



Ofcom's Plan of Work 2025/26

Making communications
work for everyone

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Foreword

The communications and digital sectors are twin powerhouses of growth in the UK. Together they account for at least 6% of our economy, generating hundreds of billions of pounds while boosting innovation and productivity across industries as diverse as manufacturing, transport and healthcare. They have never been more important to the lives and prosperity of people and businesses around the country.

Ofcom is proud to regulate the UK's world-class media and telecoms services, our centuries-old postal system and the airwaves that enable a growing range of exciting, pioneering applications. We are also privileged to have the important task of making online sites and apps safer for users in the UK.

In all these areas, it is our role to further the interests of citizens and consumers, where appropriate, by promoting competition. We protect consumers from harm and help them to make sense of rapidly evolving communications markets. We are also a regulator that encourages innovation and supports the networks that underpin a successful economy. We firmly believe that good regulation – by creating stability and certainty for investors - supports investment and economic growth.

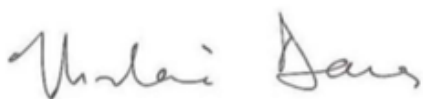
Our programme for the coming year is explained under four priorities that cover the breadth of our remit: 'Internet and post we can rely on', 'Media we trust and value', 'We live a safer life online' and 'Enabling wireless in the UK economy'. Our major work will include a five-yearly review of the UK's wholesale telecoms markets; reforming the universal postal service; implementing the Media Act while concluding a wide-ranging review of public service media; continuing to implement new UK online safety laws and moving into enforcement against firms who fail to comply; and making more spectrum available to support growth in the mobile broadband and space sectors.

We carry out this work against a backdrop of continued change in our sectors and for consumers. Innovation is creating new technologies to bring connectivity to citizens across the UK, and the demands on our finite radio spectrum have never been this great. British audiences have more choice than ever across a growing range of video and audio content. AI poses new opportunities for growth – as well as risks around safety for users of online services.

Alongside our 2025/26 Plan of Work, we are also publishing our Three-year Plan which sets out our priorities for 2025/26 -2027/28.

In a changing domestic and global environment, strong relationships with stakeholders in the UK and overseas are ever more important. We will continue to invest in dialogue with groups affected by our work. We remain engaged with and accountable to the UK Parliament, and continue to work closely with the UK Government and with elected representatives in the nations and regions.

At the start of the year we held events across the UK as part of our consultation on the Plan of Work. Thank you to everyone who came along or responded in writing. This annual process gives us invaluable insight into the needs and priorities of the people and businesses we serve, and we will keep listening to you as we pursue our mission to make communications work for everyone.



Dame Melanie Dawes, Chief Executive

1. Overview

- 1.1 As the UK's converged communications regulator, Ofcom works with industries that have technology at their heart. These are sectors that have driven significant innovation and economic growth over many decades. Our approach to regulation has sought to foster and support growth and disruption, believing that competition for ideas as well as markets is the right way to achieve sustainable outcomes for citizens, consumers and the economy.
- 1.2 We have a role to play in the evolution of both networks and services, from making spectrum available for satellite and mobile broadband, to helping people live safer lives in an online world with Artificial Intelligence (AI) and AI-generated content.
- 1.3 This Plan sets out the work we will do in 2025/26 towards our mission to make communications work for everyone, and how we will deliver this.

Our sectors

- 1.4 Secure and reliable networks are central to all aspects of our digital lives and a key driver of economic growth. Our most recent [Connected Nations](#) report showed that gigabit-capable broadband is now available to 25 million homes (83% of all UK homes). We will continue to support investment in networks through our Telecoms Access Review which will provide regulatory stability for the five years from April 2026, as part of the 10-year strategy we set out in 2021.
- 1.5 In a changing media landscape, we want audiences to continue to find and access trusted and valued content. Last year, for the first time, [more adults consumed news online than on TV](#), and [more than half of us now get our news through social media](#). In 2024, the Media Act – the first major update to UK legislation in this area in over 20 years – took forward a number of important recommendations of our 2021 [‘Small Screen: Big Debate’](#) review of Public Service Media (PSM), including proposals regarding the prominence of Public Service Broadcasters’ (PSBs) on-demand services. We are now implementing the Media Act, updating our rules alongside delivering our next Public Service Media (PSM) review, which is considering how to maintain and strengthen PSM for the benefit of audiences. Our findings will be published in the summer of 2025.
- 1.6 Last year was Ofcom's first full year as the UK's online safety regulator, with new rules coming into force from December 2024. In December, we published the final Codes and guidance on illegal harms and have turned the spotlight on services: their duties are in place and we now expect them to act swiftly to deliver changes for users¹. By the spring of this year, we will have finalised our guidance for providers of pornographic content, as well as the measures to protect children and published our final Protection of Children Codes of Practice. In particular, the [Illegal Harms Codes](#) are now in force and the Protection of Children Codes of Practice are expected to come into force in July 2025. Where a Code is in force, we will be able to enforce the duties in the Act to which it relates.

¹ Please see our [bulletin](#) for more details.

- 1.7 Growth and innovation in the way the UK's airwaves are used by an increasing range of industries, including a growing space and satellite sector, has implications for our spectrum work. For example, there are now over 10,000 active satellites in orbit, compared to around 2,000 in 2018. Our focus is on identifying and making available spectrum to support the needs of our sectors and to foster both new and existing services. In particular, our spectrum auction in 2025/26 will award the mmWave spectrum licences in high density areas.

The year ahead

- 1.8 We have developed this Plan in the context of a new UK Government, which we are engaging with to understand its priorities as it sets out its Statement of Strategic Priorities (SSP) for telecoms, spectrum and post. The UK Government has already published its [draft SSP for Online Safety](#) for consultation.
- 1.9 Our Plan of Work is centred on our four priorities, 'Internet and post we can rely on', 'Media we trust and value', 'We live a safer life online' and 'Enabling wireless in the UK economy'.

Internet and post we can rely on



Investment in high-quality networks and services which are available where they are needed



Reliable and secure networks and services that people can depend on



Efficient and sustainable markets where competition delivers choice, value and high-quality services



Consumers treated fairly at every stage of the customer journey, regardless of their circumstances



A sustainable, affordable postal service available across the UK that meets evolving customer needs

We live a safer life online



Stronger safety governance in online services based on clear understanding of risks



Online services designed and operated with safety in mind



Increased choice for users so they can have meaningful control over their online experiences



Enhanced trust in the online world through more transparency in how platforms keep users safe



Continue to set up the online safety regime for success, with the right people, systems, processes and relationships in place

Media we trust and value



Audiences can find and access a wide range of content, including PSM content which is produced across the UK and reflects its diversity



Audiences can find and access a plurality of news that is duly accurate, duly impartial and trusted



Media providers compete fairly and openly for audiences



Audiences are protected from harm, and freedom of expression is safeguarded

Enabling wireless in the UK economy



Assure stakeholder access to spectrum and mitigate harmful interference through licensing, planning, monitoring and compliance activities that enable wireless services



Identify and make available spectrum to meet evolving needs of sectors, including mobile broadband and space services



Evolve our spectrum management frameworks to support increased efficiency of use, enhance speed and flexibility of access and improve spectrum availability

Lead and influence international discussions on spectrum access while effectively representing UK interests

Our work supporting delivery of **Internet and post we can rely on** in 2025/26 includes:

- The Telecoms Access Review and Wholesale Voice Markets Review
- Mobile investment
- Telecoms and Digital Infrastructure security and preparations for increased regulatory responsibilities through the Cyber Security and Resilience Bill
- The review of the Universal Postal Service and other postal regulation

Our work supporting delivery of **Media we trust and value** in 2025/26 includes:

- Media Act Implementation
- PSM review
- BBC periodic review
- Protecting audiences from harm

Our work supporting delivery of **We live a safer life online** in 2025/26 includes:

- Establishing effective regulation of the online sector
- Tackling illegal harms and protecting children online including through supervisory engagement and enforcement
- Working with partners

Our work supporting delivery of **Enabling wireless in the UK economy** in 2025/26 includes:

- International engagement on spectrum management
- Supporting innovation through timely spectrum availability and greater sharing
- Sustained efficiencies through advanced spectrum management capabilities

Our supporting work

- 1.10 To deliver on our priorities in the year ahead we will continue to invest and build our skills and capabilities across the organisation. Our research programme provides us with a robust evidence base to help inform our policy decisions, while our horizon-scanning programme helps us to understand key developments and future trends. We will also adopt more agile internal processes, making better use of new technologies and data across our work.
- 1.11 Externally, our collaboration with regulators is vital both through our growing international relationships and our work with other regulators domestically in fora such as the Digital Regulation Cooperation Forum (DRCF). We will also continue to draw on a broad range of established partnerships with academia, industry, charities and other experts.

2. Our priorities for 2025/26

- 2.1 As the UK communications regulator, our mission is to make communications work for everyone. Our duties and functions are set out in a number of Acts of Parliament and other legislation (a full summary is included in [Annex 1](#)), and our principal duty is to further the interests of citizens and consumers in relation to communications matters, where appropriate by promoting competition.
- 2.2 As an independent statutory regulator, our Plan of Work is informed by these duties, the UK Government's SSP(s) and [statutory guidance](#)² and a wealth of evidence gathered through robust research, analysis, insights and engagement. The Plan of Work is centred around four evidence-based priorities: 'Internet and post we can rely on', 'Media we trust and value', 'We live a safer life online' and 'Enabling wireless in the UK economy'.

Statements of Strategic Priorities

- 2.3 Where the UK Government sets out its strategic priorities for telecommunications, the management of radio spectrum and postal services, or for online safety matters, in an SSP, we must have regard to the statement when carrying out our regulatory functions.³
- 2.4 The new UK Government has confirmed that it intends to designate a new SSP for telecommunications, the management of radio spectrum and postal services, and an SSP for online safety matters. The UK Government has published its [draft SSP for Online Safety](#). We will include a review of what we have done in consequence of the SSP(s) in our Annual Report.

² Ofcom has a duty to have regard to statutory guidance published by the UK Government setting out how regulators in scope of the growth duty can better support sustainable economic growth through the decisions they take and through the way they regulate. (See [Annex 1](#) for details about Ofcom's duties including the growth duty.)

³ In 2019, the then UK Government designated an [SSP for telecommunications, the management of the radio spectrum and postal services](#). No SSP for online safety matters has been designated to date, but the UK Government has published its draft SSP.

Our priorities

The following section details our four priorities and how their delivery will be supported by our projects and programmes over the course of 2025/26.

A comprehensive list of associated project work is set out in the Plan of Work 'Project Annex' ([Annex 2](#)).

Internet and post we can rely on



This priority is about ensuring that UK consumers have access to high quality full-fibre and gigabit-capable networks, and the availability of communication and postal services. Our focus is on improving the security and resilience of networks to meet the demands of citizens.

- 2.5 We aim to protect the interests of consumers and enable everyone to access fast and reliable networks and services. Our communications markets should deliver consumer choice and value, enabling a wide range of digital services which drive economic growth. We need a sustainable universal postal service that continues to provide affordable and reliable postal services to those who need them.
- 2.6 In undertaking our work to deliver 'Internet and post we can rely on', we seek to achieve the following outcomes for consumers:

- Investment in high-quality networks and services which are available when they are needed.
- Reliable and secure networks that people can depend on.
- Efficient and sustainable markets where competition delivers choice, value and high-quality services.
- Consumers treated fairly at every stage of the customer journey, regardless of their circumstances.
- A sustainable, affordable postal service available across the UK that meets evolving customer needs.

- 2.7 Ensuring the availability of digital infrastructure where it is needed continues to be a priority. This year we will conclude the Telecoms Access Review, which will set the regulatory framework that applies from April 2026 to March 2031, with the aim of promoting competition and investment in gigabit-capable broadband. We will continue to monitor compliance with the rules we set in the Wholesale Fixed Telecoms Market Review, which will remain in place until March 2026, ensuring that competition plays out fairly, including through the ongoing work of our Openreach Monitoring Unit.

- 2.8 As risks evolve due to technological and geopolitical developments, security threats facing UK telecoms networks and services continue to increase in volume and complexity. To ensure public networks and services are safe and secure, we will continue to work closely with telecoms firms to seek to improve their security and to monitor their compliance with their security duties. This work is intended to ensure that public providers have appropriate and proportionate measures in place to identify and reduce the risks of security compromises and are prepared for future risks. We will also continue our work with the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC), equipment vendors and the standards community.



- 2.9 The postal market has undergone significant change in recent years as demand shifts from letters to parcels. Our goal is to ensure that regulation supports affordable and reliable postal services across the UK that meet the needs of users. We also need to consider the financial sustainability and efficiency of the universal postal service in line with changing consumer behaviour. Our current work is largely focused on considering how the universal service for letters should be reformed. In the future we will look further at how to ensure that post continues to be affordable, and that Royal Mail is incentivised to deliver a more reliable service.
- 2.10 During the coming year our key projects and programmes to deliver the priority of ‘Internet and post we can rely on’ will include:

- **Telecoms Access Review:** The current regulatory framework that we set in 2021 ends in March 2026. We will publish our decision on the new regulatory framework, which will set out the regulations that will apply from April 2026 to March 2031. This will cover the markets for physical infrastructure access, wholesale local access, leased lines access and inter-exchange connectivity.
- **Telecoms Access Review (in the Hull Area):** The current, separate regulatory framework that we set in 2021 ends in October 2026. This review will cover the fixed telecoms markets in the Hull Area for the period November 2026 to October 2031. We will assess whether the framework we put in place in 2021 remains appropriate.

- **Wholesale Voice Markets Review:** The Wholesale Voice Markets Review will assess our regulation of call termination that supports the provision of landline and mobile telephone services in the UK. We will put in place regulation which will apply for five years from April 2026.
- **Wholesale A2P SMS Termination Review:** In January 2025, we published a [consultation](#) setting out our proposals to cap the wholesale prices charged by mobile operators for the delivery of text messages, known as Application-To-Person ('A2P') SMS, which is widely used by businesses and organisations across the private and public sectors to send text messages in bulk to consumers and the wider public (e.g. hospital appointment reminders, delivery notifications). We aim to issue a statement in Q2 2025/26.
- **Mobile investment:** We will start a programme of work to promote competition and investment in the mobile market, including through empowering consumers to choose the network and service that best suits their needs. We will work with relevant stakeholders to help address areas where the market is not currently delivering the mobile infrastructure the country needs. We will continue working with industry to improve the accuracy and consistency of available mobile coverage and performance information. We will explore how different sources of real-world data can provide consumers with more information about the mobile performance they can expect. We will consider how we can improve the presentation and communication of this information so that consumers and stakeholders can use it most effectively. We will begin monitoring compliance with the investment remedy committed to by the merged Vodafone and Three, which is being included in their relevant spectrum licences.
- **Telecoms and Digital Infrastructure security:** Using our powers introduced by the Telecommunications (Security) Act 2021, we will continue to monitor communications providers' compliance with the new security framework. In line with our new reporting function (s.105Z), we will submit our annual report to the Secretary of State on telecoms security. We will implement any monitoring direction issued by the UK Government under the high-risk vendor framework. Under our Network & Information Systems Regulations responsibilities, we will continue to monitor that operators of essential services in the digital infrastructure sector are managing their security risks through an assurance programme, which includes formal information gathering. We will also continue to carry out our incident monitoring function and run our voluntary penetration testing scheme (TBEST) for communications providers. We will continue to engage with vendors and technical standards bodies to ensure we maintain a broader understanding of the evolving ecosystem. We will prepare for increased regulatory responsibilities through the Cyber Security and Resilience Bill.
- **Review of Postal Universal Service Obligation (USO) and other postal regulation:** We recognise the urgent need to align the postal USO to the needs of its users while also considering the sustainability of the service. We will continue our work on proposals for reform of the universal postal service and quality of service standards, and related changes to access obligations, with the aim of publishing a decision in Q2 2025/26. We also plan to consult on our approach to the affordability and pricing of

USO services in Q4 2025/26, ahead of the expiry of the current safeguard cap on Second Class letter prices in March 2027.

2.11 In addition to the areas of focus outlined above, we also have ongoing programmes that support our work in this area:

- **Data reporting:** We will continue to report on the coverage, take-up, usage and availability of broadband and mobile networks across the nations and regions of the UK. We will also report on the forward-looking plans of providers to deploy gigabit-capable networks.
- **Broadband USO:** Every home and business in the UK has the legal right to request a decent, affordable broadband connection. We will continue to monitor the delivery of the broadband USO by the designated providers (BT and KCOM) and engage with the UK Government on the future approach to the USO.
- **Tackling scam calls and texts:** We will continue delivering our strategy to make it difficult for scammers to use UK telecoms networks to harm consumers. We will use our existing rules to disrupt scams, collaborate and share information across sectors to ensure a joined-up approach and consider whether further measures are necessary to protect consumers from scams.
- **Global Titles:** We will continue our work to tackle malicious signalling originating from [UK Global Titles](#) (GTs), raising network security concerns. GTs are created from UK mobile numbers by mobile operators to enable access to the global mobile signalling network. GTs normally underpin the provision of legitimate mobile services, but there is evidence that GTs are sometimes being misused, for example to illicitly locate and track people using their mobile phones on other networks. Following the publication of our statement in April 2025 setting out any new or strengthened rules to tackle misuse of GTs, we will monitor the implementation of any rule changes to ensure that bad actors are prevented from accessing the global mobile signalling network.
- **Digital transitions:** The managed transition away from legacy services such as [traditional public switched telephone network \(PSTN\) landline telephony](#) and [2G/3G mobile networks](#) is key to ensuring that people continue to benefit from reliable and more effective networks. We will continue to work with industry and the UK Government to ensure that customers, particularly those who are vulnerable, are supported and protected through these transitions. Additionally, given the shift from traditional broadcast to internet-delivered TV (IPTV) we are supporting the UK Government as it considers the findings of our report last year and works towards setting out a position on the Future of Digital Terrestrial Television. We will continue to work with industry and the UK Government to ensure that customers, particularly those who are vulnerable, are supported and protected through these transitions. We will consider what general principles there are across digital transitions to deliver the best outcomes for consumers, industry and economic growth.
- **Monitoring compliance with Consumer Protection rules:** We will continue to ensure that our consumer protection interventions and voluntary initiatives are being properly implemented and that they have a positive impact on consumers.

- **Review of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) in telecoms:** ADR provides an important protection through independent and impartial assessment on unresolved complaints between a consumer and their provider. We will complete our review assessing consumers' ability to access ADR, consumers' journey through the ADR processes and on Ofcom's oversight of the schemes.
- **Protecting vulnerable consumers and those on low incomes:** We will continue to monitor whether providers are treating customers in vulnerable circumstances fairly including monitoring affordability indicators for communications services. We will publish an update on social tariff availability and take-up figures as part of the pricing trends report.
- **Premium rate services:** We will monitor compliance with the new regulatory framework for services charged to consumers' telephone bills. We will ensure consumers continue to be protected when using these services following the transfer of day-to-day regulatory responsibility from the Phone-paid Services Authority (PSA) to Ofcom.
- **Postal monitoring:** We will continue our monitoring work across the postal sector, which will look at the impact of obligations on the parcels market for the handling of complaints, the obligation on operators to ensure the fair treatment of disabled customers, as well as Royal Mail's efficiency progress and the longer-term sustainability of the postal USO.
- **Digital markets:** [The Memorandum of Understanding](#) (MoU) between the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) and Ofcom establishes how we will work with the CMA in digital markets. As set out in the MoU, we will be engaging with the CMA and its Digital Markets Unit (DMU) where the DMU's functions impact on our regulatory remit and vice versa.

Media we trust and value



This priority is about ensuring audiences across the UK can continue to access a variety of broadcast and on-demand media and are protected against harmful content. As people increasingly move online for entertainment and information, it is particularly important that they are able to access trusted, duly accurate and duly impartial broadcast news.

2.12 The broadcasting and on-demand sector is a vital part of the UK’s culture and economy and is constantly changing as a result of global competitors, digital convergence and technological innovation. We aim to ensure that all audiences can continue to find and enjoy a broad range of relevant, high-quality UK content, whether on scheduled TV and radio, or on streamed and on-demand services.

2.13 In undertaking our work to deliver ‘Media we trust and value’, our programme of work seeks to achieve the following outcomes:

- Audiences can find and access a wide range of content, including PSM content which is produced across the UK and reflects its diversity.
- Audiences can find and access a plurality of news that is duly accurate, duly impartial and trusted.
- Media providers compete fairly and openly for audiences.
- Audiences are protected from harm, and freedom of expression is safeguarded.

2.14 Supporting the sector to adapt to changing audience habits and ensuring that our regulatory approach remains effective, is one of our priorities for the year ahead. Last year saw the first major update to UK broadcasting legislation in 20 years. The Media Act 2024 (the “Media Act”) reflects recommendations we made in our last review of PSM in 2021. We will continue to implement these new legislative measures through 2025/26, including by ensuring appropriate prominence for live and on-demand PSB content, extending content standards protections to relevant video on-demand (VoD) services (i.e., those subject to the new VoD Code and the new accessibility requirements) and securing locally-gathered news on radio services across the UK.



- 2.15 The ongoing pace of change means we must continue to assess whether further reform may be required to protect essential PSM for UK audiences. We will conclude our next PSM review in 2025/26, focusing on opportunities to maintain and strengthen public service media and the availability of high quality and accurate news that audiences can trust where they are consuming it.
- 2.16 We will continue to enforce content standards rules for TV and radio and relevant VoD services. Safeguarding freedom of expression will remain an important consideration, and we will prioritise the enforcement of rules regarding potential harm to audiences.
- 2.17 Our key projects over the next year to support our priorities are:

- **Media Act implementation:** We have published a roadmap for implementation, and an overview of key projects is below:
 - **Updating PSBs’ regulatory requirements:** Following consultations in early 2025, we will finalise guidance for PSBs’ statements of programme policy (SoPPs) and commissioning from independent producers and set out our revised approach to quotas in Q2 2025/26.
 - **Listed Events:** We will consult on our proposals for implementing the Media Act’s changes to the Listed Events regime in Q1 2025/26, and subsequently publish our final statement in Q3 2025/26.
 - **Prominence and availability of PSB players:** We will submit advice to the Secretary of State about which TV platforms should be subject to regulation and consider applications from PSBs for their players to benefit from the new availability and prominence regime. We will also consult on a code of practice and guidance in Q3 2025/26 for platforms and PSBs about how to comply with the regime, which also includes accessibility requirements for platforms.

- **State of the VoD market report:** We will prepare a report on the operation of the VoD market in the UK, responding to a request from the Secretary of State in September. The Secretary of State will consider Ofcom's report and then make regulations that determine which services will be designated as 'Tier 1' services (i.e., those subject to the new VoD Code and the new accessibility requirements). We will then consult on the introduction of requirements for VoD services in scope as below.
- **New VoD Code and review of Audience Protection measures on VoD:** we will consult on and introduce a new content standards code for Tier 1 VoD services in Q2 2025/26, and review protection measures used on VoD services, including conducting audience attitudes research.
- **VoD Accessibility Code:** we will consult on and introduce a new code requiring providers of Tier 1 VoD services to make them accessible to disabled people in 2025/26.
- **Radio regulation:** We will publish our statement on new local news and information requirements for analogue commercial radio and new requirements for digital radio multiplexes in Q2 2025/26.
- **Voice assistants:** We will advise the Secretary of State on which radio selection services should be designated in Q1 2025/26. We will consult on and put in place a process for radio providers to notify us of the online radio streams that may benefit from the legislation. We will consult on a code of practice for designated radio selection services in Q3 2025/26.

- **PSM Review:** Our review looks at how the provision of PSM content can be maintained and strengthened for the next decade and beyond. We will publish the findings of our review in Q2 2025/26. This could include areas where we are planning to consult on changes to our rules or identifying where further UK Government intervention may be needed.
- **Implement changes from the BBC's Mid-Term Review:** Subject to publication of the updated Framework Agreement between the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the BBC, we will update our competition guidance; develop a BBC Online Material Code and conduct a regular review of the BBC's Executive Complaints Unit's decisions that have not been escalated to Ofcom.
- **Proposed changes to BBC audio services:** As part of our ongoing work to monitor the BBC's performance and market impact, we will publish the outcome of our BBC competition assessment of four planned new BBC DAB+ stations and proposed changes to BBC Radio 5 Sports Extra by July 2025.
- **Conduct BBC Periodic Review:** We will deliver the next Periodic Review before the BBC Charter ends in December 2027, which we expect to complete by Q4 2025/26.
- **Less Healthy Foods (LHF) advertising:** We will continue to work with the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) to prepare for the implementation and enforcement of restrictions on the advertising of less healthy food and drink products, which come into force in October 2025.

2.18 Our Plan of Work also includes an ongoing programme of activity to secure the outcomes for all audiences:

- **Continue to set and enforce content standards for broadcast TV and radio:** We will prioritise cases involving potential harm to the audience, such as content likely to incite crime and uncontextualised hate speech. As well as upholding due impartiality and due accuracy in news and due impartiality in current affairs. We are aiming to refresh our Broadcasting Code Guidance and publish this alongside the new VoD Code resulting from the Media Act in Q3 2025/26.
- **License TV and radio broadcast services:** We will continue to issue, manage and maintain licences for all national and local commercial TV, digital commercial and digital community radio services and restricted analogue radio services. We will respond to stakeholder requests to make changes to their licences where appropriate. We will publish a statement in Q1 2025/26, following a consultation on amendments to our General Procedures for investigating broadcast licences.
- **Support platforms for broadcast services:** We will continue to license small-scale DAB digital radio services throughout the UK and complete the process for renewing the Local TV licences.
- **Accessibility of TV services:** We will continue to enforce requirements for broadcast access services – subtitles, audio description and signing. Our annual report on TV accessibility will be published in Q1 2025/26.
- **Diversity and inclusion in broadcasting:** We will continue to engage with stakeholders in this area, and report in Q3 2025/26 on the diversity of broadcasters' UK workforces.
- **Monitor BBC performance and market impact:** We will continue to assess the BBC's compliance with specified requirements in the Framework Agreement, the Operating Framework and under the Operating Licence. We will also report on the BBC's performance in our Annual Report on the BBC in Q3 2025/26.
- **Future of TV Distribution:** We will support the UK Government as it considers the findings of our report last year and works towards setting out a position on the Future of Digital Terrestrial Television. We'll provide technical advice on matters affecting audiences, spectrum planning and management, the implications for PSBs and the broader TV industry.

We live a safer life online



This priority is about establishing the online safety regime to continue our work in building a safer life online for all UK users, especially children. Our focus will shift to ensuring that providers comply with their legal obligations to protect users, while continuing to implement the regime.

- 2.19 Our goal is to create a safer life online for people in the UK, especially children. Since the Online Safety Act 2023 (the “OSA”) was passed, we have been focused on establishing the foundations of the regime. The OSA is complex and detailed, and debates continue about many of the harms and issues it addresses. We have prioritised our work to implement the areas we expect to have the greatest immediate benefit to the UK public as quickly as possible, as outlined in our [Online Safety Progress Update](#).
- 2.20 In December 2024 we published the first Illegal Content Codes of Practice. In January 2025 we issued guidance for online pornography providers about age assurance, alongside our guidance on children’s access assessments that all user-to-user and search services must do. We will publish the final Protection of Children Codes of Practice in April 2025. These are the moments at which the legal duties in the OSA come into effect, starting with the risk assessments user-to-user and search services must do. For the first time in the UK, tech firms are now required to understand who their users are, the risks posed by their services and the steps they must take to mitigate these risks.
- 2.21 Our dedicated supervision team will continue to work closely with industry and ensure providers are taking the appropriate steps to tackle the harms that exist on their services. We expect services to take action and stand ready to use our enforcement powers where we consider it is appropriate to do so, in line with our regulatory principles.
- 2.22 We will also start to put in place the additional regulatory requirements that fall upon [categorised services](#) under the OSA. Now that Parliament has approved the categorisation thresholds, our work to complete the register of categorised services is underway and this will be published in the summer. We will then swiftly put in place the transparency reporting regime. We expect transparency reporting to be effective in improving users’ safety by shining a light on services’ actions – and in particular by providing hard evidence about the impact of their safety measures.

Protecting children online is more important than ever

Compared to last year, a higher proportion of all 5-7 year olds use apps/sites to do each of these activities:



- 2.23 We also know that informed and empowered users have a key role to play in driving online safety and we will continue our long-standing work to improve media literacy through our Making Sense of Media programme.
- 2.24 In undertaking our work to deliver ‘We live a safer life online’, we seek to achieve the following outcomes for consumers:

- Stronger safety governance in online services based on clear understanding of risks.
- Online services designed and operated with safety in mind.
- Increased choice for users so they can have meaningful control over their online experiences.
- Enhanced trust in the online world through more transparency in how platforms keep users safe.
- Continue to set up the Online Safety regime for success with the right people, systems, processes and relationships in place.

- 2.25 Over the next year, our key programmes of work to support this priority will include:

- **Tackling illegal harms and protecting children online:** The Illegal Harms Code of Practice is in force and the Protection of Children Code of Practice should come into force this year. We will then be able to enforce where providers do not take the necessary action. We will build on these first Codes over time, beginning with a consultation on additional measures to protect users in spring 2025. We will also finalise our Guidance on women and girls’ online safety in late 2025.
- **Assuring compliance:** We are already working with providers of services – including the largest services as well as smaller services that pose particular risks – to assess and improve their safety measures and ensure they meet their new duties. We are preparing for early enforcement action where we identify non-compliance causing serious harm to UK users. For example, we have already launched enforcement programmes [to protect children from encountering pornographic content](#) and to

[monitor services' compliance with their new illegal content risk assessment and record keeping duties](#). We also have an extensive programme of work dedicated to helping all service providers in scope of the regime understand and fulfil their new duties and obligations. As well as having launched digital tools to help services providers conduct risk assessments and identify which Codes measures they should take.

- **Duties on categorised services:** We will begin establishing the rules for categorised services following completion of the register, which we expect to be in summer 2025. We will start issuing draft transparency notices to services soon after the register of categorised services has been published, and to issue final transparency notices following that. We expect the first transparency reports mandated by our notices to be published by services around the end of 2025. We are also aiming to publish draft Codes of Practice and draft guidance regarding additional duties on categorised services in early 2026.
- **Establishing the regime:** We will continue to build our technological and data capabilities needed to support effective regulation of the online sector. Additionally, as with our other regulated sectors, industry fees will fund the cost of regulation of online services, and we are taking steps to commence implementation of [the fees regime](#), with the expectation that invoices will be issued for the 2026/27 financial year. We will also publish a report on options to improve researchers' access to data in July 2025.
- **Working with partners:** We continue to work closely with partner regulators in the UK as part of the DRCF, and with international regulators, including through the Global Online Safety Regulators Network (GOSRN) – currently chaired by Ofcom – and our coordination agreement with the European Commission. Our goal is to align our regulatory approaches and guidance where appropriate to facilitate firms' compliance with all relevant rules. We are also developing the OSA's super-complaints process to enable eligible entities to highlight systemic issues that arise across services, or in exceptional circumstances, on one service.

2.26 We have been regulating UK-based video-sharing platforms (VSPs) since 2020. The rules on VSPs remain in place until the regime is [superseded by the broader online safety rules](#). In January 2024 we published our [updated strategy](#) for the VSP regime which summarised how we have regulated services so far, and our priorities for the remainder of the regime. Looking ahead to 2025/26 we will focus on:

- **Transition to Online Safety:** We will continue to align the VSP priorities to the online safety strategic priorities for the next three years. We will ensure that all the work we carry out during the remainder of the VSP regime is closely aligned to the Online Safety regime and prepares notified VSPs for the transition.
- **Platform supervision:** We will build on the effective supervisory relationships we have put in place with platforms. We will continue to require platforms to make improvements to their services under VSP regulation, while ensuring they are complying with their online safety duties and getting ready for online safety regulation.

- **Enforcement:** We will continue to use our full range of enforcement powers to promote compliance with the VSP regime.
- **Industry transparency:** We will continue, where appropriate, to publish outputs which give greater insight into how VSPs are carrying out their duties under the VSP regime.

2.27 The UK Government will set a date for repeal of the VSP rules, which we expect to be after the online safety Protection of Children Codes come into force, in summer 2025. Ofcom will support VSP providers in moving to the Online Safety regime.

Making Sense of Media

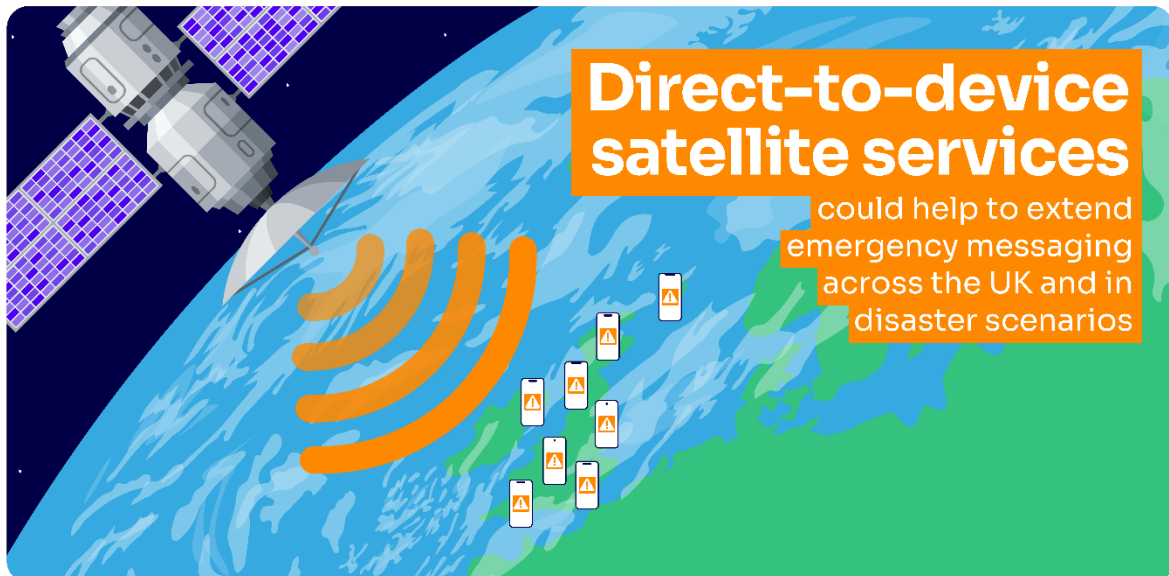
- Our vision is for a UK where people have the media literacy skills they need, and where online services and broadcasters play their part to ensure people can navigate content and safely flourish online. Our media literacy duties are most applicable to our priorities of ‘Media we trust and value’ and ‘We live a safer life online’ but we know that they touch on all our sectors.
- Our first three-year media literacy strategy outlines the way we intend to make media literacy everyone’s business. We have developed our [media literacy strategy](#) prioritising three central elements:
- **Research, Evidence and Evaluation:** This builds on our heritage of research and evidence gathering about the daily realities of adults and children, as well as our well-received evaluation resources.
- **Engaging Platforms:** Online platforms and services, alongside broadcasters, are a primary conduit for communications and media consumption. They have a significant role to play in encouraging media literacy for their audiences.
- **People and Partnerships:** Media literacy is about people, and impact is best achieved through local trusted partners, who are experts in delivery.

Enabling wireless in the UK economy



This priority is about ensuring that spectrum remains an effective enabler for wireless communication for all people, businesses, and sectors. We seek to ensure that spectrum continues to support the growing demand for a variety of services, enable innovation and, importantly, aid economic growth.

- 2.28 Radio spectrum is vital for the delivery of a wide range of wireless services and technologies that we use in our everyday lives, and that enable the running of businesses and public services. These services include mobile, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, broadcast radio, television and satellite navigation. Moreover, spectrum remains critical in supporting the emergency services, climate monitoring, air traffic control and radar and our armed forces.
- 2.29 With demand for radio spectrum from both existing and new users continuing to increase, our goal is to ensure this essential resource is used efficiently to benefit everyone in the UK. In particular, we will support economic growth through facilitating innovation in mobile, satellite and unlicensed (Wi-Fi) services. We will do this by enabling timely access with flexible authorisation approaches and encouraging greater sharing between different applications and uses.



2.30 In undertaking our work of ‘Enabling wireless in the UK economy’ we seek to achieve the following outcomes:

- Assure stakeholder access to spectrum and mitigate harmful interference through licensing, planning, monitoring and compliance activities that enable wireless services.
- Identify and make available spectrum to meet evolving needs of sectors, including mobile broadband and space services.
- Evolve our spectrum management frameworks to support increased efficiency of use, enhance speed and flexibility of access and improve spectrum availability.
- Lead and influence international discussions on spectrum access while effectively representing UK interests.

2.31 Our work to support these outcomes is focused on the following areas:

- **International engagement on spectrum management:** We represent UK interests in the World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC) and in European spectrum work to pursue international outcomes that align with UK interests. Through this, we aim to ensure that citizens and consumers can benefit from international technological innovation and harmonised equipment ecosystems. Our priorities are to encourage greater sharing between different users and wireless technologies; ensure sufficient spectrum and adequate protection of space science services; and improve the satellite regulatory framework that supports innovation and growth of the sector.
- **Supporting innovation through timely spectrum availability and greater sharing:** We want to enable timely access to spectrum to support competition, innovation and growth across different sectors. We are preparing to award the mmWave (26 and 40 GHz) spectrum, designing rules for the award of 1.4 GHz spectrum and confirming our approach in making more spectrum available in the 6 GHz band for additional services. We will consult on making more spectrum available to support increased capacity for satellite services through access to Q/V and E band for satellite gateways and additional access to Ku and Ka band for satellite terminals on ships and planes. Working with the UK Government, we aim to ensure spectrum availability for critical national infrastructure, including for the rail, emergency services and utilities sector.
- **Sustained efficiency through advanced spectrum management capabilities:** We will continue our programme of work to modernise and enhance our licensing platform to deliver greater automation, improve user experience and increase spectrum efficiency.

2.32 These areas of focused activity are complemented by ongoing programmes of work to deliver our outcomes. This includes:

- **Research and planning:** We carry out radio propagation and radio equipment measurements to inform our policy development to improve spectrum efficiency. We continue to engage with spectrum users, international counterparts, industry,

the UK Government and academia to understand technological and market changes that may affect spectrum requirements of different users and sectors. For example, we are exploring innovative sharing approaches as part of our spectrum sandbox and considering spectrum implications arising from any future decision on digital terrestrial TV. We are also working with the UK Government to enable greater sharing in defence spectrum.

- **Evolving our spectrum management framework:** We are reviewing our satellite licensing framework for non-geostationary satellite (NGSO) systems and our satellite gateway licence fees policy and will consult on updating our satellite filing procedures. We are [consulting](#) on introducing a regulatory framework to enable satellite services direct to mobile handsets, where there is agreement with relevant mobile spectrum licensees; and considering future authorisation of the 2 GHz Mobile Satellite Services spectrum licences that will expire in 2027. We plan to update some of our maritime licences to simplify and align with international framework changes. We are also reviewing mobile spectrum licence fees to ensure efficient use of spectrum. We continue to simplify and streamline our licence products/process where appropriate to improve operational efficiency.
- **Licensing, compliance and assurance:** We manage around 400,000 live spectrum licences which includes planning of frequencies for licensees such as special events, microwave fixed links, shared access, business radio, NGSO systems, radio and TV broadcasting; and providing advice and assistance to these spectrum users. We investigate harmful interference and unauthorised/illegal use of spectrum and reduce this risk by limiting the availability of non-compliant equipment.

3. Nations

- 3.1 Communication services need to work for all people and businesses, and to ensure this, we work to understand the different needs across the UK. There are unique challenges, but also opportunities for communication services in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and England. Our work is informed by research that is nationally representative across all of the UK's nations and regions. Two of the priority areas of work for Ofcom's nations teams are ensuring access to good-quality telecommunications services in rural areas, and making sure content is available that reflects the diverse experiences of people in different nations.
- 3.2 Our statutory National Advisory Committees help us to understand and address the specific interests and concerns for all stakeholders living and working in each of the four nations and integrate this into our policy work. In addition, our teams in Belfast, Cardiff, Edinburgh, London and Manchester ensure that we have a broad understanding of the needs of the UK, but also the specific circumstances of consumers and stakeholders in each nation. We also have field engineers placed across the UK to support our spectrum work, including in Baldock and Birmingham.
- 3.3 MoUs in each nation ensure that the views and interests of stakeholders, consumers and audiences in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales are represented at Board level within Ofcom, through the inclusion of non-executive directors who represent the interests of each of the four nations. We will continue to engage constructively with the signatories of each MoU, including the relevant governments and parliaments, in delivering on our priorities for 2025/26.
- 3.4 The views of UK audiences are also represented to Ofcom's Content Board, which has members representing each of the nations. There is also a statutory requirement for each of the UK nations to have its own representation on the Communications Consumer Panel, which highlights the needs of older and disabled people, people in rural areas and those on low incomes.
- 3.5 We focus on the issues we consider the people in each nation find most important, but the work detailed in our priorities above will affect the whole of the UK. Each nations team will work to ensure the unique needs of each nation are represented in the implementation of our projects. An outline of the key areas of work and priorities for each of our nations is described below.

Scotland

- 3.6 Scotland remains, by many metrics, the least connected of the UK's four nations. A range of approaches and technologies will be needed to fill the remaining connectivity gaps, supported by Ofcom's regulation and engagement in Scotland.
- 3.7 This year, a critical part of our work to continue to support the rollout of broadband is our Telecoms Access Review. This aims to provide a stable regulatory framework that supports commercial investment in full-fibre and gigabit capable fixed connectivity across Scotland. A range of engagement is already under way in Scotland and we will continue this as part of

the consultation on our plans. We will also continue to provide input and data, where appropriate, to support the delivery of current UK and Scottish Government funded programmes – both fixed and mobile – including Project Gigabit, Reaching 100 and the Shared Rural Network.

- 3.8 More broadly, we will advise on the role of other technologies in solving connectivity challenges in remote areas, such as NGSO satellite and Direct-to-Device connectivity. With a growing space and satellite sector in Scotland, our space spectrum strategy will also support and enable technical innovation.
- 3.9 We will recognise the interests of rural and island communities in Scotland in affordable, resilient connectivity, including monitoring how the rollout of new technologies in Scotland complements the withdrawal of legacy technologies such as the move to Voice-Over Internet Protocol services and the switch-off of 3G and 2G services.
- 3.10 In our postal work, we will engage with consumers, business groups and other stakeholders across Scotland as we consider reform to the provision of a universal postal service.
- 3.11 As we look at how public service media can be maintained and strengthened through the PSM review, we will engage with the Scottish Government, industry, academia and other stakeholders as part of the process. Our focus will be on ensuring this delivers for audiences in Scotland and takes account of the distinct broadcasting ecosystem in Scotland with a different (from the rest of the UK) Channel 3 licence holder in the form of STV, and MG ALBA’s role providing Gaelic language content in partnership with the BBC.
- 3.12 In supporting consumers to live a safer life online, we will continue our engagement with the Scottish Government to ensure the smooth implementation of the online safety regime in a devolved context. Particularly, we will cooperate with the Scottish Government on its goal of eradicating violence against women and girls. Strong working ties here will also aid our own work in providing [guidance on a safer life online for women and girls](#) that will be finalised during the year. More broadly, we will continue to build relationships with Scottish stakeholders to ensure that the relevance of the OSA in Scotland is known and understood.
- 3.13 We will strengthen our partnerships with third sector organisations across Scotland operating at the local level to promote media literacy. We will work with stakeholders in Scotland to encourage the development of media literacy initiatives, particularly as it relates to our local media review and our Making Sense of Media programme.

Wales

- 3.14 We will continue to engage with Government at all levels in Wales, ensuring that both elected representatives and officials are informed and supported on issues across Ofcom’s remit, guided by the MoU between Ofcom, the Welsh Government, Senedd and the UK Government. We will provide advice to help inform policy discussions and decisions to deliver positive outcomes for citizens and consumers in Wales. Additionally, we will work with other regulators to share knowledge and best practice across sectors through various networks, forums and particularly the DRCF partnership.

- 3.15 We will continue to be an ally to the Welsh language, engaging with Welsh speaking communities to ensure their specific issues are heard and understood and that, where appropriate, the Welsh language is considered in Ofcom’s policy making. We strive to perform our existing duties to a high level and will continue to review our processes and standards to ensure successful outcomes.
- 3.16 With Ofcom gaining formal powers to regulate providers of online services for online safety, we will work closely with the Welsh Government, civic society, and consumer advocacy groups in Wales to build understanding of the new regime and support efforts to help people to live a safer life online. The OSA has provided greater clarity and specificity to our media literacy duties⁴. Therefore, we will work with the Welsh Government and others to support media literacy work in Wales to help consumers navigate content safely and flourish online.
- 3.17 We will support improved connectivity, particularly in the harder to reach areas of Wales. We will do this through regular engagement with the Welsh Government, telecoms stakeholders and consumer advocacy groups, in relation to the Telecoms Access Review and on issues like full fibre rollout, satellite broadband, improved mobile coverage and resilience of communications networks to ensure Wales specific issues are heard and understood.
- 3.18 We will support the implementation of the Media Act ensuring the broadcasting, creative and other related sectors in Wales are kept informed of, and involved in, the consultation processes. We are also engaging with these Welsh sectors as part of our review of PSM. Our focus is on ensuring PSM delivers for audiences in Wales and highlights the Welsh language and culture.

Northern Ireland

- 3.19 We will continue to engage Government at all levels in Northern Ireland, ensuring that both elected representatives and officials are informed and supported on issues across Ofcom’s remit, guided by the MoU between Ofcom, the NI Executive, Assembly and the UK Government. We will provide advice to help inform policy decisions, leading to better outcomes for citizens and consumers in Northern Ireland. Additionally, we will work with other regulators to share knowledge and best practice across sectors through various networks, forums and particularly the DRCF partnership.
- 3.20 We will support improved connectivity in Northern Ireland through regular engagement with Government officials on issues such as full fibre rollout, mobile coverage and resilience of communications networks; and we will continue our engagement with local telecoms stakeholders and consumer advocacy groups to ensure issues specific to Northern Ireland are heard and understood – particularly through the Telecoms Access Review process and the PSTN and 2G/3G migrations.
- 3.21 With Ofcom’s new powers to regulate providers of online services for online safety, we will work closely with the devolved Government and civic society in Northern Ireland to promote understanding of the new regime and support efforts to help people live a safer life online.

⁴ As originally set out in the Communications Act 2003.

We will work with local organisations to design and implement a media literacy delivery plan for Northern Ireland to help consumers navigate content safely and flourish online.

- 3.22 We are actively engaging with relevant stakeholders in Northern Ireland as part of our review of PSM, including the broadcasting, creative and other related sectors. Our focus will be on delivering positive outcomes for audiences in Northern Ireland.
- 3.23 We will work closely with our regulator counterparts in the Republic of Ireland – ComReg and Coimisiún na Meán – and offer advice to the UK Government and UK consumer bodies to ensure people and businesses in Northern Ireland continue to benefit from a good cross-border relationship.
- 3.24 As part of our commitment to promoting diversity and inclusion inside our organisation and in the wider sectors we regulate, and ensuring compliance with section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, we will publish how we propose to continue to fulfil our section 75 duties in a new five-year Equality Scheme for Northern Ireland.

England

- 3.25 We will continue to ensure that the diverse communication needs of people across England are met. The statutory Advisory Committee for England continues to support Ofcom’s policy decisions by identifying issues affecting the communication sectors in all parts of the country.
- 3.26 Our commitment to supporting England’s diverse media ecosystem, by making sure media is inclusive and reflects all audiences, remains an essential part of our work. We recognise the importance of local media and will deliver the new local news and information requirements for analogue radio stations.
- 3.27 We will continue our work with government, local MPs and local authorities to assist full-fibre rollout and to ensure greater mobile coverage in rural areas. In our annual Connected Nations report, we highlight operators’ plans for the deployment of fibre networks to ensure high-speed broadband services to consumers. When all plans are taken into account, 99% of urban properties and 91% of rural properties are expected to have gigabit-capable broadband by May 2027.

4. How we deliver

- 4.1 Working collaboratively within and outside of Ofcom helps us to deliver on our commitments. Outlined below is our approach to partnerships, our underpinning work and how we make the best use of our resources by investing in our organisational capability.

Partnerships

- 4.2 To be an effective converged regulator and deliver for consumers and our sectors, we increasingly rely on a range of important partnerships, both domestically and internationally.

Domestic partnerships

- **Continuing to work with fellow digital regulators through the DRCF.** We will continue to work together with the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) and the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) to support a coherent regulatory approach to digital services and issues. The DRCF members work together on horizon scanning and understanding the opportunities and risks of AI. We are also working particularly closely with the ICO to ensure alignment with data protection law as we implement the OSA. The DRCF will publish its workplan for 2025/26 in April 2025.
- **UK Regulators Network (UKRN).** We work with other UK regulators to address challenges across different sectors, to share best practice and to drive forward positive change as a member of the UKRN. The UKRN also engages with external stakeholders to inform and contribute to policy debates, regulatory reviews and cross-sector issues. In particular, we will continue to contribute to joint work with the UKRN to improve outcomes for vulnerable consumers.
- **Engaging with the academic community to help develop our evidence base.** We have a focus on building relationships with academic researchers to ensure Ofcom’s work is informed by the latest insights from academic research, expert groups and civil society organisations. This is particularly important for our regulation of online safety, where we will work with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure we have the insights we need to understand user experiences online and the impact of platforms’ safety measures.
- **Continuing to work with our co-regulator, the ASA.** We will continue our co-regulatory arrangements of TV, radio, on-demand programme services and VSPs.
- **Making Sense of Media Network and Advisory Panel.** Our Making Sense of Media Network currently has 667 members representing a variety of organisations in the UK and internationally, collaborating to improve media literacy in the UK. Our Advisory Panel informs Ofcom’s work to help improve the online skills, knowledge and understanding of UK adults and children.
- **NCSC.** We will continue to work with our technical authorities, the NCSC and the National Protective Security Agency.

- **Law enforcement and the intelligence community.** We will continue our working relationships with law enforcement and the intelligence community with regard to our online safety, telecoms security and spectrum responsibilities. This includes organisations such as the National Crime Agency, the Metropolitan Police, the City of London Police, Police Scotland and the NCSC.
- **Sustainability and climate change.** We have an interest in the long-term sustainability of our sectors, but our statutory duties do not currently include attaining any specific environmental (including climate change) objectives. We continue, however, to engage with the telecommunications industry to develop its understanding of the topic and to support and contribute to the advancement of net zero objectives.

International partnerships

4.3 Our international work continues to evolve as the services we regulate operate globally, as well as the platforms they use to reach consumers. Our international work involves representing Ofcom and the UK regionally and globally and using our evidence-based research to influence policy at an international level, while bringing back insights to inform our work domestically.

4.4 We focus on international developments in online safety, broadcasting, telecommunications, digital markets, security and resilience, and international technical standards. Our planned work for 2025/26 includes:

- In **online safety**, we will continue developing our international relationships, exchanging best practice and experience. In particular, we will continue to foster collaboration and advocate for shared norms in online safety, as a founding-member and the current Chair of the GOSRN. We will also continue to work closely with EU counterparts on the implementation of rules for VSPs and other online platforms through the International Working Group on Age Verification.
- In **broadcasting and media**, we will continue to participate in the global debates on regulatory responses to maintain and strengthen PSM. We will continue to engage in networks such as the European Platform for Regulatory Authorities, the European Media and Information Literacy Taskforce and the UNESCO Media and Information Literacy Alliance to develop and exchange media literacy best practices globally. We will also continue our work with organisations such as the Council of Europe to collaborate with other international broadcast and media regulators on the common challenges that we face.
- In **telecoms**, we will continue to monitor and analyse emerging technologies, regulatory developments and market dynamics in the communications sectors in key jurisdictions, to help us to identify challenges, risks and opportunities that might affect the UK telecoms sector. We will continue to work closely with international counterparts on both a bilateral and multilateral basis, with the Independent Regulators Group remaining our primary multilateral forum in Europe. We will also actively participate in other ad hoc international initiatives on areas of common interest, including the Unsolicited Communications Enforcement Network and the Global Informal Regulatory Antifraud Forum.

- In relation to **internet-based communications markets**, we will monitor and understand how competition develops in other jurisdictions that might influence or have an impact on our duties and sectors. For instance, we note the gradual emergence of ex ante regulation of online platforms globally, most notably in the EU with the Digital Markets Act. The experiences of other such regimes might influence the design of pro-competition interventions in the UK as different jurisdictions seek to regulate the same set of large digital platforms both individually and collectively for the same or similar conduct.
- In the areas of **security, network resilience and technical standards**, we have an ongoing programme of bilateral engagement with regulators and other stakeholders around the world to share expertise and updates on developments in our respective countries. Ofcom also works through the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), where we are an elected member of its governing council and we represent the UK in all three sectors (telecommunications, radiocommunication and development). We also serve as the chair of the lead spectrum committee and chair of the preparatory committee in the European region group. We closely follow discussions on technical standards impacting our sectors in industry-led standardisation organisations such as the Internet Engineering Task Force, the European Telecommunications Standards Institute and the 3rd Generation Partnership Project.

Growing skills and capabilities

4.5 While our sectors evolve and our remit expands, it is vital that we continue to invest in our most valuable asset, our people. We need to adapt to support effective delivery across every area of our business. We do this by:

- **Developing our data and digital function:** We continue to develop our capability to make the most of data and data-driven technologies across our whole organisation. We will continue to use technologies based on AI and machine learning where there is a clear business need and benefit, developing our own in-house solutions alongside purchasing off-the-shelf products where appropriate. This year, we will focus on improving our management of increasing volumes of complex data to ensure it continues to be locatable, high-quality and compliant with all relevant legislation. For our colleagues, we will continue to develop training to ensure we have the right mix of skills.
- **Strengthening our technology capability:** Technology will always play a critical role in shaping demand, driving emerging consumer trends and delivering advanced services to businesses and consumers alike. We particularly focus on technologies that: enable the delivery of new services that are safe to use and valued by people and businesses; improve the coverage, performance, and capacity of networks; lower barriers to entry, providing more choice for people; and ensure the security and resilience of service delivery. We will continue to invest in our technical capabilities by building our workforce of experts across key technological areas such as: AI, extended reality, gaming and safety technology. Our expertise is supported by our continued engagement with stakeholders, our participation in professional

forums, our interaction with standards communities and our work with UK Government partners.

- **Building commercial understanding and horizon scanning:** We continue to develop our understanding of the sectors we regulate and how our stakeholders and markets are evolving. We achieve this through recruitment from a range of backgrounds and building skills and knowledge among our colleagues. Our horizon scanning programme is another key input to building our understanding of our sectors as we aim to anticipate future developments and trends through external engagement, research and analysis.
- **Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) strategy:** Our five-year D&I strategy ends in 2026. During this period, we have made significant improvement in representation across Ofcom. We are now working towards a new target of 19% for senior representation of ethnic minority colleagues and a new target of 15% for organisational wide representation for disability. We will continue to embed our new inclusive recruitment processes and focus on improving the experiences of Black and disabled colleagues. We are particularly proud of being awarded Public Sector Employer of the Year at the InsideOut Awards in June 2024, which celebrates achievements in the mental health space. We have an extensive existing programme of activities to promote mental, physical, financial and social wellbeing. Work is underway to determine our strategy beyond 2026.
- **Connected working and location strategy:** 27% of our colleagues are based outside of London and we expect to meet our 30% target by March 2026. Work is underway as part of our Strategic Workforce Planning to determine future goals.

Underpinning wider work across the sectors we regulate

4.6 Ofcom is an evidence-based regulator, and we obtain the evidence, intelligence and insight we require in a variety of ways across our sectors including:

- **Market research and intelligence:** We research communications markets and consumer preferences and behaviour to provide an up-to-date, thorough understanding of people and businesses. We explore innovative research methods including behavioural science where we have established a Behavioural Insights Hub to build a deeper understanding of how consumers make decisions. We combine our own consumer research with data collected directly from industry and third parties. In addition to informing our work, our research, and our commitment to making the findings publicly available, fulfils some of our statutory duties.
- **Data engineering and analytics:** We have teams that support our policy and operational work by using data and advanced analytics. We are developing data products and tools to generate insights and help make decisions in an effective and efficient way. Alongside this we are implementing a comprehensive data and

information management and governance framework as a foundation for our end-to-end use of data.

- **Technology insights:** Our technology functions have a dual purpose of advising our policy, supervision and enforcement teams to deliver on their current priorities and undertaking forward-looking work to prepare for future challenges. We are deepening our understanding of how technology is driving change within our sectors and the potential impact on how we work, including active engagement with academia to take advantage of expertise and research. We are also conducting in-depth testing and evaluation of existing and emerging approaches to online safety in our Online Safety Technology Lab. This lab allows for the examination of specific technical solutions, such as those in age assurance and automated content moderation.
- **AI:** Our work on AI is driven by its use across all our sectors and how it may impact the regulatory outcomes we seek to achieve across our remit. For example, we will be further exploring the merits of deepfake mitigation methods, such as watermarking, metadata schemes and content labelling. We will continue to consider the impact of AI on the media sector, particularly on the provision of accurate and trustworthy news as part of the PSM review. We will also continue our engagement with standards bodies, in particular the European Telecommunications Standards Institute as AI will also impact the telecoms sector including for security and resilience. It is important that we understand the future opportunities and risks of AI across our sectors and we will continue to look at developments through our horizon scanning activities. We will also continue to work with our DRCF partners on our shared interests in AI and engage with the UK Government as it takes forward its AI agenda. Internationally, Ofcom will continue to monitor AI policy debates, engaging with stakeholders around the world to understand the uses and impacts of the technology, and follow discussions on AI standards in organisations like the ITU, where Ofcom represents the UK. We plan to publish an update on how we regulate AI where it is used in our sectors later this year.

4.7 We are also keen to understand the impact of our work for consumers and on the sectors we regulate. We do this in a number of ways including:

- **Impact assessments:** We use impact assessments in line with our revised guidance to ensure our approach to evidence-based policy making adheres to best practices. We consider the effects of our interventions on a wide range of citizens and consumers, including those with protected characteristics as identified in equality legislation. Additionally, we assess the potential impact on the Welsh language. We continuously monitor and, in specific cases such as mobile telecoms end-of-contract notifications, evaluate the real-world impact of our work post-implementation to understand how our interventions have shaped consumer outcomes. This ongoing evaluation allows us to refine our policy making based on actual, rather than anticipated, outcomes. Where appropriate, we also consider the impact of our regulation on economic growth in accordance with our new statutory Growth Duty.

- **Discussion Papers:** We encourage debate on all areas of communications regulation through our ongoing discussion papers. They also contribute to our robust evidence base that supports our decision making.
- **Information gathering:** The Information Registry coordinates our statutory and significant informal information requests and acts as the main point of contact for stakeholders requiring support in this area. Ofcom is committed to continuous improvement of our information gathering activities and following feedback on our general information gathering policy, has established an internal senior cross-Group forum to provide further oversight and accountability for the use of our information gathering powers. We published our [General policy statement](#) in December 2024, which provides further clarity for stakeholders about how we will exercise our information gathering powers. We have also invested in software to be rolled out this year that will streamline the information gathering process for stakeholders through our new Community Portal.

Achieving value for money

- 4.8 Ofcom is committed to being an efficient and effective regulator, continuously seeking opportunities to enhance efficiency. Since the 2015 Spending Review, we have achieved real-terms savings in line with the wider public sector. Over the last 10 years, Ofcom’s Spending Cap will have increased by 5% on a like for like basis, representing an average increase of 0.5% per year and significantly below inflation.
- 4.9 We prioritise strategic planning and integrated budgeting to deploy our resources effectively. Investments are tightly controlled to maximize efficiency, utilising competitive procurement for optimal price and quality. We aim to streamline and automate processes, such as continuing to automate and digitise our approach to licensing, which enhances efficiency of our resources and user experience, and ensuring we leverage existing infrastructure for new duties where possible (e.g. the OSA and the Media Act). Additionally, we continue to optimise our estate use and have continued increasing our presence outside London in line with our connected working strategy, which has in turn led to more efficient use of our estate over the last three years.

Spending cap for 2025/26

- 4.10 The UK Government establishes our spending cap through the Spending Review, which guides our budget planning. As part of our 2025/26 settlement, increases have been granted for new duties (OSA, Media Act and absorption of the Phone-paid Service Authority).

A1. What we do

- A1.1 Ofcom was established under the Office of Communications Act 2002 and operates under a number of Acts of Parliament and other legislation. We regulate fixed-line and mobile telecoms, TV and radio broadcasting, video-on demand services, post and the radio spectrum used by wireless devices, VSPs established in the UK and online safety under the Online Safety Act 2023.
- A1.2 We act independently from governments and commercial interests to deliver our duties. However, we are accountable to Parliament, and to perform our role effectively we need to engage openly and constructively with the UK and devolved governments. We provide technical advice to governments (for example, our recent report to the UK Government on [the future of TV distribution](#)) and in some cases, we act as a formal representative of the UK Government (for example, in international negotiations on spectrum).

Our duties

- A1.3 The Communications Act 2003 (the “Act”) places a number of duties on Ofcom that we must fulfil when exercising the regulatory powers and functions we have been given. The Act states that our principal duty in carrying out our functions is to further the interests of citizens in relation to communications matters, and of consumers in relevant markets, where appropriate by promoting competition. For postal services, our priority duty is to carry out our functions in a way that we consider will secure provision of a universal postal service in the UK.
- A1.4 In performing our duties, we are required to have regard to the principles under which regulatory activities should be transparent, accountable, proportionate, consistent and targeted only at cases where action is needed, as well as any other principles appearing to us to represent best regulatory practice.⁵
- A1.5 In exercising certain regulatory functions, our duties include having regard to the desirability of promoting economic growth.⁶ This duty is referred to as the “growth duty” and aligns in particular with our duties to have regard to the desirability of: promoting competition in relevant markets; encouraging investment and innovation in relevant markets; and encouraging the availability and use of high speed data transfer services throughout the UK.
- A1.6 We implement and enforce communications, competition and consumer protection laws; our competition powers are outlined later in this annex.

⁵ See section 3(1) of the Act.

⁶ The growth duty under section 108(1) of the Deregulation Act 2015 applies to Ofcom’s exercise of its “regulatory functions” (as defined in section 111), but this is subject to certain exemptions.

Our main legal duties guide the direction of our work

- A1.7 Our main legal duties in carrying out our work include securing that:
- the UK has a wide range of electronic communications services;
 - optimal use is made of the radio spectrum;
 - a wide range of high-quality television and radio programmes are provided across the UK, appealing to a variety of tastes and interests;
 - a sufficient plurality of providers of different television and radio services is maintained;
 - people are adequately protected from harmful or offensive material, unfair treatment and unwarranted invasion of privacy on television and radio;
 - citizens are adequately protected from harm presented by online content on regulated services, through the appropriate use by providers of such services of systems and processes designed to reduce the risk of such harm;
 - the BBC is held to account on its compliance with appropriate content standards, its performance against its Mission and Public Purpose, and the impact of its activities on fair and effective competition; and
 - the universal service obligation on postal services is secured in the UK.
- A1.8 Since 2020 Ofcom has had responsibility for ensuring that VSPs established in the UK take appropriate measures to protect consumers who engage with those services from the risk of viewing harmful content.
- A1.9 On 1 October 2022 the regulatory regime established by Telecommunications (Security) Act 2021 formally commenced. This places strengthened security duties on telecoms providers, gives the Secretary of State powers to specify security requirements, and gives Ofcom responsibilities to make sure providers comply.
- A1.10 In November 2023 the Online Safety Act obtained Royal assent and Ofcom was appointed as the UK's online safety regulator.
- A1.11 Ofcom can enforce consumer law on behalf of consumers but does not have the power to resolve individual consumer complaints about telecoms or postal services, unlike in TV and radio. Where appropriate, we may provide advice to complainants and refer them to the ADR schemes that we have approved.

Ofcom's competition law powers

- A1.12 In addition to our regulatory responsibilities set out above, we have powers in relation to communications matters to:
- enforce the prohibitions on anti-competitive agreements and abuse of a dominant position, set out in the Competition Act 1998;
 - study markets and make references under the Enterprise Act 2002 to the CMA; and

- report to the Secretary of State under section 44A of the Enterprise Act 2002 in relation to media mergers.

A1.13 We consider whether it is more appropriate to exercise the Competition Act 1998 or sectoral powers in any given case, subject to the specific legislative requirements.

A2. Project Annex

Internet and post we can rely on

Project Details	Milestones
Telecoms Access Review. The Telecoms Access Review 2026 will review the main fixed telecoms markets in the UK and put in place regulation which will apply for 5 years from 1 April 2026.	Statement Q4 ⁷ 2025/26
Telecoms Regulation in the Hull Area. We will review the main fixed telecoms markets in the Hull Area and put in place regulation which will apply for 5 years from 1 November 2026.	Consultation Q4 2025/26
Wholesale Voice Markets Review. We will review our regulation of call termination that supports the provision of landline and mobile telephone services in the UK and will put in place regulation (following consultation) which will apply for 5 years from the 1 April 2026.	Consultation Q1 2025/26 Statement Q4 2025/26
Wholesale A2P SMS termination market review. Following our January 2025 consultation , in which we made proposals to regulate the wholesale A2P SMS termination market (given our competition concerns for the bulk messages sent by businesses and public bodies), we will publish a statement setting out our final decisions.	Statement Q2 2025/26
Mobile investment. We will start a programme of work to promote competition and investment in the mobile markets, including through empowering consumers to choose the network and services that best suits their needs.	Report Q3 2025/26
Security and resilience. We will continue to monitor communications providers' compliance against the Telecoms Security Act and submit our second report to the Secretary of State in Q3.	Report Q3 2025/26
Security and resilience continued. We will continue to engage with industry to carry out our threat intelligence-led TBEST (penetration testing). On power resilience, we will work with mobile operators, representatives from government and the energy sector, to determine if additional measures are needed for the mobile radio access network. We will work with Government and prepare for increased regulatory responsibilities through the Cyber Security and Resilience Bill.	Ongoing

⁷ Financial quarters are used throughout the Plan of Work

Project Details	Milestones
<p>Mobile coverage. We will continue to improve the reporting of mobile coverage and performance. We plan to update the mobile webchecker and we will hold the mobile network operators to account for the accuracy of their reporting. New approaches and data sources will also be analysed.</p>	Ongoing
<p>GTs & Mobile Network Security. Following on from our July 2024 consultation, we will decide whether to implement our proposed rule changes to the use of GTs to ensure that bad actors are prevented from accessing the global mobile signalling network and monitor the implementation of any such changes.</p>	Statement Q1 2025/26
<p>2G/3G switch off. We will continue to work with mobile operators and other service providers reliant on 2G/3G networks to support switch off. Our aim is to help minimise any disruption during the switch off process and to help protect customers, particularly vulnerable customers, from harm.</p>	Ongoing
<p>Tackling scam calls and texts. Following publication of our call for input in summer 2024 on reducing mobile messaging scams and options to address mobile spoofing we plan to consult on proposals to address these sources of harm this summer.</p>	Consultation Q2 2025/26 Statement Q4 2025/26
<p>Migration to IP (PSTN switch-off). We will continue to work with communication providers, the UK Government and other relevant stakeholders to ensure issues raised by the migration to digital landlines, including PSTN retirement, are identified and addressed with the aim of protecting consumers from harm and minimising disruption.</p>	Ongoing
<p>ADR Review. Strategic review of how access to ADR is working and customers' experience through the ADR process. The aim is to ensure that the rules we have in place for providers remain effective and to consider the reapproval of the two ADR schemes under the Communications Act.</p>	Statement Q2 2025/26
<p>Digital Comparison Tools (DCTs) accreditation scheme. We will continue to provide regulatory oversight to Ofcom's voluntary accreditation scheme for DCTs, ensuring consumers are able to compare between different providers. This includes carrying out regular audits to check that the site(s) work well, and that the information provided is accessible, accurate and up to date.</p>	Ongoing
<p>Protecting vulnerable consumers. We will continue to monitor whether providers, including smaller providers, are treating customers in vulnerable circumstances fairly and giving them the support, and services, they need. We will also continue to work with the UKRN to improve outcomes for vulnerable consumers.</p>	Ongoing
<p>Broadband USO. We will continue to monitor the delivery of the broadband USO by the designated providers (BT and KCOM) and engage with the UK Government on the future approach to the USO.</p>	Ongoing

Project Details	Milestones
<p>Affordability. We will continue to monitor and report on affordability indicators for communication services every quarter. We will publish a report on social tariff availability and take-up figures as part of the pricing trends report.</p>	<p>Report Q3 2025/26</p>
<p>Reporting on pricing trends in communications services. We will publish our annual report that tracks the prices available to, and paid by, consumers of telecoms and pay TV services.</p>	<p>Report Q4 2025/26</p>
<p>Comparing customer service. We will publish a report looking at the quality of service provided to residential customers by fixed and mobile telecoms providers.</p>	<p>Report Q1 2025/26</p>
<p>Monitoring compliance with Consumer Protection rules. We will continue to ensure that our consumer protection interventions and voluntary initiatives are being properly implemented and that they have a positive impact on consumers.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Future of numbering policy. We will continue our strategic review of the telephone numbering plan to make sure it provides what consumers understand, want and need from numbers for the coming decade.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>080 and 116 Access Review. We are carrying out a review of the access conditions we imposed in relation to wholesale call origination for free-to-caller 080 and 116 numbers, to understand the results of imposing the conditions and consider whether they should be modified or revoked.</p>	<p>Consultation Q2 2025/26 Statement Q3 2025/26</p>
<p>Telecoms Vendor Diversification. We will continue to enable newer vendors' ability to test technology in a commercially neutral environment through the SmartRAN Open Network Interoperability Centre Labs open radio access network testbed. We will also continue to share our insight and expertise with the UK Government across diversification issues including the UK Telecoms Lab.</p>	<p>Report Q1 2025/26</p>
<p>Connected Nations. Following the publication of our annual UK report and four nations report in December 2024, covering fixed and mobile networks and network security / resilience, we will also produce a mid-year update and an update on planned network deployment data.</p>	<p>Q1 2025/26 & Q3 2025/26</p>
<p>Net neutrality monitoring. We will publish an annual report on our monitoring of the open internet regulations. This will include an update on the overall quality of broadband experienced by consumers as well as any issues with compliance to the rules by internet service providers.</p>	<p>Report Q3 2025/6</p>
<p>Review of the universal postal service and other postal regulation. Following the publication of our consultation in January 2025 on proposals for reform of the postal USO, we plan to publish a statement in 2025 which will set out our decision.</p>	<p>Statement Q2 2025/26</p>

Project Details	Milestones
<p>Affordability and pricing of postal USO services: We will consult on our approach to the affordability and pricing of postal USO services, ahead of the expiry of the current safeguard cap on Second Class letter prices in March 2027.</p>	<p>Consultation Q4 2025/26</p>
<p>Postal monitoring. We will continue to monitor the impact of guidance and obligations in the parcels market for the handling of complaints and treatment of disabled customers. We will continue our enhanced monitoring of Royal Mail's efficiency progress and the long-term sustainability of the postal USO. In addition to continuing to report on market data, consumer research and Royal Mail's financial and efficiency performance in our annual post monitoring report.</p>	<p>Report Q3 2025/26</p>

Media we trust and value

Project Details	Milestones
<p>Media Act. We will continue to work towards the timelines set out in our implementation plan on how we will implement the Media Act and prepare for our new duties across different regulatory spaces. This will include a variety of consultations, statements, reports and licence variations in 2025/26. The Media Act implementation section of the Ofcom website provides regular updates to keep stakeholders informed as we progress our work. More information is provided for each area of our work below.</p>	Ongoing
<p>Part 1a: Media Act PSB reform. Following consultations in early 2025, will publish guidance for SoPPs and commissioning from independent producers in Q2 2025. In April we will issue our consultation on quotas with a statement following later in 2025.</p>	Consultation Q1 2025/26 Statement Q3 2025/26
<p>Part 1b: Media Act Listed Events. We will issue a consultation on our proposals for implementing the changes to the Listed Events regime made by the Media Act 2024, followed by a statement.</p>	Consultation Q1 2025/26 Statement Q3 2025/26
<p>Part 2: Media Act Availability & Prominence. We will consult on and make recommendations to the Secretary of State on which platforms should be in scope of the new availability and prominence regime under the Media Act.</p>	Consultation Q1 2025/26 Statement Q2 2025/26
<p>Part 2: Media Act Availability & Prominence. We are also required to designate the commercial PSB players within scope of the new regime. We aim to publish our statement on the methodology we will use for determining PSB player designation in Q1 2025/26, and issue our final designation decisions in a statement in Q4 2025/26.</p>	Statement Q1 2025/26 Statement Q4 2025/26
<p>Part 2: Media Act Availability & Prominence. We plan to consult on our codes of practice on how platforms can comply with their new prominence and accessibility requirements as well as associated guidance in Q3 2025/26. We will then publish a statement in Q4 2025/26.</p>	Consultation Q3 2025/26 Statement Q4 2025/26
<p>Part 3: Media Act Channel 4 commissioning policy. We will consult on guidance for Channel 4 on preparing its statement of commissioning policy that will apply when it establishes a production business.</p>	Consultation Q1 2025/26
<p>Part 4a: Media Act VoD Code. We are preparing a report on the operation of the VoD market in the UK, responding to a request from the Secretary of State last year. The Secretary of State must have regard to the contents of Ofcom’s report before making regulations that determine the services that are designated as ‘Tier 1’ services. We will consult on a draft VoD Code following designation.</p>	Report Q1 2025/26 Consultation Q2 2025/26

Project Details	Milestones
<p>Review of VoD audience protection measures. We have begun our review of the audience protection measures that VoD providers have in place, to assess whether they are adequate for the protection of audiences from harm.</p>	<p>Report Q2 2025/26</p>
<p>Part 4b: On demand programme service (ODPS) VoD standards code and VoD accessibility code. Subject to the Secretary of State’s decision on designated Tier 1 providers, we will consult on a proposed VoD code and on the introduction of accessibility requirements for VoD services in scope.</p>	<p>Consultation Q2 2025/26 Statement Q3 2025/26</p>
<p>Part 5: Media Act Radio regulation. We will publish our statement on implementing the changes required by the Media Act in particular new local news and information requirements for local commercial radio, as well as new requirements for digital radio multiplexes. We will vary licences accordingly.</p>	<p>Statement Q1 2025/26</p>
<p>Part 6: Media Act radio selection services. We will set out our approach to determining which voice-activated platforms we consider significant. We will then consult on and make recommendations in a report to the Secretary of State on which voice-activated platforms should be designated under the Media Act.</p>	<p>Statement Q1 2025/26 Consultation Q2 2025/26 Report Q3 2025/26</p>
<p>Part 6: Media Act radio selection services. We will consult on and put in place a process for radio providers to notify us of the online radio streams that may benefit from the legislation.</p>	<p>Consultation Q1 2025/26 Statement Q3 2025/26</p>
<p>Part 6: Media Act radio selection services. We plan to consult on our codes of practice on how designated platforms can comply with their new requirements around the provision of online radio services in Q3 2025/26. We will then publish a statement in Q4 2025/26.</p>	<p>Consultation Q3 2025/26 Statement Q4 2025/26</p>
<p>PSM review. Following publication of our review of PSB past performance and future PSM challenges in 2024/25, we will engage with stakeholders and publish our findings on how to strengthen the future provision of PSM content by the end of Q2 2025/26.</p>	<p>Report Q2 2025/26</p>
<p>BBC performance monitoring. We will set out how we have carried out our duties and assess the BBC’s compliance with specified requirements in the Framework Agreement, the Operating Framework and under the Operating Licence in our annual report on the BBC. The report will also include our assessment of the BBC’s performance across our duties, including delivering its Mission and Public Purposes across its public services and continuing to meet audience needs as it modernises its services.</p>	<p>Report Q3 2025/26</p>

Project Details	Milestones
<p>BBC Periodic Review. Ofcom is required to complete a second Periodic Review before the BBC Charter ends in December 2027. We will review the BBC’s performance and address any areas of concern we identify in line with our duties.</p>	<p>Report Q4 2025/26</p>
<p>BBC Mid-Term Review competition guidance. Subject to the publication of the new Framework Agreement between DCMS and the BBC, we will update our guidance on assessing changes to BBC services.</p>	<p>Statement Q1 2025/26</p>
<p>BBC Online Material Code. Subject to the publication of the new Framework Agreement between DCMS and the BBC, we will deliver a BBC Online Material Code that reflects the standards objectives underpinning the Broadcasting Code. We will consult on the Code and implement new rules within 12 months of the amended Framework Agreement being published.</p>	<p>Statement Q3 2025/26</p>
<p>BBC Audio. We will carry out a BBC competition assessment of four planned new BBC DAB+ stations and proposed changes to BBC Radio 5 Sports Extra.</p>	<p>Statement Q2 2025/26</p>
<p>C4C Statement of Media Content Policy. We will publish our response to Channel 4 Corporation's Statement of Media Content Policy setting out its plans to deliver its remit and media content duties and reporting on its performance over the last year.</p>	<p>Report Q2 2025/26</p>
<p>Code Guidance review. We are aiming to publish our refreshed Broadcasting Code guidance alongside the final statement on the VoD Code.</p>	<p>Publish Q3 2025/26</p>
<p>Local TV renewals process. New legislation was approved by Parliament in December 2024, providing Ofcom with the powers to both extend current licences by 12 months and to complete the full renewal process. We will commence this process immediately after the statutory deadline for renewal application submission has passed, which is 31 March 2025.</p>	<p>Statement Q3 2025/26</p>
<p>General Procedures review. We will publish our statement on changes to the general procedures for investigating breaches of broadcast licences.</p>	<p>Statement Q2 2025/26</p>
<p>ODPS accessibility monitoring. We will continue our ODPS accessibility monitoring and aim to publish our annual report alongside reporting on broadcast accessibility data.</p>	<p>Report Q1 2025/26</p>
<p>Diversity in broadcasting monitoring and reporting. Alongside ongoing stakeholder engagement, we will continue our annual data collection for our report on the diversity of broadcasters’ UK workforces.</p>	<p>Report Q3 2025/26</p>
<p>LHF advertising. Restrictions on the advertising of LHF and drink products come into force in Q3 2025/26. We will work with the ASA as it prepares for implementation and enforcement.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Project Details	Milestones
Media Nations. We will publish our annual report on key trends in the television, video, radio and audio sectors, which also features a version for each of the nations of the UK.	Report Q2 2025/26

We live a safer life online

Project Details	Milestones
Tackling illegal content online. We will consult on further proposals to strengthen our Codes on the most significant online harms, which will add additional measures to the baseline established in our first Codes.	Consultation Q1 2025/26
Protection of Children. We will publish our Protection of Children Codes of Practice and risk assessment guidance, laying out how providers should approach their new duties relating to content that is harmful to children.	Statement Q1 2025/26
Age assurance for pornography providers. In January 2025 we published our Age Assurance and Child Access statement alongside final guidance for Part 5 (pornography studios), for Part 3 services on highly effective assurance and on Children’s Access Assessments. On 16 January 2025 we launched an Age Assurance Enforcement Programme to monitor compliance with these duties, beginning with Part 5 services.	Ongoing
Women and girls’ online safety. We consulted in February 2025 and will finalise our guidance later in 2025, which focuses on practical steps providers can take to address the content and activity which disproportionately affects women and girls.	Ongoing
Duties on categorised services. We will publish a register of categorised services and issue draft transparency notices to service providers, setting out requirements for transparency reports. We will also consult on draft Codes of Practice and draft guidance on additional duties on providers of categorised services.	Publication Q2 2025/26 Consultation Q4 2025/26
Minimum standards of accuracy for accredited technologies. Taking account of responses to our consultation, we will look to finalise our advice to the Secretary of State on minimum standards of accuracy in the detection of child sexual exploitation and abuse (CSEA) and terrorism content. We will publish guidance for Part 3 service providers about how we propose to exercise our new power to issue notices to deal with CSEA/terrorism content under Chapter 5 of Part 7 of the OSA.	Ongoing
VSP programme. The UK Government has given VSPs notice of its intention to repeal the regime. Ofcom will support VSP providers in transitioning to the online safety regime and produce an end of regime report following repeal.	Report Q3 2025/26

Project Details	Milestones
Supervision. We will continue engaging with selected providers. This targeted oversight includes understanding providers' measures in detail, assessing how well they protect users, and pushing for timely improvements where necessary.	Report Q3 2025/26
Fees. The online safety regime will be funded by fees paid by providers of regulated services whose qualifying worldwide revenue (QWR) meets or exceeds a certain threshold, and who are not otherwise exempt. We will submit our advice to Secretary of State on the QWR threshold in Q1 2025/26.	Ongoing
Super-complaints. DSIT has consulted on the eligibility criteria for entities to make a super-complaint under section 169 of the OSA; criteria for a super-complaint to be admissible, and procedures for making a super-complaint. The Secretary of State will finalise these criteria in secondary legislation, after which Ofcom will consult on guidance about super-complaints.	Consultation Q2 2025/26
Enforcement. By the end of Q4 2025/26 the duties related to illegal harms, protection of children and age assurance will all be in force. We have already launched enforcement programmes to protect children from encountering pornographic content and to monitor services' compliance with their new illegal content risk assessment and record keeping duties. We will monitor compliance and use our enforcement powers to take action where appropriate and where we see risks of serious harm to users (especially children).	Ongoing
Online Nation. We will publish our annual report on what people are doing online and their attitudes to, and experiences of, using the internet.	Report Q3 2025/26

Enabling wireless services in the UK economy

Project Details	Milestones
Award of mmWave spectrum licences (26 and 40 GHz). We plan to open applications for the auction of mmWave spectrum licences in high density areas and plan to grant licences to use the spectrum for mobile services in Q3 2025/26.	Spectrum auction Q3 2025/26
Enabling access to 1.4 GHz. We will decide the design of the auction of 1.492 - 1.517 GHz spectrum for mobile use.	Statement Q4 2025/26
Future use of 6 GHz. We will decide on the initial phase of making the Upper 6 GHz band available for shared use by Wi-Fi and mobile services (to authorise low power indoor Wi-Fi). We will decide on whether to make the lower 6 GHz available for standard power and outdoor Wi-Fi using an automated frequency coordination (AFC) database.	Upper 6 GHz Statement Q3 2025/26 Lower 6 GHz Statement Q4 2025/26

Project Details	Milestones
<p>Enabling access to 1900 MHz. We will decide use and licensing rules for the 1900 MHz spectrum for national infrastructure users such as rail safety communication and emergency services.</p>	<p>Statement Q3 2025/26</p>
<p>Expanding spectrum access for satellite gateways. We will decide our approach, following consultation, to making additional spectrum available for satellite gateway use in Q/V and E bands to meet growing demand for satellite connectivity.</p>	<p>Consultation Q2 2025/26 Statement Q4 2025/26</p>
<p>Expanding spectrum access for aeronautical and maritime satellite connectivity. We will consult on expanding spectrum access for aeronautical and maritime satellite services in Ku and Ka band, implementing WRC-23 decisions. This would provide additional capacity for provision of satellite broadband services for ships and planes.</p>	<p>Consultation Q3 2025/26</p>
<p>Updating our satellite authorisation framework. We are reviewing our NGSO licensing framework (introduced in 2021) and our satellite gateway licence fees policy. We will also update our Procedures for the Management of Satellite Filings, implementing WRC-19 and WRC-23 decisions.</p>	<p>NGSO licencing consultation Q1 2025/26 Gateway Licence Fees Consultation Q1 2025/26 Statement Q3 2025/26 Management of Satellite Filings Statement Q3 2025/26</p>
<p>Regulatory framework for direct satellite to mobile handset connectivity. We will decide on a regulatory framework to enable satellite services direct to mobile handsets where there is agreement between satellite and mobile operators. This could extend mobile coverage and provide resilience to terrestrial mobile networks in emergency and disaster scenarios.</p>	<p>Statement Q3 2025/26</p>
<p>Simplifying and updating maritime licences. We will consult on proposals to update some of our maritime licences to implement WRC decisions and streamline licence terms and conditions.</p>	<p>Consultation Q3 2025/26</p>
<p>Review of mobile spectrum licence fees. We will decide on the level of annual licence fees which we charge for 900, 1800 and 2100 MHz mobile spectrum licences, having considered the request from BT.</p>	<p>Statement Q2 2025/26</p>
<p>Review of programme making and special events (PMSE) spectrum. We are reviewing spectrum usage by audio and video PMSE to ensure our spectrum management decisions continue to enable the PMSE sector to deliver benefits to the UK economy and users.</p>	<p>Update Q3 2025/26</p>

Cross-cutting projects

Project Details	Milestones
<p>Media literacy. We will publish recommendations to encourage platforms and others in providing better media literacy support for their users, more evaluation of the effectiveness of that support and longer-term funding for media literacy initiatives.</p>	<p>Publication Q2 2025/26</p>
<p>Reporting on adults' media literacy. We will publish our annual Adults' Media Use and Attitudes report, looking at media literacy among UK adults. Alongside this, we will publish our annual Adults' Media Lives report, detailing the findings from our small-scale, longitudinal, ethnographic research.</p>	<p>Report Q1 2025/26</p>
<p>Reporting on children's media literacy. We will publish our annual Children's Media Use and Attitudes report and our annual Children's Media Lives report, detailing the findings from our small-scale, longitudinal, ethnographic qualitative research among children and young people.</p>	<p>Report Q1 2025/26</p>
<p>News consumption report. We will publish our annual research into people's use of and attitudes to news services across television, radio, print, and online.</p>	<p>Report Q2 2025/26</p>
<p>Digital markets. We will continue to consider how digital competition and consumer issues impact the sectors we regulate and how best to respond, including through collaboration with the CMA / DMU.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Future of TV Distribution. We are assisting the UK Government with its ongoing work on the Future of TV Distribution, providing technical advice on matters affecting audiences, spectrum planning and management, the implications to PSBs and the broader TV industry.</p>	<p>Ongoing technical support</p>
<p>Digital transitions. The managed transition away from legacy services that ensures people continue to benefit from reliable and more effective networks. We will continue to work with industry and the UK Government to ensure that customers, particularly those who are vulnerable, are supported and protected through these transitions. We will consider what general principles there are across digital transitions to deliver the best outcomes for consumers, industry and economic growth.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Understanding the impact of our work. We will ensure that our approach to policy appraisal follows best practice drawing on our revised impact assessment guidelines. We will continue to assess the impact of our work through our on-going programme of ex-post evaluations.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

A3. Impact assessment

- A3.1 Ofcom has an obligation to carry out [impact assessments](#) to provide our stakeholders with a view of the options considered in making policy decisions and showing why the chosen option was preferred. We recognise that the decisions we make can deliver significant value for citizens and consumers but can also impose significant costs on our stakeholders. We therefore consider if our policy interventions are proportionate and appropriate during our consultation process.
- A3.2 As reflected in Section 7 of the Communications Act, Ofcom must carry out impact assessments in cases where our conclusions would be likely to have a significant effect on businesses or the general public, or where there is a major change in Ofcom’s activities. In the case of the Annual Plan of Work, we have not carried out an impact assessment as each policy and all related publications and work programmes contained in the Plan are impact assessed individually as appropriate.
- A3.3 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the “2010 Act”) imposes a duty on Ofcom, when carrying out its functions, to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct related to the following protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation. We refer to groups of people with these protected characteristics as ‘equality groups’. The 2010 Act also requires Ofcom to have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share specified protected characteristics and persons who do not.
- A3.4 Ofcom has separate but complementary duties under Northern Ireland’s equality legislation.⁸ This requires Ofcom to screen policies for their impact on equality of opportunity and/or good relations in each of the nine equality categories identified for Northern Ireland.
- A3.5 To help us comply with our duties under the 2010 Act and the 1998 Act, we assess the impact of our proposals on persons sharing protected characteristics and in particular whether they may discriminate against such persons or impact on equality of opportunity or good relations.
- A3.6 In this Plan of Work, we have set out the wide range of activities we will be undertaking in the coming year across our remit with the interests of citizens and consumers at their heart, including many areas that we expect to have a positive impact on equality groups. We expect that all our work on making services we regulate more accessible, more widely available, more competitive and safer will have positive impacts on groups with protected characteristics.

⁸ Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

A3.7 Throughout the year, and across all of our work, we will continue to assess and explain how we are complying with our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and Northern Ireland Act 1998 adopting the approach set out in our Impact Assessments Guidance.