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UKCTA Secretariat
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**The proposed Welsh Language (Wales) Measure – additional evidence to
Legislation Committee No.2**

19 May 2010

Dear Dohmnall

1. You recently gave evidence on behalf of the UK Competitive Telecommunications Association to the National Assembly's Legislative Committee 2 as part of its stage 1 consideration of the proposed Welsh Language (Wales) Measure. I am very grateful to you for attending the meeting and for contributing to a very informative evidence session.

2. Unfortunately in the session on 13 May, time ran out before all the issues had been covered and I am therefore writing to ask you if you could provide answers in writing to the following questions:

- a) In your written evidence, you place considerable emphasis on the costs associated with the provision of Welsh-medium services under the proposed Measure, and many of your concerns about the potential impact of the proposed Measure seem to relate to such costs. Please could you explain what you understand the nature and the extent of those costs to be for particular types of members of your organisation as well as for the sector as a whole?
- b) You noted in your written evidence that some of your members operate "on an international basis". How do they accommodate the linguistic needs and preferences of customers and users in those jurisdictions, and what has been their experience as to the additional costs, if any, and the impact of such additional costs on matters which you raise in your written evidence, such as quality of service provision, competition, and so forth?

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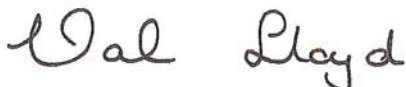
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- c) You state in your evidence that “for most other communications providers [excluding BT and mobile network operators] with a relatively smaller footprint in Wales it might be cheaper and easier simply to refrain from offering services in Wales rather than shoulder the burden of the additional cost and perhaps practical difficulty of complying with the mandatory Welsh language obligations”. Could you expand on who these providers would be, what would the cost disincentive be and what would be the impact on competition in this market in Wales?
- d) In your written evidence, you noted that no UKCTA members are based in Wales and to the extent that they serve Welsh customers, they do so from elsewhere in the UK. On this basis, you state that it is unclear how the proposed Measure can have jurisdiction over your members. Given that some of your members operate internationally (and also serve other jurisdictions within the UK), could not this same argument be made concerning regulation that is imposed in other jurisdictions?
3. In your written evidence, you state that:
- “The Welsh language deserves promotion but care needs to be taken to ensure that steps taken to promote it do not deny Wales access to the benefits of the latest technology by making Wales an unattractive place to invest.”
- e) You state that the "Welsh language deserves promotion." Can you explain what promotion measures would "deny Wales access to the benefits of the latest technology by making Wales an unattractive place to invest"?
- f) Your evidence states that Welsh Ministers should commission a report considering fully the impact of any proposed regulations on the telecommunications sector. Can you please expand on this?
- g) Have you any views on how the provisions in the proposed Measure will impact on consumers in practical terms?

4. Could you please reply by 4 June.

5. I hope these are clear but please do not hesitate to contact the Committee's Deputy Clerk, Owain Roberts on 029 2089 8101 (owain.roberts@wales.gsi.gov.uk) if you want to discuss these issues further.

Yours sincerely,



Val Lloyd AM
Chair, Legislation Committee No 2