



Department
for Culture,
Media & Sport

Rt Hon Ian Murray MP
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Mr Russell Borthwick
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Dear Russell,

Thank you for your correspondence of 25 September, to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, the Rt Hon Lisa Nandy MP, which follows the recent announcement that STV intends to merge its Central and North of Scotland news operations. I am replying as the minister responsible for the Media.

I understand your concerns, given the vital role that public service broadcasters play both on and off-screen. It is important that STV provides for audiences in the North of Scotland, including for your own constituents. As a Government we want programming to reflect the full diversity of people right across the UK so that they can see themselves and the interests that matter to their local community reflected on screen.

Under STV's current Channel 3 regional licences (for both Central and Northern Scotland) they must first give prior notice to Ofcom in writing and seek their approval to make any changes to their 'Appointed News Provider'. This is an independent regulatory process and it would not be appropriate for the Government to intervene.

I am aware that STV has confirmed that around 60 jobs will be impacted as a result of this change and that STV will be conducting a consultation process. You will appreciate that, as an operationally independent company, employment decisions are first and foremost a matter for STV itself.

However, thank you for writing to me on this. I intend to raise the importance of the continued provision of high quality, relevant news content in the North of Scotland with the senior leadership at STV when I next meet with them.

Yours sincerely,

Rt Hon Ian Murray MP
Minister for Creative Industries, Media and Arts