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Secretary of State for Trade and Industry

30 November 1987

The Rt Hon Douglas Hurd CBE MP  
 Secretary of State for Home Affairs  
 Home Office  
 50 Queen Anne's Gate  
 LONDON  
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*Prime Minister's  
 JRS  
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*Row Taylor,*

**BROADCASTING SPECTRUM STUDIES**

Our two studies into a possible fifth television service at UHF and into the feasibility of MVDS to deliver additional television services are proceeding well, and reports on both studies should be available before the end of the year.

I have however become conscious of a growing pressure to consider also the potential for an additional television service to share VHF bands I and III with the new mobile radio services in these bands.

VHF bands I and III are of course still available for television broadcasting under the International Radio Regulations, and indeed are still used extensively for this purpose by most other European countries and the USA. It is one reason why Charles Jonscher and others can claim that other countries provide more television services than we do.

The arguments which led us to withdraw this spectrum from the broadcasters when 405-line transmissions ceased, in order to allow for the expansion of mobile radio urgently needed by the business community, still hold good. There can, in my view, be no question of displacing the new services now operating in these bands or of going back on firm commitments already made. But I now believe that, for the sake of completeness if nothing else, there would be merit in an additional - and quick - study into the extent to which an additional television service might be able to share this spectrum with mobile radio.



The objective would be to enable us to include this option along with UHF and MVDS in the decisions we shall need to reach early next year. I would therefore seek a report before the end of January.

If you agree, I suggest that the study could most conveniently be undertaken by broadly the same interdepartmental group, with assistance from the two broadcasting organisations, which is now well advanced with the UHF study, though I believe that there is no CAA involvement in this spectrum.

The announcement of this study might well cause considerable concern to existing and prospective users of bands I and III and to their providers of equipment and services. I am far from convinced that sufficient spectrum can be found to provide worthwhile coverage for a television service and I would not wish to alarm the mobile radio lobby unnecessarily. I therefore propose a low-key press announcement which would present the study as no more than an extension of the existing UHF study.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, to MISC 128 colleagues and to the Secretary to the Cabinet.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Y. Young', written in a cursive style.

LORD YOUNG OF GRAFFHAM

