

MEMO

To: [REDACTED]
cc: [REDACTED], Consumer Panel
From: [REDACTED]
Date: 6 June 2005
Ref / Subject: Impact Assessment Guidelines

[REDACTED]

1. The Consumer Panel have reviewed the document "Better Policy Making: Ofcom's approach to Impact Assessments V2" and asked me to convey that they find the approach to be robust and comprehensive. As you know, the Panel is currently engaged in a project looking at the way Ofcom takes consumer interests into account in policy-making and there is some read-across from this to the impact assessment guidelines. We will make sure that this is taken on board by the consultants (PWC) who are conducting the Panel work.
2. Members did have some specific comments and queries and I would be grateful for your response to these:
 - a. How will Ofcom measure the effectiveness of the impact assessment process? Members were concerned that there did not appear to be a mechanism to test whether the right decisions were made as a result of the IA process. In addition they suggested that a review of the way the IA process worked might be necessary once it began to be used on a regular basis.
 - b. Clarification was requested on how much of the information gathered through the process would be made public, bearing in mind the statement at B.5 that Ofcom would not normally publish its initial view on all of the options. It is quite likely that the information gathered by Ofcom in reaching its view on a preferred option would be of interest to stakeholders, particularly the early information referred to in 3.7.
 - c. Additionally, clarification of the reasons why Ofcom would not publish its initial view on all possible options was requested.

- d. Finally, in relation to point 5.13, members questioned whether the 'no new intervention' benchmark would also include a consideration of whether the current regulatory framework was actually working to the benefit of stakeholders or not. Their view was that this would need to be a part of the process.
3. We understand that the IA process is due to be debated at the Board tomorrow and trust that these comments will be fed into the debate.



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