



Department for  
Digital, Culture,  
Media & Sport

## Consultation on the Further Renewal of Analogue Commercial Radio Licences

**23 December 2019**

## Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>Page 3</b>
<b>How to respond</b>	<b>Page 5</b>
<b>A. Policy and Regulatory Background</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
<b>Commercial Radio Licensing</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
<b>Analogue Licence renewals</b>	<b>Page 8</b>
<b>The development of the UK radio market since 2010</b>	<b>Page 8</b>
<b>The case for further renewals</b>	<b>Page 10</b>
<b>B. Policy Options for Consultation</b>	<b>Page 12</b>
<b>C. Next Steps</b>	<b>Page 16</b>
<b>D. Consultation Questions</b>	<b>Page 17</b>

## Executive Summary

1. Since 2010, improvements in national and local digital radio coverage together with investment in new digital services by broadcasters and by vehicle manufacturers in fitting digital radios as standard in new cars (92.9% in Q3 2019) has supported the continued take up of digital radio. Digital now accounts for 56.8% of all radio listening (RAJAR Q3 2019), up from just 24% in 2010.
2. However, in spite of the shift of radio listening to digital, analogue radio remains an important platform for listeners and still accounts for just over 40% of UK radio listening. With a number of national and local commercial FM and AM radio licences approaching final expiry in 2022, and with little prospect of a radio switchover before the mid-2020s, the government needs to again consider whether or not to continue with the current arrangement of licence renewals and, if so, to determine how long the further renewal should be for. Ofcom does not currently have powers to renew these licences for a further period: radio stations wishing to continue broadcasting would need to reapply for their licences and potentially compete against other prospective operators, including new entrants, to secure a new licence.
3. This consultation therefore seeks views on whether the government should make provision to allow analogue commercial radio licences to be renewed for a further period, and if so, what the length of this period should be. The government intends to make this change via a Legislative Reform Order (LRO) which would amend the relevant legislation – namely sections 103B (which covers national licences) and 104AA (which covers local licences) of the Broadcasting Act 1990 - in order to allow these licences to be renewed for a further period.
4. Specifically, we are seeking views on three options:
  - **Option 1** - Do nothing: Not to legislate, but instead to allow licences to expire and be re-advertised by Ofcom in accordance with the legislation;
  - **Option 2** - Allow the renewal of licences for a further five year period for licences renewed under s103B and s104AA of the 1990 Broadcasting Act, with appropriate provisions for any stations that have not yet had licences renewed under s103B or s104AA;
  - **Option 3** - Allow the renewal of licences for a further eight year period for licences renewed under s103B and s104AA of the 1990 Broadcasting Act, with appropriate provisions for any stations that have not yet had licences renewed under s103B or s104AA.
5. Options 2 and 3 would continue to provide commercial radio with incentives to support the development of Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) through their investment in new content. Both options would also result in a further reduction in the regulatory burdens on the industry and Ofcom by removing the costs industry would incur and the management

and administrative burden radio stations would have to bear should stations have to re-compete for licences. These options would also remove an administrative burden on Ofcom, who would otherwise have to run a lengthy licensing process between 2021 and 2025. With both options, we will need to make some consequential technical changes to allow Ofcom to amend the relevant date of licenses coming up for renewal.

6. Alongside these changes, we also propose to update the renewal requirement for small commercial stations. The proposed change will enable them to satisfy the requirements to have carriage on DAB if their services are carried on either a local multiplex (as now) or a new small scale DAB multiplex service that covers substantially the same measured coverage area as their analogue service. Ofcom are due to start licensing small scale DAB multiplexes in early 2020 and this change would allow small commercial stations greater flexibility in how they organise their services.

7. We plan to take forward any action via a Legislative Reform Order at the earliest opportunity following the conclusion of this consultation. These Orders may be used where a burden has been identified which is intended to be removed or reduced. This approach does limit the scope of changes to those areas where a regulatory burden is removed or reduced. This approach cannot be used to create new obligations or requirements and Ministers must be able to certify that the preconditions set out in section 3 of the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006 (LRRRA) are met before an Order is made. However, we may consider making this change via primary legislation if a suitable legislative vehicle is available early in this Parliament.

8. This consultation is being made in accordance with the Legislative Regulatory Reform Act 2006, as well as the terms of the government's [consultation principles](#).

9. The consultation period has been set at 8 weeks in order to give the government the option of bringing forward any legislative changes in the early part of 2020. The closing date for responses is 5pm on **21 February 2020**.

## How to Respond

10. This consultation covers the United Kingdom. We welcome comments from all stakeholders who may be interested. The consultation **will close at 5pm on 21 February 2020**. Please respond by email to [analoguelicence@culture.gov.uk](mailto:analoguelicence@culture.gov.uk).

11. We are happy to provide a copy of this document in Welsh or alternative accessible formats. If you require a copy in an alternative format or if you have any questions, please get in touch at:

FAO Commercial Radio Analogue Licence Renewal Consultation  
Media Team  
DCMS  
4th Floor, 100 Parliament Street  
London  
SW1A 2BQ

or [analoguelicence@culture.gov.uk](mailto:analoguelicence@culture.gov.uk)

## Disclosure of responses and data protection

12. The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), 4th Floor, 100 Parliament Street, London, SW1A 2BQ, is the data controller in respect of any information you provide in your answers. Your personal data is being collected and processed by DCMS, which processes your personal data on the basis of informed consent. We will hold the data you provide for a maximum of 2 years. You can find out more here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-digital-culture-media-sport/about/personal-information-charter>

13. We will process the names and addresses and email addresses provided by respondents, and information about which organisations respondents belong to, where this is provided. We will also process the information that you provide in relation to your views on the proposed changes contained in the consultation, which may of course include commercially sensitive data. When the consultation ends, we will publish a summary of the key points raised on the Department's website: [www.gov.uk/DCMS](http://www.gov.uk/DCMS). This will include a list of the organisations that responded, but not any individual's personal name, address or other contact details. All responses and personal data will be processed in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation.

14. If you want some or all of the information you provide to be treated as confidential or commercially sensitive, it would be helpful if you could clearly identify the relevant information and explain why you consider it confidential or commercially sensitive. Please note that DCMS may be required by law to publish or disclose information provided in response to this consultation in accordance with access to information regimes: primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, the

Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation. If we receive any request to disclose this information, we will take full account of your explanation, but cannot give you an absolute assurance that disclosure will not be made in any particular case. We will not regard an automatic disclaimer generated by your IT system as a relevant request for these purposes.

15. Once you have submitted your response to the consultation you will not be able to withdraw your answers from the analysis stage. However, under the Data Protection Act 2018 (and the General Data Protection Regulation), you have certain rights to access your personal data and have it corrected or erased (in certain circumstances), and you can withdraw your consent to us processing your personal data at any time.

16. You have the right to lodge a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office about our practices, to do so please visit the Information Commissioner's Office website: <https://ico.org.uk/concerns/> or contact the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House

Water Lane Wilmslow

Cheshire SK9 5AF

[casework@ico.org.uk](mailto:casework@ico.org.uk) Telephone: 0303 123 1113 Textphone: 01625 545860 Monday to Friday, 9am to 4:30pm

17. If you need any further information please contact us:  
[dcmsdataprotection@culture.gov.uk](mailto:dcmsdataprotection@culture.gov.uk)

## A. Policy and Regulatory Background

### Commercial Radio Licensing

18. National radio licences were first advertised by the Radio Authority in 1991 and originally awarded to applicants who submitted the highest cash bid. The Broadcasting Act 1990 requires that two of the three national licences must be awarded to stations with specific content formats: the FM national licence must be for a 'non-pop' station (this was awarded to Classic FM), and one of the two AM licences must be for a predominantly speech-based service (awarded to TalkSport). The third licence on AM was open to 'all-comers' and was awarded to Virgin Radio (a rock and pop service) latterly Absolute Radio.

19. All three national licences were first renewed in 1999/2000 and have benefited from subsequent renewals. Under changes made under the Digital Economy Act 2010, the licences were renewed for a further seven year period and then, following the passage of the Legislative Reform (Further Renewal of Radio Licences) Order 2015, for a further five years. The national licences are due to expire in early 2022.

20. Local commercial radio licences were initially awarded through a 'beauty parade' process with the majority of licences issued prior to 2005. The original applicants for local licences were required to include detailed proposals in their application for how they would cater to the various interests of people in the relevant locality and broaden the range of programmes available. In awarding these licences, the Radio Authority (until 2003) and its successor Ofcom are required to consider a range of factors including the ability of the applicant to maintain the service, the extent to which the proposed service would cater to the relevant locality, the extent to which the proposed service would broaden the range of programmes available in that area, and the extent to which the application is supported by people in the locality.

21. Ofcom also sets conditions, as part of granting the licence, known as a station's format, which derive in part from the commitments made in the original application. The format sets out the type of broadcast output that each commercial radio station is required to deliver, and encapsulates the character of the service a commercial station is obliged to deliver as a condition of its licence. In addition, under Section 314 of the Communications Act 2003, local commercial radio stations are also subject to the requirements set out in Ofcom's localness guidance, to produce locally relevant and locally produced content each week. The format requirements and localness rules have been simplified by Ofcom in recent years with changes made to reduce the impact of requirements to reflect market changes and changes in listening behaviours.

22. All commercial radio licensees must also adhere to a common set of standards, including around taste and decency, and due accuracy and impartiality in news as set out in Ofcom's Broadcasting Code and the Code on Advertising Practice (CAP).

### Analogue Licence Renewals

23. Since the late 1990s, previous governments have supported the development of digital radio in order to improve the quality of radio reception across the UK and widen choice for radio listeners. A key part of the overall support for DAB since the late 1990s has been provisions allowing commercial radio licence holders to apply to Ofcom for an automatic renewal for their analogue licences. Holders of national and local licences are entitled to renewals of their analogue licence provided they broadcast the stations' services on the appropriate national or local DAB multiplex. The "rollover" provisions offered to commercial radio services provided an important incentive to encourage commercial radio to invest in building national and local DAB networks (multiplexes) during the early and formative years of digital radio and to offset the significant additional costs of simulcasting in both modes. The renewal provisions also offered commercial radio operators the stability they needed to develop and transmit new services in order to broaden digital radio's services and so help support the migration of listeners.

24. The renewal provisions were updated by the Digital Economy Act 2010. This gave Ofcom further powers to grant licence renewals to FM and AM stations. Radio stations that were licensed on or after 8 April 2010, or which had already been renewed for 12 years under section 104A or section 103A of the Broadcasting Act 1990, were able to apply to Ofcom to renew their licence for one further period of seven years. The 2010 Act included a number of other measures to support commercial radio, for example allowing commercial stations greater latitude in networking content and in making provision for local DAB multiplex licences to be extended to support an expansion of coverage.

### The development of the UK radio market since 2010

25. In 2010, DCMS brought commercial radio, the BBC and industry together to develop a single Digital Radio Action Plan. The Plan's objective was to tackle the various barriers to the adoption of digital radio and to provide Ministers with advice on whether a switchover of radio was desirable and, if so, when should a future switchover should take place.

26. In spite of a large amount of good progress, not least in the industry producing better, more reliable and energy efficient DAB radios and getting car manufacturers to switch to DAB radios as standard, DCMS Ministers concluded in December 2013 that the transition from analogue to digital radio would take longer than the previous government had originally envisaged and that a future radio switchover before the early 2020s was unlikely. A range of new measures were announced with the aim of supporting progress towards the transition. This included a request for Ofcom to licence a second national DAB multiplex and the commitment of capital funding from DCMS along with investment by the



BBC and commercial radio to fund an expansion of local DAB network coverage. In 2015, as part of these changes, Parliament agreed to a further five year renewal of analogue licences to the extensions granted under the 2010 Digital Economy Act in order to ensure that commercial radio had a further period of stability and a clear incentive to continue to invest in the expansion of digital radio coverage and in the launch of new radio services.

27. The government's strategy since 2010 has supported further progress by the radio industry towards the development of a comprehensive DAB network which is used weekly by 66% of adults:

- the first national commercial multiplex - known as D1 and licensed to Arqiva - now covers more than 91% of UK households and a new second national commercial multiplex - known as D2 and licensed to Sound Digital Ltd - was launched in 2016 and its coverage was further extended this year to 83% of UK households;
- the number of national commercial services on DAB has increased from just 4 in 2012 to 39 now and this includes stations such as Scala Radio (classical music), Talk Radio (speech), Absolute 90s (90s music), Sunrise Radio and Panjab Radio (both serving Asian communities) and FunKids (serving children and young adults); in 2014 Global decided to take LBC nationwide; the station now reaches 2.3m listeners a week (compared to 0.9 million before);
- the programme of work to upgrade the local DAB multiplex coverage was completed in 2018. This was supported by funding from the BBC (whose national and local services are carried on the local DAB network) and commercial radio and by £7.3m of capital funding from DCMS.

28. The improvements in digital radio coverage and the increased choice of stations on DAB and online has helped to support the steady progress in the transition of radio to a digital medium. According to RAJAR, around 57% of all UK radio listening is now on digital - up from 24% in 2010. The increase in digital listening has been supported by further investment by the UK motor industry in shifting to fitting DAB radios as standard. Currently 92.9% of all new cars sold and 63% of new commercial vehicles have DAB installed as standard. The amount of digital radio listening in cars continues to grow: in Q3 2019, 42% of all radio listening in cars is now via digital - compared to virtually nil in 2010.

29. One of the drivers of the recent growth in digital has been an increase in listening via internet-based devices - on smart speakers and mobile phones - which now exceeds 10% of all radio listening. This trend is starting to change the way in which listeners, particularly younger listeners, interact with radio. The rapidity of these changes means that commercial radio will shortly have to make important decisions about the long-term strategy for future radio and audio distribution and the role of AM and FM in the next 10 years and beyond. The government announced in May 2019 that it will carry out a joint review with commercial radio, the BBC and the wider radio industry to get a better understanding of future scenarios

and the impact of new technologies to inform future long-term investment in digital distribution of content.

### The case for further renewals

30. In light of these uncertainties, the government believes the right approach is to continue with the long-standing policy of analogue licence renewals and to allow commercial radio stations simulcasting on DAB a further licence extension. However, we also acknowledge that the issues are not as clear cut as in 2015, and this consultation seeks views on the overall approach as well as on the optimum period for any further analogue licence renewals.

31. On the one hand, the significant improvement in DAB radio coverage, along with the long-term shift to digital listening, means that the commercial radio sector is now starting to lose its reliance on analogue platforms. A good example is Absolute Radio and TalkSport, which hold two of the three national radio licences. The most recent audience figures from RAJAR published on 24 October showed that 66% of TalkSport's weekly reach is now via digital, whilst Absolute's weekly reach is 76% on digital compared to just 24% on analogue. As a result with a reduction in analogue listening, Ofcom has permitted Absolute to reduce the number of AM transmitter sites; TalkSport have recently applied to Ofcom for a similar change.

32. On the other hand, the progress of digital at the national level does flatter compared to the position for most local stations (including licences held by Global and Bauer) where reach on analogue still exceeds reach on digital; and although a decisive shift to digital has started, the progress is not uniform. The challenge of new competition from online audio content providers such as TuneIn and Spotify and the need for broadcasters to take long-term planning decisions on radio content distribution in the near future both point to the necessity for a further period of stability that would help commercial radio operators plan for the changing competitive landscape resulting from the increasing challenge of online audio which is starting to impact on radio's reach and share particularly amongst younger age groups.

33. Overall, the government also believes that any possible benefits of allowing licences to expire and relicensing to take place are likely to be outweighed by the significant cost and disruption to the broadcast radio industry, at a time when advertising revenues this year have been flat and where challenges posed by new online audio services continue to grow. Providing a degree of certainty and stability would support commercial radio as it continues to face the tri-fold challenges of the transition from analogue to digital, the growth in new forms of online audio content and the sector's continuing dependence on advertising.

34. Whilst there are some calls for analogue commercial radio licences to be opened up to competition from potential new entrants, the government believes that allowing licences to be bid for is unlikely in most cases to lead to such an outcome. An important factor here is

the decisive shift to digital listening - particularly in cars - where digital radio listening is now 42% of in car listening and is likely to reach 50% in the next year.

35. The government recognises that such a change raises a number of important issues for the radio industry and wishes to consult on three specific options:

- **Option 1**- Do nothing: Not to legislate, but instead to allow licences to expire and be re-advertised by Ofcom in accordance with the legislation;
- **Option 2** - Allow the renewal of licences for a further five year period for licences renewed under s103B and s104AA of the 1990 Broadcasting Act, with appropriate provisions for any stations that have not yet had licences renewed under s103B or s104AA;
- **Option 3** - Allow the renewal of licences for a further eight year period for licences renewed under s103B and s104AA of the 1990 Broadcasting Act. with appropriate provisions for any stations that have not yet had licences renewed under s103B or s104AA.

## B. Policy options for consultation

**Option 1. Do nothing: not to legislate, but instead to allow licences to expire and be re-advertised by Ofcom in accordance with the legislation.**

36. The purpose of the licence renewal provisions - including the extension granted by the Legislative Reform (Further Renewal of Radio Licences) Order 2015 (whereby national and local analogue radio licensees could be granted further renewal for five years as long as they also provided content in a digital service via a multiplex) was to promote and maintain investment in and support for digital radio.

37. With around 66% of households having at least one digital radio set and digital radio listening at around 57% of all listening nationwide (over 60% in London), it is certainly arguable whether the licensing regime still needs to include incentives for commercial radio through an extension of the system of licence renewals in order to secure commitments to broadcast in digital. The majority of the radio stations that have benefited from the two periods of renewal following the passage of the 2010 Act are now firmly established on DAB, with little risk of them moving from the platform. Ofcom's successful licensing and launch of the second national digital commercial multiplex to Sound Digital Ltd in 2016 has opened the way for a further increase in the number of national commercial radio stations. In addition, requiring existing licences to be relicensed would make national and local FM and AM licences available to potential new entrants to the market, encouraging competition between both existing and new providers. At the very least, this option could give Ofcom an opportunity to secure a stronger commitment from incumbents through a competitive bidding process.

38. However, we believe there are considerable advantages in allowing the further renewal of licences:

- Firstly, it maintains the consistent position that radio's long-term future is a digital one and that the focus should be on opening up choice on DAB and via online platforms. A change to the long-standing policy of granting licence renewals in return for continued investment by commercial radio in DAB runs the risks of sending mixed signals about the government's commitment - this is important for manufacturers, retailers and the car industry who have supported investment in technological improvements in DAB and whose continued investment and support is essential to radio's long-term health and well being.
- Secondly, it avoids what could be a very disruptive situation where the national and a large number of local commercial analogue licences expire at the same time, leading to a diversion of much the commercial radio industry's efforts into bidding for the licences; this would be costly for commercial broadcasters, especially if the large groups chose (defensively) to bid for each others' licences

and smaller new entrants struggle to compete and to demonstrate how they would support business plans without a future write down of local licence commitments. There is also the risk of speculative bids from new entrants who seek to secure long-term licences in order to sell them on or opting to sell back to the major commercial radio groups.

39. The government's view is that whilst not introducing legislation to allow a further renewal may have some benefit, it carries with it a significant risk of weakening the whole radio sector at a time of change, and where certainty on the direction of travel is crucial to giving companies the confidence to continue to invest in meeting the challenge of online audio providers. The competitive process for each licence would have clear cost implications for commercial radio, with the costs of bidding for and award of licences being met by industry through licence application fees charged by Ofcom. There would also be a significant administrative burden to Ofcom in running a competitive process for each licence over a relatively short period. More importantly perhaps, there is a potential impact on listeners, particularly those listening on analogue, who could face the loss of their long-standing and favourite services if stations' licences were simply allowed to expire.

**Question 1 – What is the likely impact on the radio sector if legislation is not changed? In particular, what would the benefits be in terms of widening choice and investment in local programming and what would be the cost and other impacts for commercial radio in rebidding for licences?**

**Option 2. Allow the renewal of licences for a further five year period for licences renewed under s103B and s104AA of the 1990 Broadcasting Act, with appropriate provisions for any stations that have not yet had licences renewed under s103B or s104AA.**

40. As outlined in paragraph 24, the 2010 Act introduced changes to the Broadcasting Act 1990 to allow Ofcom to grant a further licence renewal to FM and AM stations licensed before 8 April 2010 for one period of seven years, on the condition that licensees also broadcast a service on DAB. In 2015, this was extended by a further five years.

41. A further five year renewal would ensure that all commercial radio licences will continue to run until 2027 and to a period when (on current trends) digital listening may have reached 80% of all listening. Such a change would extend the period of certainty for industry, enabling licensees to continue to realise their early commitments to the development of DAB and avoiding the extensive and ongoing process of re-advertising and re-awarding licences.

42. The period would only cover renewals made before a future digital switchover decision between now and the mid 2020s, as all licences (including those renewed under a new provision) would be subject to termination with two years' notice at the point at which

a switchover date was nominated, as provided for under s97A of the Broadcasting Act 1990. However, this approach is also likely to be of most advantage to incumbents, and to the detriment of any potential new entrants, who will be unable to apply for the licences which are due to expire.

**Question 2 – Do you agree that a five year period of renewal would provide sufficient certainty to licensees about a continued transition to digital, and encourage continued investment?**

**Question 3 – We would also welcome views on whether all analogue licences should be treated in the same way, or whether the renewal of national licences should be treated differently to local licences.**

**Option 3. Allow the renewal of licences for a further eight year period for licences renewed under s103B and s104AA of the 1990 Broadcasting Act, with appropriate provisions for any stations that have not yet had licences renewed under s103B or s104AA.**

43. We do not believe there is any benefit in renewing licences for less than five years. This is because such a short renewal will not create the necessary certainty that would allow stations to continue to invest in their businesses or the transition to digital radio.

44. Allowing periods of longer than five years - for example eight years - could create greater certainty for licence holders, potentially encouraging further investment. As with the five-year renewal option, the renewed licences would also be subject to the two years' notice period at the point at which a switchover date was nominated, as provided for under s97A of the Broadcasting Act 1990.

45. On the other hand, very lengthy, or even indefinite, licence terms would be a radical change in radio licensing and could disproportionately benefit existing licence holders, particularly the larger groups, who could conceivably choose to try and slow progress towards a future digital radio transition in order to extract additional value from their FM licences.

46. Although a longer licence term appears to strengthen the position of established stations and groups, the growing maturity of digital radio means there are other options available to new entrants who want to launch new services, for example by launching their station on a local or national DAB multiplex benefiting from the improved coverage (compared with the position 5 years ago) or, from 2020, on new small scale DAB multiplexes. Therefore it is arguable that this option would not have a significant impact on new entrants, and indeed any impact may diminish over time as digital radio listening and DAB radio penetration increases and becomes the default mode of radio listening.

47. As with option 2, this option would also reduce the regulatory and cost burden on industry and Ofcom, as it would circumvent the likely onerous process of re-advertising and re-awarding so many licences in a relatively short period of time.

**Question 4 – We would welcome views on the advantages and disadvantages to the radio industry and to individual stations of allowing a further eight year renewal.**

**Question 5 – We would also welcome views and evidence on the impact of further licence renewals on commercial radio and on whether the current routes do provide a workable option for potential new entrants to the market.**

**Option 4.** Allow local commercial stations that serve small geographical areas the option of taking a licence renewal if their services are carried on a new small scale DAB multiplex service that covers substantially the same measured coverage area as their analogue service.

48. On 25 October 2019, the Small-scale Radio Multiplex and Community Digital Radio Order 2019 came into force. The Order gave powers to Ofcom to license small scale DAB multiplexes covering small geographical areas. The new light touch regime will provide more smaller commercial and community radio stations with a practical and lower cost means of broadcasting on the DAB digital platform. Small commercial stations have raised the issue of the specific requirement in s104AA of the 1990 Broadcasting Act that to qualify for a renewal stations need to nominate a local radio multiplex service - i.e that the station must be carried on a local multiplex covering a larger (usually county sized) geographical area.

49. With the introduction of small scale DAB multiplexes, which Ofcom plans to start licensing early next year, the government proposes to update the legislation to allow for licence renewals to apply where a station has nominated either a local multiplex (as now) or a small scale DAB multiplex and, in Ofcom's view, this covers substantially the same measured coverage area served by the analogue licence.

**Question 6 – We would welcome views on a new requirement to allow smaller commercial stations to benefit from renewals if they take carriage on a small scale DAB multiplex and whether the legislation needs to define what is meant by substantially the same measured coverage area or whether this should be left wholly to Ofcom's discretion.**

## C. Next steps

50. A summary of responses and the government's response to this consultation will be published in due course following the closure of the consultation. The government's response will take all responses submitted to this consultation into account, and will be based on a careful consideration of the points made in consultation responses, not the number of responses received.

51. This consultation is being conducted in accordance with the provisions of section 13 of the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006. Information on Legislative Reform Orders can be found at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-archive/regulatory-reform-committee/regulatory-reform-orders/>.

52. Further information on the consultation principles can be found at

<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/consultation-principles-guidance>.

53. We would welcome views on all aspects of the consultation paper.



## D. Consultation Questions

**Question 1** – What is the likely impact on the radio sector if legislation is not changed? In particular, what would the benefits be in terms of widening choice and investment in local programming and what would be the cost and other impacts for commercial radio in rebidding for licences?

**Question 2** – Do you agree that a five year period of renewal would provide sufficient certainty to licensees about a continued transition to digital, and encourage continued investment?

**Question 3** – We would also welcome views on whether all analogue licences should be treated in the same way, or whether the renewal of national licences should be treated differently to local licences.

**Question 4** – We would welcome views on the advantages and disadvantages to the radio industry and to individual stations of allowing a further eight year renewal.

**Question 5** – We would also welcome views and evidence on the impact of further licence renewals on commercial radio and on whether the current routes do provide a workable option for potential new entrants to the market.

**Question 6** – We would welcome views on a new requirement to allow smaller commercial stations to benefit from renewals if they take carriage on a small scale DAB multiplex and whether the legislation needs to define what is meant by substantially the same measured coverage area or whether this should be left wholly to Ofcom's discretion.



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