



Commercial Radio Companies Association

19th August 1997

[REDACTED]
Head of General Broadcasting Policy Branch
Room 413
Department for Culture, Media and Sport
2-4 Cockspur Street
London, SW1Y 5DH

Dear [REDACTED]

Broadcasting Events of National Significance

This is a response by the Commercial Radio Companies Association to the letter dated 10th July from the Secretary of State which enclosed a briefing paper.

Part IV of the Broadcasting Act 1996 is primarily concerned with television broadcasts of major events. The Commercial Radio Companies Association (CRCA) represents radio companies which, for the most part, do not include television companies amongst their shareholders.

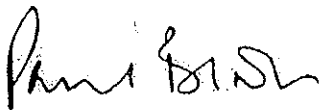
The CRCA understands that the government may wish to ensure that the coverage of certain major national sporting events should not be confined to those able to afford a subscription service of one sort or another. It can also understand, however, that the owners of the sports rights concerned have a duty to maximise the profits made from coverage of the event in the interests of their shareholders, members or participants.

Commercial radio companies believe it is in the interests of British sport, sports men, women and fans that sporting events receive wide coverage. We therefore believe that the ITC's code of guidance required by Section 104 of the Broadcasting Act 1996 should include advice to sports rights holders and purchasers that radio rights should not be bundled with television rights so as to prevent radio coverage of the event(s) concerned. In our view, it would be wrong for a television company purchasing rights

to have radio rights included in the deal which it is not prepared to use or sell on at a fair price. Radio sports coverage is a vital service to those not in a position to view an event either because of other activities they may be engaged in or because they do not have access to the relevant television service.

I realise that this point of view does not answer any of the direct questions asked by your paper on the criteria for identifying events to be listed. However, I hope the case for ensuring that radio is able to cover sporting events is a compelling one.

Yours sincerely,



PAUL BROWN
Chief Executive