona Parry; for TV Advertising, contact: Daniel Maher; for Participation TV & Premium Phone use, contact: Yvonne Matthews.

The Future of Public Service Broadcasting



Ofcom has launched a consultation on the first phase of its Review of Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) which sets out alternative ways that PSB might be funded in future. It covers all the terrestrial PSBs, both publicly-owned (the BBC, Channel 4 and S4C), and commercial (ITV1, (Channel) Five and Teletext).

KEY POINTS IN THE CONSULTATION:

Ofcom says audiences value competition for the BBC, but competition for advertising revenue makes the underlying economics of the commercial PSBs increasingly difficult. Audiences place a high value on UK-made programming from a variety of providers, but there is a risk that this will not be provided to the same degree in future. Audiences are increasingly taking advantage of new digital media to access public service content.

A NEW SUSTAINABLE MODEL FOR PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTING

A range of options for funding and provision is considered. The review highlights the fact that the costs to commercially-funded PSBs of making programmes to meet PSB aims is going up, while their main financial benefit – privileged access to terrestrial broadcasting spectrum – is going down. So, despite other benefits, it is possible that by 2012 the costs of holding the ITV1 licences may exceed the benefits. Channel 4's financial future also looks uncertain. Programming for children and for the nations and regions of the UK is already commercially unattractive.

OFCOM SEEKS COMMENTS ON FOUR MODELS FOR FUNDING PSB

Possible models for new forms of public support for the commercially-funded channels include: direct public funding; from direct taxation or hypothecated proceeds from spectrum auctions or spectrum charging; the BBC licence fee: using part of the licence fee income or other BBC assets to support commercial providers; regulatory assets: these might include access to spectrum at

below-market prices, revised or longer advertising breaks; or PSB status for additional channels; industry funding: a wide range of industry levies, including proposals similar to those currently under consideration in France.

OFCOM WILL PUBLISH AN EVALUATION OF THE RESPONSES IT HAS RECEIVED IN THE AUTUMN

It will give more detail about the four suggested models, and proposals on other issues such as programming for the nations and regions, children, the future of the commercial PSBs, innovation and interactive media.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS CONSULTATION CANNOT BE OVERSTATED.

At stake is the future of public service broadcasting in the UK, the BBC and the kind of broadcasting environment and infrastructure that has made the UK the world's leading quality broadcaster. VLV will be submitting a detailed response but we urge everyone to send in comments of their own especially their views on the four questions Ofcom poses.

See box above for how to respond. Please copy your comments to VLV. Deadline for responses: 19 June.

Advertisements

Please refer to VLV when responding to advertisements. VLV Ltd cannot accept any liability or complaint in regard to the following offers. The charge for classified advertisements is 30p per word, 20p for members. Please send typed copy with a cheque made payable to VLV Ltd. For display space please contact Linda Forbes on 01474 352835.



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Give VLV membership as a gift to a friend or relative. We will add an appropriate greetings card and a FREE copy of the Radio or TV User's Guide worth £5.95.

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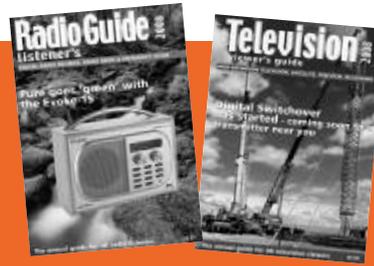
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The guides cost £5.95 each - (plus p&tp). Please make your cheques payable to *Radio Listener's Guide*, and send them to:

Radio Listener's Guide, PO Box 888
Plymouth PL8 1YJ

Diary Dates

Tuesday, 3rd June

VLV/LSE Polis seminar on Ofcom Review of Public Service Broadcasting
London School of Economics, Kings Way, London WC2 6.30pm.

Tuesday, 24th June

VLV Evening Seminar with Culture Secretary, Rt Hon Andy Burnham MP
House of Commons, London SW1 6pm.

Wednesday, 26 November

VLV Autumn Conference & AGM
Geological Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1

CAN YOU HELP?

Are You a Radio 4 Listener?

I am an academic and former BBC Radio and World Service journalist looking for Radio 4 listeners to participate in a research study on audience response to Radio 4 News and Current Affairs. The results will be published in *The Radio Journal* and read by my former colleagues in BBC News and documentaries. The aim is to help radio journalists find ways of creating programmes which cover hard issues in a more accessible way.

Participants will be asked to listen to two CDs or tapes between now and September at times when they would normally listen to live radio, and then to respond to a short questionnaire.

For further details, please email k.wright@roehampton.ac.uk
Or write to Kate Wright, Senior Lecturer in Journalism, Roehampton University, London SW15 5PH.

Spring Competition

Win Jamie Oliver's 400 page cook book "Jamie at Home - Cook Your Way to the Good Life"

Published by Michael Joseph, an imprint of Penguin, ISBN 978-0-718-15243-7 h/b at £25.

After moving back to Essex with his wife and children, Jamie took up gardening, especially vegetable gardening which gave him a whole new perspective on the food he cooks and eats. This book, based on his recent TV series, contains simple instructions on how to grow your own food and scores of practical recipes for turning it into delicious meals.

Q: On which TV channel was the series Jamie at Home shown?

Replies on a postcard to: Spring Competition, VLV, 101 Kings Drive, Gravesend, DA12 5BQ or by email to: info@vlv.org.uk by 1 July 2008. The Editor's decision is final.

The winner of VLV's Winter competition for a copy of Monty Don's 'Around the World in 80 Gardens' was Roger Dauncey of Minsterworth, Gloucestershire.



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