



the department for Enterprise

CCP

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Dear David

#### BROADCASTING BILL: CONTIGUITY

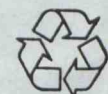
Thank you for copying me your minute of 9 November to the Prime Minister about the contiguity rules for Channel 3.

I support your proposal. I welcome the fact that it recognises that commercial realities can sometimes override ownership restrictions and I agree that, even if this power were used, the positive programming requirements should preserve the separate regional identities of the two franchises. It would clearly be a nonsense for an area not to be served at all because of the way the ownership rules had been drafted.

I wonder, however, whether we are not being inconsistent in acknowledging that regional identity can be preserved by having two licences in the circumstances outlined in your letter whilst not accepting that the same mechanism can work from the start of the franchise period.

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

James  
Liam



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