

The Bigger Picture

Programme for this session

- Europe
- UK Digital Economy Bill
- New landline tax
- UK election

Europe

- Europe- changes to the framework directive to become law by May 2011
- 1 day number portability
- Consumer contracts- 24 months maximum
- Better consumer information
- Protecting internet access
- Minimum network quality
- Consumer protection against personal data breaches and spam

Europe

- Better access to emergency services
- New EU authority- BEREC, set up from the existing European Regulators Group- now in force from January 2010
- Commission say on competition in national markets
- Functional separation a tool for European regulators
- Accelerating broadband access
- Encouraging competition and investment in next generation access

UK Digital Economy Bill

- Extends the role of Ofcom to include reporting on communications infrastructure and media content *This could affect CPs
- Imposes obligations on internet service providers to reduce online copyright infringement, and allows the Secretary of State to amend copyright legislation to the same end * this could affect CPs and resellers
- Allows the Secretary of State to intervene in internet domain name registration
- Requires Channel Four to provide public service content on a range of media
- Provides more flexibility over the licensing of Channel 3 and Channel 5 services and allows Ofcom to appoint providers of regional and local news

UK Digital Economy Bill

Also:

- Modifies the licensing regime to facilitate switchover to digital radio
- Allows variation of the public service provision in Channel 3 and 5 licences
- Provides Ofcom with additional powers in relation to electromagnetic spectrum access
- Extends the range of video games that are subject to age-related classification
- Makes provision for the regulation of copyright licensing
- Includes non-print formats in the public lending right payment scheme

FCS supports the bill overall- specifically reporting on access to infrastructure- FCS amendment on access to spectrum debated on 8 February in House of Lords

New Landline Tax

- 50p per month on each local loop
- Applied to voice, data and broadband services
- Expects to raise £175 million per year
- Imposed on network owners who can pass it on to customers
- To be used to fund Next Generation Access to 90% of Britain by 2017
- Treasury Consultation closes 12 February 2010

UK General Election

What does the future hold?

- Conservatives say they will reduce Ofcom activity in line with their purge on unelected quangos and lack of accountability,
 - “So with a Conservative Government, OFCOM as we know it will cease to exist. Its remit will be restricted to its narrow technical and enforcement roles” David Cameron, summer 2009
 - BBC licence fee to support superfast broadband roll out
 - To break BT’s monopoly on infrastructure and permit other providers to use BT’s ducts and pipes- Jeremy Hunt February 2010
- Labour will progress the Digital Britain report and digital economy bill
- Ofcom waiting for outcome of election- annual plan for 2010 has limited projects
- Little time for a new Communications Act to implement the EU revised framework by May 2011



Bigger Picture session

Thank you

Any Questions or Issues?