

GLOBAL/GMG MERGER INQUIRY

Third party response to the provisional findings

14 March 2013

In response to the Competition Commission's Provisional Findings on the Global/ RSL merger inquiry, the BBC would like to make two points.

The first relates to paragraph 5.5, which states: 'Commercial radio competes with the BBC for listeners (see Appendix F) and we did not receive evidence or views that contested that there is rivalry for listeners between the two. Across the UK, the BBC has about 55 per cent of all listeners across its national and local stations and these compete directly with commercial radio which accounts for the vast majority of other radio listeners.'

We note that Appendix F consists of a summary of statements by commercial stations of who they consider to be their main competitors. The Commission has not provided the underlying methodology or evidence. It would seem useful for the Commission to further set out its own analysis of the nature of any competition between BBC and commercial stations, including audience analysis and the propensity to switch of the different audience segments (listeners to commercial radio only/ to BBC radio only/ to both).

(See our November response on the distinctiveness of the BBC's radio stations; also http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/annualreport/pdf/bbc_exec_sopps_2011_12.pdf p.58 et seq.).

The second point is in relation to the number of BBC radio stations. The BBC has 10 network radio stations, 7 of which are broadcast on both analogue and DAB platforms (Radio 1, Radio 2, Radio 3, Radio 4, Radio 5 Live, Asian Network) and 3 of which are digital only (1Xtra, Radio 4 Extra, 6Music). In addition, the BBC has 5 nations stations (Radio Scotland, Radio Nan Gaidheal, Radio Wales, Radio Cymru, Radio Ulster/ Foyle), as well as a network of Local Radio stations in England (39 stations covered by one Service Licence). With the exception of Radio Foyle, the BBC's nations stations are all broadcast on analogue and DAB. The same is true for the majority of BBC local radio stations although some local stations are not yet available on DAB because they are in areas where a commercial licence has not yet been awarded by Ofcom. This is summarised in the table below.

BBC Radio Services	FM	AM	DAB
BBC Radio 1	X		X
BBC Radio 2	X		X
BBC Radio 3	X		X
BBC Radio 4	X	X	X
BBC Radio 5 Live		X	X
BBC Asian Network		X	X
BBC Radio 1Xtra			X
BBC Radio 4 Extra			X
BBC Radio 5 Live Sports Extra			X
BBC 6 Music			X
BBC Local Radio	X	X	(X)
BBC Radio Scotland	X	X	X
BBC Radio nan Gaidheal	X		X
BBC Radio Wales	X	X	X
BBC Radio Cymru	X		X
BBC Radio Ulster/ BBC Radio Foyle	X	X	(X)

Note: BBC nations and local stations are only available in their local area do not have UK coverage. Asian Network has UK coverage on DAB, but not on analogue where it is available only in the following areas: East Midlands, West Midlands, Derbyshire and Peterborough/North Cambridgeshire.

(X) Not all BBC Local Radio stations are yet broadcast on local DAB. Radio Ulster is broadcast on DAB in Northern Ireland, but not the daytime opt, Radio Foyle

Further information about the BBC's radio stations is available here:
www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/our_work/services/radio/service_licences

Information about analogue frequencies and DAB availability is here:
www.bbc.co.uk/radio/info/frequencies

www.bbc.co.uk/reception/transmitters/radio/digital_local_radio