

Cover sheet for response to an Ofcom consultation

BASIC DETAILS

Consultation title: Ofcom's Annual Plan 2005/6

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Representing (self or organisation/s): Chelmsford Amateur Radio Society

Address (if not received by email):

CONFIDENTIALITY

What do you want Ofcom to keep confidential?

Nothing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Name/address/contact Details/job title	<input type="checkbox"/>
Whole response	<input type="checkbox"/>	Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Part of the response	<input type="checkbox"/>	If there is no separate annex, which parts?	

If you want part of your response, your name or your organisation to be confidential, can Ofcom still publish a reference to the contents of your response (including, for any confidential parts, a general summary that does not disclose the specific information or enable you to be identified)?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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DECLARATION

I confirm that the correspondence supplied with this cover sheet is a formal consultation response. It can be published in full on Ofcom's website, unless otherwise specified on this cover sheet, and I authorise Ofcom to make use of the information in this response to meet its legal requirements. If I have sent my response by email, Ofcom can disregard any standard e-mail text about not disclosing email contents and attachments.

Name	Signed (if hard copy)
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Ofcom's 2005/6 Annual Plan

Consultation Questions and Answers

Question 1:

Do you agree with our outline proposals for our three year planning horizon?

No comment

Question 2:

Do you agree with the broad priorities identified for 2005/6?

Largely okay but we would wish Ofcom slow down and consider detail more. The recent rate of consultations is too much

Question 3:

Are there areas/issues not covered in this Plan which Ofcom should consider adding to its priorities?

Ofcom could consider how it could enhance media and technical literacy amongst citizens, both as users and as creators/innovators. Otherwise we will not only have a digital or wireless-divide, but much of the new technology will be imported, undermining the UK economic base. As per our reply in Q4, Amateur Radio is one resource which has roles to play in educating the citizen consumer as well as contributing to future trained engineers and the UK industrial base.

For both Amateur Radio and other small SMEs, the concept of Spectrum National Parks and Test & Development zones/licenses should be considered to keep a path open for future innovation, development and training.

Ofcom should consider urgent re-reviewing short range and licence exempt bands at 430, 860 and 2.45GHz as per our Framework Review submission (More capacity at/near 2.45GHz, migration of Car alarms out of 430 to 860). Priorities should be interoperability of varied systems and capacity.

An online database of spectrum and license holders, standards and issues is needed.

Ofcom's website is proving difficult to use! Please simplify it and speed it up

Question 4:

Have we identified properly the interests of different stakeholder groups, and the impact of our plan on those groups?

We wish Ofcom would take more time to understand and interact with the 60000 licensed stakeholders in the Amateur Radio community. This should be on the basis of its being not just a recreational activity, but on the underlying potential value for technical innovation, propagation research emergency communications and scientific/educational training.

Ofcom impact assessments should consider how such a sector which is unable to yield direct commercial weight in spectrum trading for example should be fostered for national benefit. Ofcom should also take note of recent EU EMC legislation and new US Congress bills which aim to protect Amateur interests.

Question 5:

Do you agree with our proposed level of resourcing?

CARS and its members note the budget pressure that Ofcom is operating under. Nonetheless we wish to express our concern that the resources and manning are declining in the technical areas of spectrum monitoring, enforcement, representation at international committees and EMC compliance, at a time when Ofcom's policies of liberalisation and renewed industry/user growth require such resources more pro-actively than ever before. We suggest the balance is shifted from BT and TV Broadcast issues to wireless/spectrum activities. We also (as per our Framework review submission) strongly recommend a rollout of comprehensive remote spectrum monitoring stations in the DC-6GHz range.