

Research Briefing

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The draft Media Bill: A reading list

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Background

In a [Written Ministerial Statement of 29 March 2023](#), Lucy Frazer, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, announced the publication of a [draft Media Bill](#). She said this would deliver on the Government’s vision for the broadcasting sector, as set out in its April 2022 white paper, [Up Next](#). According to the Secretary of State, the Bill would “reform decades-old laws to turbocharge the growth potential” of the UK’s public service broadcasters, allowing them to better compete with global giants. She explained that the Bill would:

- Deliver a new public service remit for TV while making sure public service broadcasters continue to service audiences across the UK with universally available, high-quality programming.
- Make sure public service broadcast content is always carried and easy to find for UK audiences on connected devices and major online platforms, including on Smart TVs, set-top boxes and streaming sticks, so audiences can easily access this content in the way that best suits them.
- Introduce a sustainability duty on the Channel 4 Television Corporation (C4C) and remove the existing publisher-broadcaster restriction on C4C so it has a greater ability to produce and monetise its own content, if it chooses to do so, ensuring Channel 4’s long-term future in public ownership.
- Update the public service remit of S4C (Sianel Pedwar Cymru), the Welsh language television service, to include digital and online services. Removing the current geographical broadcasting restrictions so that S4C can broaden its reach and offer its content on a range of new platforms in the UK and beyond, demonstrating the Government’s commitment to the future of Welsh language broadcasting.
- Bring video-on-demand services like Netflix under UK regulation, ensuring that larger, TV-like services are subject to the same high standards as broadcast TV channels, by giving Ofcom powers to investigate and take action if they consider it appropriate.
- Reduce regulatory burdens and costs on commercial radio stations which are no longer needed due to the decisive shift towards digital listening, while also strengthening protections for the provision of national and local news and local information for listeners.
- Introduce measures to protect the position of radio accessed via smart speakers (for example ‘Alexa’ devices) by ensuring listeners are able to find the content they expect in an unaltered format, without additional or substituted advertisement.

- Repeal Section 40 of the Crime and Courts Act 2013 which would (if commenced) force news publishers to pay the costs of any court judgment if they were not a member of the approved regulator, regardless of the outcome of the court judgment.

For discussion of the above issues, see the Library Briefing, [Media Bill: policy background](#).

This reading list provides a selection of media coverage, stakeholder responses and other material relevant to the draft Bill.

2 Select committee publications

[DCMS Committee acting Chair welcomes publication of draft Media Bill](#), Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee news, 29 March 2023 (accessed 19 April 2023)

3 Stakeholder and media comment

3.1 Organisations

[What does the Government's draft Media Bill mean for RNID's Subtitle It! campaign?](#), RNID news [online], 3 April 2023 (accessed 19 April 2023)

[Impress releases statement following Government's draft Media Bill](#), Impress statement [online], 29 March 2023 (accessed 19 April 2023)

[Draft Media Bill – our response](#), Writers' Guild of Great Britain website, 29 March 2023 (accessed 19 April 2023)

[NUJ welcomes support of PSBs in the draft Media Bill](#), National Union of Journalists news [online], 29 March 2023 (accessed 19 April 2023)

[Draft Media Bill to include repeal of press freedom provision & Leveson incentive, section 40 of the Crime and Courts Act 2013](#), Hacked Off news [online], 29 March 2023 (accessed 19 April 2023)

[NMA welcomes repeal of section 40 in draft Media Bill](#), News Media Association blog, 29 March 2023 (accessed 19 April 2023)

[S4C response to Media Bill publication](#), S4C news [online], 29 March 2023 (accessed 19 April 2023)

[BBC Director-General's response to DCMS press release on the Media Bill](#), BBC statement [online], 29 March 2023 (accessed 19 April 2023)

3.2 Media and blogs

[Government draft Media Bill causes concern over future of religious programming](#), Church Times [online], 14 April 2023 (accessed 19 April 2023)

[Part 7 of our 7-part series on the draft Media Bill – public service television reforms](#), CMS Law-Now eAlert, 11 April 2023 (accessed 19 April 2023)

[Part 6 of our 7-part series on the draft Media Bill – the future of Channel 4](#), CMS Law-Now eAlert, 6 April 2023 (accessed 19 April 2023)

[Part 5 of our 7-part series on the draft Media Bill – listed events regime revisions and a blow for Levison](#), CMS Law-Now eAlert, 5 April 2023 (accessed 19 April 2023)

[Part 4 of our 7-part series on the draft Media Bill - levelling the regulatory playing field between video-on-demand and traditional broadcast linear services](#), CMS Law-Now eAlert, 4 April 2023 (accessed 19 April 2023)

[Part 3 of our 7-part series on the draft Media Bill – the de-regulation of analogue commercial radio](#) CMS Law-Now eAlert, 3 April 2023 (accessed 19 April 2023)

[Part 2 of our 7-part series on the draft Media Bill - a revised prominence regime](#), CMS Law-Now eAlert, 31 March 2023 (accessed 19 April 2023)

[The draft Media Bill and what it means for UK broadcast laws](#), Wiggin insight [online], 31 March 2023 (accessed 19 April 2023)

[Levelling the playing field for TV and streaming: the UK's draft Media Bill explained](#), Performance Marketing World article [online], 31 March 2023 (accessed 19 April 2023)

[The UK's "Draft Media Bill" aims to ensure that UK broadcasters remain globally competitive](#), Harbottle & Lewis viewpoint [online], 30 March 2023 (accessed 19 April 2023)

[Part 1 of our 7-part series on the draft Media Bill – Smart speakers to fall within the scope of media regulation](#), CMS Law-Now eAlert, 30 March 2023 (accessed 19 April 2023)

[UK Media Bill proposes a major overhaul of UK broadcast laws](#), Osborne Clarke insight [online], 30 March 2023 (accessed 19 April 2023)

[Major rule changes coming to local radio as draft Media Bill is released](#), Radio Today [online], 30 March 2023 (accessed 19 April 2023)

[We interrupt this broadcast: draft Media Bill to change TV and radio rules](#), Media Writes.Law website, 29 March 2023 (accessed 19 April 2023)

[The draft Media Bill: a first look](#), Herbert Smith Freehills [online], 29 March 2023 (accessed 19 April 2023)

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