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Consultation title	UK preparations for the World Radiocommunication Conference 2023 (WRC-23)
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Your response

The Children's Media Foundation (CMF) is a not-for profit organisation supported by public donation, which campaigns for greater range and variety in the content provided for children and young people in the UK, advocates a research-based approach to policy and regulatory decision-making, and supports the production of UK-based programming that offers British children the opportunity to hear their own voices, experience their own stories and explore their own culture and society.

This is a response to Ofcom's call for input on UK preparations for the World Radiocommunication Conference 2023 (WRC-23). Our response is focused on Section 5: Broadcast TV & Support Applications.

CMF usually avoids comment on technical developments or planning. However, on this occasion our association with Arqiva has brought to our attention that decisions taken at the World Telecommunications Conference will impact on the future of Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) services. These TV services are as important to the younger audience as to all demographics - in some cases more important and we urge Ofcom to ensure they continue in their current form.

Like Arqiva we advocate for a 'no change' position on WRC-23 agenda item 1.5 "*Review of the frequency band 470-960 MHz with potential IMT identification*" because decisions taken at this Conference will have a lasting and wide-ranging impact on UK broadcasting.

DTT uses the 470-694 MHz spectrum band. 'No change' would protect DTT's continued use of the spectrum and we strongly encourage Ofcom to build an international consensus for this position.

DTT remains important and useful. Ipsos research revealed that more than half (56%) of British adults have watched Freeview via an aerial in the past year.¹ Broadcast TV and radio are a critical national asset.

DTT and radio services delivered via an aerial enjoy broad support, across all age groups and regions. The Ipsos research for Arqiva shows that 90% of adults believe broadcast services should continue to be supported.

We believe that everyone should have access to the high quality and diverse programming that broadcast TV and radio provides, regardless of their income, the level of their digital skill, where they live or their age. DTT is free at the point of use – delivering a diverse range of content, including public service broadcasting. Many who rely solely on broadcast TV and radio are those who have the least - the disconnected. The Children's Media Foundation believes that "no child should be left behind" in the provision of content that delivers public service purposes and is free at the point of use. For the least well-off families in this country DTT is their lifeline to a broad range of entertainment and education for their kids.

We reiterate our support for a 'no change' position on the 'review of the frequency band 470-960 MHz with potential IMT identification'. Ofcom should lead the way in preserving this vital service for the less well-off and digitally disadvantaged.

Greg Childs
Director, The Children's' Media Foundation
28.9.22

¹ Ipsos (2022). *The Importance of Digital Terrestrial Television and Broadcast Radio*
https://www.arqiva.com/Importance_of_Broadcast.pdf