

Chris Rowsell
BBC
New Broadcasting House
Portland Place
London
W1A 1AA

Siobhan Walsh
Director
Content & Media Policy Group

2 March 2021

Dear Chris,

The BBC's Operating Licence – Christmas and Public Holiday Exemptions on BBC Radio

Thank you for your letter of 11 December 2020. We have considered your request for Ofcom to amend the Operating Licence to provide an exemption from the requirements of conditions 2.10.1, 2.14 and 2.15 on Public Holidays. We agree to extend the public holiday clause that's in place on R1 and 1xtra to R2, R6 and Asian Network.

In addition, as indicated in paragraphs A1.15 - A1.16 of Ofcom's third Annual Report on the BBC, we noted that we were considering varying the Licence to take account of changes the BBC makes to the schedules of Nations radio services around Public Holidays and seasonal events, also covered in your letter.

Therefore, we are proposing the following amendments to the operating licence:

- a) Replace the existing text of condition 2.10.1 with the following:

“at least 17 hours are allocated to news and current affairs programming each week, of which at least 3 hours must be in Peak Listening Time, with the exception of weeks containing a Public Holiday, in which case the numbers of hours may be reduced proportionately; and”

- b) Replace the existing text of condition 2.14 with the following:

“In respect of **BBC 6 Music**, the BBC must ensure that in each week at least 6 hours are allocated to news, with the exception of weeks containing a Public Holiday, in which case the number of hours may be reduced proportionately.”

- c) Replace the existing text of condition 2.15 with the following:

“In respect of **BBC Asian Network**, the BBC must ensure that in each week at least 24 hours are allocated to news and current affairs programming, with the exception of weeks containing a Public Holiday, in which case the number of hours may be reduced proportionately.”

d) After condition 2.95 insert a new condition numbered 2.95A as follows:

“2.95A The BBC may request in writing that the requirements in condition 2.82.1, 2.88.1, 2.89.1, 2.95.1 or 2.95.2 be suspended for a specified period. Ofcom will consider any such request and may agree to the request where it is satisfied that in the particular circumstances of the case it is appropriate to do so. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to, proposed changes to schedules to cover a live event such as a music festival.”

Please could you confirm formally your agreement to the proposed amendments to the Licence conditions as set out above as soon as possible.

As explained in our letter of 18 December 2020, we are planning to publish a series of minor amendments to the Operating Licence together imminently. To implement the changes, we will issue a Notice of Variation to the BBC and send you a hard copy of the amended Licence. We will publish the amended Licence on our website.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Siobhan Walsh', followed by a small horizontal line.

Siobhan Walsh