



QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

29 March 1983

Dear George

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Thank you for your letter of 15 March about the possibility of retaining some Scottish 405-line transmitters in service beyond the end of 1984.

I quite understand your concern, and I have no wish to withdraw the 405-line service any earlier than is necessary to allow the land mobile services to expand. But there is, I think, rather more at stake here than pure administrative tidiness. Substantial progress has already been made with the closure of the 405-line services in Scotland, and most of the Scottish transmitters will in fact be off the air by the end of 1984 under the existing programme. Of the three IBA transmitters that would be due for closure in 1985/6 (Black Hill, near Glasgow; Durris, near Aberdeen; and Mount Eagle, near Inverness) the first two operate at very high power and would be certain to cause significant interference to land mobile usage as far south as Manchester, unless special steps were taken to plan the introduction of land mobile services around them on a temporary basis, and it might not be entirely safe to rule out the possibility of interference to services in Glasgow and Edinburgh from the third transmitter. Though we are somewhat less concerned about the BBC transmitters (because our main objective is to press on with the exploitation of Band III, which is the more suitable band for the land mobile services) even in Band I we have limited room for manoeuvre. In any event, it seems undesirable to embark upon the additional complication of departing from the general pattern of simultaneous closure of the BBC and the IBA 405-line transmitters.

In all the circumstances, and given that by 1984 there should be very substantial UHF coverage and significant development of self-help schemes in Northern Scotland, I frankly do not think that I would be justified in requiring the broadcasting authorities to maintain one or two Scottish transmitters in operation beyond 1984. I propose, therefore, to go ahead with my announcement; it seems most desirable to avoid any further delay in giving the public notice of the new date of closure.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister and to other recipients as before.

George Younger
Letter

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Review of Radio Frequencies

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