

I wish to contribute to the cross media ownership consultation to express my concern at the situation that two independent producers find themselves in. **Endemol UK** and **Cafe Productions** have lost their independent status because they are more than 25% owned by a broadcaster. However, in each case the broadcaster is a foreign one that has no broadcast interest in the UK, and as a consequence they cannot in any way threaten the plurality of programme supply, the health of the independent production sector or cause further vertical integration amongst the UK broadcasters.

This is an anomaly that needs to be corrected, particularly because I understand that we are out of step with the rest of the European Union - Endemol's other subsidiaries within the European Union have all retained their independent status since the company was bought by Telefonica.

Writing as an Independent Producer, and also the former Chairman of PACT, I feel it is important to have rules relating to independent status that encourage inward investment in our creative industry, not raising barriers to it. In this instance for example, the two companies mentioned, Endemol and Café Productions have made an enormous contribution to the creative and financial success of the Independent sector, and I believe it is important that their status should be such that they can again continue to contribute to the independent sector.

Yours sincerely

BERYL VERTUE

Chairman Hartswood Films Ltd