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## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The BBC has committed to supporting local television during its launch phase. As part of that commitment, the BBC has offered to buy content from local TV during the period to March 31<sup>st</sup> 2017. Local TV is under no obligation to take up that offer but if it wishes it can sell individual items and/or commit to a regular supply of content in return for a fixed fee.
- 1.2 The core fixed-fee deal pays the station to supply 85 ‘discrete and substantial’ pre-planned ‘diary’ stories a month in its first year, 62 each month in year two and 23 each month in year three.
- 1.3 These are the ‘BBC/LTVN Guidelines’ as defined in the main contract. They are negotiated and, if necessary, revised or updated from time to time in talks between the BBC and the Local TV Network (LTVN). The BBC and local TV are expected to operate in accordance with them.

## 2 Building a Relationship

- 2.1 The relevant BBC regional newsroom will appoint a contact (either a specific person or a specific shift) and each local TV licence holder will do the same. The two will liaise on a daily basis on working weekdays looking at the day or days ahead and the local TV contact will indicate the stories they plan to supply to the BBC. These will be ‘diary stories’ from the local TV news agenda of the relevant day and the discussion should include approximately what is expected editorially from the stories, the time of delivery to the BBC (and thus which bulletin or programme each story is aimed at) and what the stories should be named on the digital system. If any story will contain pre-shot material, this should be mentioned.
- 2.2 This phone call and relationship should in no way compromise the editorial independence of either local TV or the BBC:
  - The local TV licence holder has the choice in the stories supplied to the BBC (provided they accord with the terms of the deal). The BBC is purchasing rather than commissioning content from local TV.
  - The local TV licence holder is editorially and operationally independent of the BBC.
  - The BBC also will maintain its editorial and operational independence from the local TV licence holder.

- Local TV teams must not tell people they represent, or are working for, the BBC; the BBC must not tell people that it is representing local TV.

2.3 The local TV licence holder may deploy differently on the day if the news agenda dictates. If so, the local TV contact should let the BBC know as soon as is reasonably possible that a planned story will not be delivered.

### **3 What constitutes a story?**

3.1 A 'discrete and substantial' story is defined as sufficient unpackaged video material to enable the timely telling on television of a local news story that is planned to run in local TV news output and that is suitable for use by the BBC in news output (regardless of whether the BBC chooses to use it). It will normally consist of three minutes or more of video footage, together with the relevant 'metadata' (names of contributors etc). It could take many forms: for example, a compilation of rushes to make a package, some shots and an interview suitable for a brief news item, a local news vox pop, or even a studio interview. No matter what form it takes, the video should only be loosely edited (if at all), to enable the BBC to cut in a way that suits its own output. On relevant occasions, a story may be of sufficient substance with less than three minutes of video footage.

3.2 In some cases local TV might supply two 'stories' on a single topic. The essential difference between the first and second stories on a single topic is that the first story will contain enough material to make the topic intelligible, and to provide any required balance. The second story should contain supplementary material that is not essential to the first story making sense. Here is a short checklist of attributes a second story on a single topic will have:

- It should be capable of standing alone, with the addition of its own written link and a shot or two from the first story.
- It shouldn't be material that is vital to the first story, e.g. a key interview.
- It could be dropped without damaging the discrete (free-standing) nature of the first story.

In exceptional cases (e.g. serious local floods), all items on a day could be different stories related to the same topic.

3.3 The same footage cannot be offered twice to the BBC. For example: where two local TV newsrooms are sharing material, only one of the newsrooms can offer that material to the BBC and count it against their monthly tally.

- 3.4 News stories can cover a broad range of areas – including sport, consumer items, the arts, business, politics, human interest, community news, and events. The practical test is always ‘could you credibly write a top-line for this story on today’s TV news?’

#### **4 Branding and Advertising**

- 4.1 The aim should be that all material provided by local TV should obey current principles of pooled footage. This means that local TV reporters and presenters should not be seen in the stories offered and local TV branding should be avoided as much as practical. For example, a local TV branded microphone appearing in a press conference is acceptable, but a heavily branded studio background in an interview is to be avoided. Incidental local TV reporter elements (such as cutaways or pieces to camera) may be included in the supplied rushes to save time (as they may not have been edited out of the raw material), but should not be counted by local TV when calculating the duration of the supplied content.
- 4.2 The BBC newsroom must be made aware if any offered story has been generated as a consequence of a commercial deal or provided by a third party with an interest in the story. For example if local TV has a media partnership with a county show, and is filming there as a result, the BBC needs to know so it can judge how (or if) to use the material. The BBC has the right to turn down a story if it feels that the use of the material could compromise BBC editorial integrity. It should be noted that, like all broadcasters, local TV is constrained by Ofcom rules.

#### **5 Time of delivery**

- 5.1 If Local TV decides not to cover a planned story, that is perfectly acceptable as long as the BBC newsroom is warned of this as soon as possible so they can make alternative arrangements.
- 5.2 A timescale for story delivery to the BBC central server is to be agreed during the daily contact; in most cases it should be possible to forecast timings for diary items a day in advance. Stories offered that miss the deadline and therefore miss BBC TX times might not be accepted unless it has happened in unforeseen circumstances (for example, when a press conference is delayed by an hour as someone failed to turn up). If this is likely every effort should be made to make the BBC newsroom aware.

#### **6 Breaking news and other non-diary content**

- 6.1 Apart from diary stories, local TV can also offer the BBC footage of ‘on the day’ breaking news stories, or other news/current affairs items that it wants to sell (investigations etc); this is called ‘ad hoc content’.

6.2 Where ad hoc content is for sale, the BBC has first refusal to buy. Participating local TV stations are obliged to give the BBC an opportunity to buy such content at, depending on its characteristics, either a pre-determined or an open market rate. If local TV wants to offer ad hoc content, the station informs its BBC contact. The local TV station will be free to sell the content elsewhere if:

- it receives no reply within a reasonable timeframe, or
- the agreed process having been complied with, the BBC does not wish to purchase the content.

6.3 Most ad hoc items are expected to be valued according to rates specified in the main contract and the BBC will give a simple yes/no response to the offer. This will be confirmed by an email exchange. There are special arrangements where the item is of exceptional (e.g. national/world) news value. Then the local TV station names the terms on which it will offer the item; if the BBC says no then the local TV station can offer the item elsewhere but must re-approach the BBC if it later wants to do an exclusive deal at a lower price than that first offered to the BBC.

6.4 ‘On the day’ ad hoc content can also help make up the monthly story target (instead of being offered for an extra fee), provided the BBC is advised of this in time for it to be of potential use. For example when a diary item is dropped the local TV licence holder might wish to send some breaking news material as a substitute. Ad hoc content that is not ‘of the day’ may also be used as a diary-story substitute, but only if both parties agree this by email.

## 7 Delivery and exclusivity

7.1 Local TV content must be uploaded to a BBC server, in IMX30 format as detailed here:

Name	Container						
IMX30	MXF OP1a						
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Stream</th> <th>Stream contents</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>720x608i/25 Top-Field-First MPEG2 I-frame only @30Mbps</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>4 channels of 16 bit little-endian 48,000Hz PCM</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Stream	Stream contents	0	720x608i/25 Top-Field-First MPEG2 I-frame only @30Mbps	1	4 channels of 16 bit little-endian 48,000Hz PCM
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0	720x608i/25 Top-Field-First MPEG2 I-frame only @30Mbps						
1	4 channels of 16 bit little-endian 48,000Hz PCM						
ffmbc							
Stream definition							
Stream #0.0(und): Video: mpeg2video (4:2:2), yuv422p, 720x608i tff [PAR 608:405 DAR 16:9], 30000 kb/s, 25.00 fps Stream #0.1(und): Audio: pcm_s16le, 48000 Hz, 4 channels, s16, 3072 kb/s							

- 7.2 Both the BBC and local TV contacts will receive an email once the material is delivered successfully. It now can't be sold elsewhere in the UK for the next 24 hours. The delivery will be shown on an 'Arrivals Board' webpage, viewable by the BBC and local TV users.
- 7.3 If the BBC has a specific intention to use an uploaded item it will transfer it onwards from the central server. At this point the content is co-exclusive in the UK (to the local TV station and its permitted associates and the BBC only) for one week from the time it originally arrived.
- 7.4 If the uploaded item is not transferred within 24 hours then it will be promptly deleted from the BBC server; this material is now released from the BBC exclusive contract and can be sold elsewhere. The Arrivals Board will show the status of each item (when delivered and whether transferred within 24 hours).

## **8 Local working practices**

- 8.1 Provided they don't frustrate the overall intention of the deal, local TV and BBC contacts may by mutual agreement develop minor variations to the working practices in these guidelines – e.g. liaising by email rather than by phone.

## **9 Resolving issues**

- 9.1 Any issues that arise day-to-day should normally be referred to the people named locally as supervising this relationship. Any that cannot be resolved locally should be referred to senior management at the local TV station and to the BBC editor for local TV.

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