

# tigeraspect

PRODUCTIONS

Secretary of State  
Department of Culture, Media & Sport  
The Right Honourable Tessa Jowell  
2 - 4 Cockspur Street  
London  
SW1 5DH

18<sup>th</sup> July 2001

Dear Minister,

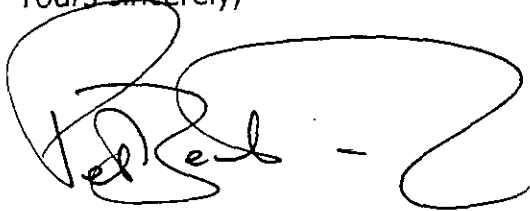
I understand that you are currently considering and assessing BBC proposals to launch new digital channels. Tiger Aspect is a leading independent production company supplying programming to all UK broadcasters. Our BBC output includes feature films and popular comedy, drama, entertainment, wildlife and factual series.

Tiger Aspect is of the view that the existence of the proposed new digital channels gives the BBC the potential to nurture and launch new talent and formats in a less exposed arena than currently exists. Uniquely, the BBC has a proud tradition of adopting a long term view towards talent development but it's ability to continue this tradition has been threatened in a ratings driven environment in which success needs to be immediate. New, less exposed outlets clearly targeted at specific audiences will in theory allow the BBC to continue to nurture creative talent and to take risks which lead to success.

From our perspective it is important that the funding of the new channels is not at the expense of the funding of BBC1 and BBC2; that a competitive price is paid for original programming and that in the event of programming being transferred from digital to terrestrial channels, a fair price is paid to producers and artists for further exploitation. We are meeting DCMS officials this week as part of a PACT initiative to allow the independent sector's voice to be heard regarding these and related issues. We will use this opportunity to demonstrate what new opportunities will be on offer to content creators as a result of the BBC's proposals and state our strong in principle support for the proposals. We will flag our concerns about the dangers of the new channels becoming either a dumping ground for specialist interest programming or an underhand method of sourcing cheap programmes.

If these issues are addressed satisfactorily we are hugely supportive of the BBC's proposals to enlarge the broadcasting arena as this should lead directly to greater opportunity and diversity for the creative and production community in an increasingly competitive environment.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Bennett-Jones', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Peter Bennett-Jones  
Chairman – Tiger Aspect & Comic Relief