



M O B I L E   D A T A   A S S O C I A T I O N

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Baron Carter of Barnes  
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Communications, Technology and  
Broadcasting  
Department of Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform  
1 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0ET

10 March 2009

Dear Lord Carter

### **Digital Britain**

I am writing on behalf of the Mobile Data Association (MDA) to express our strong support for the objectives outlined in the Interim Digital Britain Report, and to provide our views on some of the elements that we believe are central to the UK maintaining and growing its world leading position in Digital Communications, and in establishing the digital economy as the centre of its economic development strategy.

The Mobile Data Association has been established since 1994 and its membership is open to any business operating in the supply side of the mobile telecommunications industry. Our membership includes all of the UK Mobile Network Operators (MNOs), most of the major Aggregators and many others in the supply chain for mobile content and business-enhancing mobile solutions. We provide a neutral platform to engage the industry in items of common concern and work with the industry regulators – Ofcom and PhonepayPlus – as active members of their industry panels. We also work with other government departments including BERR and DIUS, Department of Health, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. We work with UK Trade and Investment (we are an Accredited Trade Organisation under the Tradeshow Access Programme) to help our members develop relationships overseas and gain business there. We are actively involved in the Knowledge Transfer Networks run under the government's Technology Strategy Board and sit on the Board of the Digital Communications KTN.

We write also in support of the submission made to you by the DC-KTN. The DC-KTN is unique in being set up as an industry focused body and has made great strides because of this. While supporting the KTN's submission, however, we would

add specific areas that we believe are important and that are uniquely applicable to our membership (telecoms accounted for 3.1% of GDP in 2007 at £38.8bn, with Mobile responsible for over 50% of this figure – source Ofcom / Measuringworth) and where we see issues for which we can assist in providing a solution.

Areas where we can assist and where the mobile telecommunications sector are actively involved include the development of new digital applications:

- Digital Transport and ITS (Telematics form a key basis for evidence gathering, transport investment and improved safety; GPS and LBS are at the heart of mobile communications; Internet on wheels).
- Digital Education (access to learning and museums for life; digital creative skills – anywhere anytime).
- Digital Healthcare (always connected, “Doctor in your pocket”; Assisted Living; self managed healthcare).
- Digital Public Services (paperless and remote access for all fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century; digital workforce management).
- Digital Payments, bar codes, Near Field Communications (NFC), vouchers and ticketing.
- Digital Energy (smart metering to smarter climate change; lighting and energy controls for industrial and domestic use).
- Digital Homes (always secure through remote monitoring; environmental alerts; fall monitors).
- Digital Environment (connected sensors everywhere; pollution measurement; congestion alerts etc).

The mobile community has been 100% digital since 1996. It is already gearing up for Digital Britain with research and development, but this is generally viewed as part of Digital Europe and a more globalised world of collaborative R+D. The remote gathering of data and the ease of sharing this data through high speed fixed and mobile links are key to the UK being a central player in future R+D

Looking to the future, Digital Britain 2025/2030, we would like to be involved in helping to stimulate key players in better cross-sector understanding of the power of broadband (fixed and mobile) and work on FORESIGHT type studies that prepare the right investment scenarios for UK broadband investment (as have already been created for Transport).

We also believe it is important that routine international benchmarking of broadband is maintained by OFCOM and ONS as an evidence base and a clear driver of policy and investment in this area, supported by OECD and ITU data. The MDA would welcome the opportunity to be involved in steering these next steps to support UK competitiveness and helping future-proofing our broadband nation

While recognising that the final report will be published shortly, the interim report, and thus, we presume, the final report, raise issues that will need further work to ensure pressure is maintained to bring the vision to fruition.

We look forward to the opportunity of working with government to achieve these goals and would welcome a meeting with you to discuss our future involvement in helping to establish the medium term vision, to undertake longer term scenario-planning and to support international benchmarking missions against which we believe both should be routinely checked.

Yours faithfully

**Steve Reynolds**  
**Chairman Mobile Data Association**  
Steve.Reynolds@themda.org

Signed in his absence

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martin Ballard". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Martin Ballard  
Operations Director