

Supplementary written evidence from Mr Tim Leech, Chief Executive, Wireless for the Bedridden (W4B)

I like to follow up upon three items from the 10th and thank everyone for the interest and concern in the area.

1. Upon FM radio and the Scrappage scheme. It is worth noting that FM receivers are in lot of things iPods and stereos to mention but two. I doubt the Scrappage scheme will be of any help with these.
2. We were asked about the fall in advertising revenues. Where I can sympathise in some part, I think it is general knowledge that the commercial radio market has been saturated for quite some time and quality programming is a must to win audience loyalty. If the general public are not listening, I cannot see them wanting to bail out the commercial stations. Commercial radio is by its very nature a commercial venture which does mean that there are risks and it is not necessarily the taxpayer's place to insulate business against these risks.

Digital Outreach Ltd and the Help scheme. Where in general I agree with my colleague, I think it is important to consider the numbers are very low and that help stops after the switch has happened. This does mean that people have been missed or are now struggling to use their equipment. A Help scheme for radio from our experience will need to be a very different animal from the one presently being run and certain elements probably could be cut. Please see below email below from one of my staff in the Granada area as an illustration.

15 February 2010

Hi Tim

Just thought you might be interested to hear more about the Freeview Box request.

The gentleman in question has been in hospital from October so missed the switchover and was quite confused beforehand so prob would've missed the deadline anyway.

The advice people at Manchester City Council had called the digital help scheme but were told that it was closed in the region. Interestingly they were not given our name or details. These were then passed on from another lady that I had met and has since put applications our way.

The gentleman is in poor health and is now in a wheelchair and is waiting to be given new, suitable, sheltered accommodation and is probably better suited to a digital TV due to the confusion of using two remote controls.

Expect an application to land on your/Anny's desk soon.

Emma

Hi Tim

I have been trying to speak to Digital Outreach regarding what they are doing in the regions post switchover. The short answer to this appears to be nothing.

When I asked about retuning and ongoing support they said that they didn't offer any technical support from there but then went on to mention in passing that they did have roving re-tuners at the point of switchover.

Somebody is apparently going to give me a ring back as the person I spoke to was very sketchy on details.

Emma