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To Secretary of State

Cc Jon Zeff

From 

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NOMINATED NEWS PROVIDER SYSTEM

Issue

You asked for a note on how the Channel 3 news arrangements would work if we removed the ownership rules.

How would a system work?

In the event that ministers decide to remove ownership limits on the Channel 3 appointed news provider, there would no longer be a need for the nomination process. The Bill would continue to require that news for all Channel 3 services be provided by a single body corporate which is separate from the holders of Channel 3 licences, though could be completely owned by them.

As the Channel 3 appointed news provider must be a separate body corporate, there will be a transparent contract between ITV and that provider. OFCOM will therefore still be able to approve the terms on which any appointment is made in order to secure adequate funding for Channel 3 news obligations to be met.

The quality elements of the Channel 3 news system (ability to compete effectively with other television news programmes broadcast nationwide in the UK, and OFCOM's approval of the terms and finances of the appointment) will remain in place as part of OFCOM's regulatory regime for Channel 3 news provision. This will be a statutory requirement. We would expect these obligations would also be included in licence conditions for ITV but the precise details of these arrangements are a matter for OFCOM.


Media Ownership Officer