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23rd July 2001

The Rt Hon Tessa Jowell MP
Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport
2 - 4 Cockspur Street
LONDON
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Dear Secretary of State

REVIEW OF PROPOSALS BY THE BBC FOR THEIR DIGITAL SERVICES

As Director of BREMA I am writing on behalf of companies manufacturing and supplying consumer electronics products in the UK.

We fully support the Government's objective to achieve analogue to digital switchover between 2006 and 2010. Our members have and continue to invest heavily in the development and manufacture of digital television receiver equipment.

The success of digital television in the UK was highlighted recently by your Department's report of the MORI Survey, Digital Television 2001, which included the fact that 30% of households have digital television. This is a well-deserved outcome for the Pay-TV operators but has resulted in the misconception taking hold that Digital Television equates to Pay-TV. The full range of benefits of Digital Television include the Free-To-View services and it is now essential to raise awareness in this respect - which Government is committed to doing.

There is a widely-held view that 30% to 40% of households will not wish to subscribe to digital Pay-TV but only want the Free-To-View services. For these households to be persuaded to move to Digital Television there will need to be high quality digital services additional to the current analogue services. The BBC is seen as the leading public service broadcaster to provide additional high quality digital Free-To-View services which will persuade that significant proportion of households who do not want Pay-TV to move to digital television.



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Earlier this year the introduction of the DVB Logo and a promotion campaign resulted in an upsurge in integrated digital television (idTV) receivers. While we would not wish to comment on the details of the proposals, we strongly support the BBC being permitted to invest in additional digital only Free-To-View services. We are in no doubt that such additional services would have a significant positive impact on the take-up of digital television by those households who do not want to subscribe to digital Pay-TV.

Yours sincerely

Hugh Peltor

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Director