



CONFIDENTIAL

FCS/88/117

cc ~~BG~~
MBM
Ph 6
20/6

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRADE & INDUSTRY

Additional DBS Channels

- Diap*
1. I am grateful to you for sending me a copy of your letter of 17 June to the Home Secretary.
 2. I agree that for the reasons set out in your letter we should defer any approach to the ITU for additional DBS Channels until after the World Administrative Radio Conference for the Planning of the Geostationary Orbit (WARC-ORB 88) in October this year.
 3. I noted with interest that you mentioned the possibility of a re-planning exercise for the DBS broadcasting band, which would provide a broader national coverage than that established in 1977. As you may know, at the time the Government were considering introducing UK DBS, I argued strongly for a European (as opposed to a purely domestic) UK DBS service on the grounds of the real advantages to be gained from industrial and commercial spin-off of such a service, as well as the foreign policy and UK cultural diplomacy implications. These arguments, I believe, still remain valid. Moreover, it seems to me that the climate for such a wider European service is now particularly suitable,

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given German and Scandinavian interests in extending their own DBS footprints, and in the light of MISC 128 considerations and of developments in transfrontier broadcasting in the Community and the Council of Europe.

4. I am of course aware that now is not the time to be considering the question of DBS re-allocation and I am writing at this stage only to register our interest. But this is something we will need to look at very closely, possibly sometime after the WARC-ORB 88, and well before the 1989 ITU Plenipotentiary.

5. I am copying this minute to the Prime Minister, the Home Secretary, and other members of MISC 128 and to Sir Robin Butler.

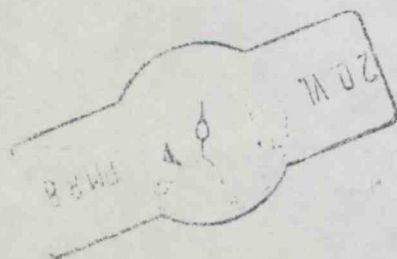
A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'G. Howe', written in a cursive style.

(GEOFFREY HOWE)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
17 June 1988

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BROADCASTING: DBS PT6.





QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

15 June 1988

*MBPM
Pres
15/6*

Dear Peter,

TRANSFER OF BBC 2 AND CHANNEL 4 TO DBS

Thank you for your letter of 10 June. *at top.*

As you say, there would be no question of altering the transmission arrangements for S4C if Channel 4 were transferred to DBS. David Young made it clear in his paper MISC 128(88)7 that he envisaged that S4C would continue to be transmitted terrestrially; and there would not, of course, be room for S4C as well as Channel 4 and BBC 2 on the spare DBS channels.

I fully understand your wish to avoid this causing any unnecessary anxiety in Wales. Our press offices can make clear in response to any enquiries that no change is envisaged for S4C.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, other members of MISC 128 and to Sir Robin Butler.

*Yours,
David*