



CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

Cable Policy

The Cabinet's discussion of cable policy on 2nd December did not touch on responsibility for resolving the issues left undecided by the Ministerial Sub-Committee on Telecommunications Policy (E(TP)) and for preparing the White Paper on cable systems which it is intended to issue in the first few months of 1983. The minutes record that you would consider what arrangements should be made (CC(82) 51st Conclusions, Minute 7).

2. As I suggested in my brief for the meeting, the task would not be appropriate for the Cabinet Office which took the lead in advising on the Government's response to the Information Technology Advisory Panel and the Hunt Reports, since it will be necessary to ensure that there is close Ministerial supervision of such a politically sensitive subject. As most of the outstanding issues involve broadcasting policy and regulation, and the legislation is likely to fall to the Home Office, it seems natural to look to the Home Secretary to take the lead, consulting the Secretary of State for Industry and other Ministers as appropriate.

*Amend  
no*  
3. If you agree with this, it would be desirable to clarify matters, so that the Departments have their marching orders. I attach a draft Private Secretary letter.

Robert Armstrong

6th December 1982

CONFIDENTIAL



CONFIDENTIAL

DRAFT LETTER FROM THE PRIME MINISTER'S PRIVATE  
SECRETARY TO THE HOME SECRETARY'S PRIVATE SECRETARY

cc: Private Secretaries to Members of E(TP), the  
Private Secretary to Mr. Raison, Mr. Spence, CPRS  
Mr. Hatfield, Cabinet Office

Cable Policy

As indicated in her summing up of the Cabinet's discussion of cable policy on 2nd December, the Prime Minister has considered what arrangements should be made for resolving the issues left undecided by E(TP), and for preparing the White Paper on cable systems which it is intended to issue in the first few months of 1983 (CC(82) 51st Conclusions, Minute 7).

The Prime Minister thinks that it is important to ensure that there is close Ministerial supervision of this politically sensitive subject. Since most of the outstanding issues involve broadcasting policy and regulation, and the eventual legislation seems likely to fall to the Home Office, she would be grateful if the Home Secretary would take prime responsibility, consulting the Secretary of State for Industry and other Ministers, and the Cabinet Office Information Technology Unit, as appropriate.

I am sending copies of this to the Private Secretaries to other members of E(TP) and to the Private Secretaries to Mr. Raison, Sir Robert Armstrong and Mr. Sparrow.

*MS*



HL

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Principal Private Secretary*

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

Cable Policy

The Prime Minister has seen your minute of 6 December and has agreed that a Private Secretary letter should be circulated in the terms attached to your minute. I enclose a copy of the letter which I have sent to the Private Offices proposed in your minute.

E. E. R. BUTLER

8 December 1982

CONFIDENTIAL



10 DOWNING STREET

FILE

cc: Mr. Baker (Ind)  
Trade  
Ch Sec HMT  
LPO  
S/S Ind  
Mr. Raison  
RTA (under separate cover)  
Mr. Sparrow

HL

*From the Principal Private Secretary*

8 December 1982

Cable Policy

As indicated in her summing up of the Cabinet's discussion of cable policy on 2 December, the Prime Minister has considered what arrangements should be made for resolving the issues left undecided by E(TP), and for preparing the White Paper on cable systems which it is intended to issue in the first few months of 1983 (CC(82) 51st Conclusions, Minute 7).

The Prime Minister thinks that it is important to ensure that there is close Ministerial supervision of this politically sensitive subject. Since most of the outstanding issues involve broadcasting policy and regulation, and the eventual legislation seems likely to fall to the Home Office, she would be grateful if the Home Secretary would take prime responsibility, consulting the Secretary of State for Industry and other Ministers, and the Cabinet Office Information Technology Unit, as appropriate.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Private Secretaries to other members of E(TP) and to the Private Secretaries to Mr. Raison, Sir Robert Armstrong and Mr. Sparrow.

F. E. R. BUTLER

John Halliday, Esq.,  
Home Office.

CONFIDENTIAL

BTC