

Department for Culture, Media and Sport

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To Secretary of State

cc Andrew Ramsay
Diana Kahn

Will done.

From

File Ref

Date 13 November 2001

Bill Bush
Ruth MacKenzie

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CONSULTATION ON MEDIA OWNERSHIP - MEETING INDUSTRY LEADERS

1. In discussing the best approach to this consultation, you suggested two ways to drive forward debate and give us early indications of the likely nature of responses:

- A series of seminars organised by various think tanks;
- A wide range of meetings with key players in the industries concerned.

2. Bill Bush is talking to think tanks about arranging the seminars. He will try to involve a free market-orientated body to ensure political balance.

3. Annex A lists the meetings we suggest you have with representatives of the major media companies. In each case we should invite the Chief Executive. Given the time constraints, we have suggested grouping some companies together, so that the majority of meetings can take place early in the consultation period.

4. The list comprises ten meetings for you and one for Kim Howells. We have grouped together:

- local newspaper interests;
- the English ITV companies;
- the big radio companies (with the exception of Scottish Radio Holdings, who dissent from the majority opinion on ownership, and Wireless Group, who have already asked for a separate meeting).

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5. You and Patricia Hewitt are already due to meet Les Hinton of News International on 26 November (briefing request attached at Annex B). We recommend rearranging this meeting so that it is part of December's consultation itinerary - the 26th may in any case be difficult if it is to be the date we publish our consultation paper. Similarly, we suggest that you reply to the attached invitation from Kelvin MacKenzie of the Wireless Group (Annex C) by arranging a meeting in December.
6. Are you content with these arrangements? If so, please pass the list of suggested meetings to your diary secretaries.



Suggested consultation meetings with major media companies

1. News International
2. BskyB
3. Trinity Mirror
4. Associated Newspapers
5. Northern and Shell - to meet Kim Howells
6. Newspaper Society
Johnson Press
Newsquest
7. Granada
Carlton
8. Scottish Media Group
9. RTL
10. GWR
Capital
EMAP
Chrysalis
11. Scottish Radio Holdings
12. Wireless Group