



PRESS RELEASE

Date: 22 March 2010

Arqiva joins Project Canvas

- **Seventh partner in joint venture**
- **Support for Freeview and Freesat next-generation hybrid TV platforms**
- **Integration of linear channels and online TV services with open standards**

The partners of Project Canvas have today announced that the communications infrastructure and media services company Arqiva has committed to join the proposed venture. The partners have submitted analysis to the Office of Fair Trading setting out why the proposed Canvas joint venture does not constitute a qualifying merger under the Enterprise Act 2002. Alongside the existing six partners of the BBC, BT, Channel 4, Five, ITV and Talk Talk Group, Arqiva will take an equal stake, and provide equal funding, to a new venture. The BBC's involvement remains subject to BBC Trust approval.

Project Canvas is the proposal to develop and promote subscription free, internet-connected television based on common technical standards. The Project Canvas partners now expect the OFT to initiate a consultation process.

Project Director, Richard Halton, said: "The Canvas partners are clear that the joint venture does not qualify as a merger, and we welcome the opportunity to clarify this position formally. We are delighted that Arqiva have committed themselves to the project. They have a history of positive and progressive support for Freeview, and Project Canvas will benefit hugely from both their experience and engineering expertise."

Rob Hamlin, Strategic Development Director for Arqiva Terrestrial Broadcast, said: "We are delighted to become a partner in Project Canvas. Arqiva has a long history in supporting free-to-air broadcasting as a shareholder in Freeview and provider of digital terrestrial television networks, so it is a natural step for us to take a partner role in Canvas. The approach of Canvas as an open platform based on common technical standards is one we fully support and are looking to encourage through standards bodies, particularly via the UK's Digital Television Group (DTG)."

- Ends -

About Project Canvas

Project Canvas is a partnership between BBC, BT, Channel 4, Five, ITV and Talk Talk Group, and now Arqiva, to spearhead an open standard for internet-connected TV. Connected-TV is next-generation TV, providing internet-based content with a route to the living room TV screen.

The partners would form a new joint venture company to promote it to audiences and the content, service and developer community. 'Canvas compliant' devices (eg set-top boxes) would enable a range of services to be accessed seamlessly together through a simple core common user experience. Services would include:

- Linear TV (e.g. Freeview, freesat) with HD and storage (pause, rewind, record)
- Video-on-demand services (e.g. BBC iPlayer, ITV Player, 4oD)
- Other internet-based content or services (e.g. flickr, amazon, NHS Direct)

The BBC's involvement is subject to BBC Trust approval.

Further information on the venture can be found here:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/our_work/canvas/shareholders_agreement.pdf

About Arqiva

Arqiva operates at the heart of the broadcast and mobile communications industry and is at the forefront of network solutions and services in an increasingly digital world. The company provides much of the infrastructure behind television, radio and wireless communications in the UK and has a significant presence in Ireland, mainland Europe and the USA. There are three business units:

Terrestrial Broadcast provides transmission for all UK terrestrial TV broadcasters, including the new networks being built for the Digital Switch Over. Transmission is also provided for BBC Radio and most commercial radio stations, both analogue and DAB. The company owns and operates two of the six UK digital terrestrial TV multiplexes, enabling major media companies to bring their TV and radio services to Freeview.

Satellite & Media provides global communication platforms to enterprise, government and broadcast customers around the world. It owns and operates teleports at key locations including Los Angeles, Washington, London and Paris, as well as comprehensive satellite capacity, an international terrestrial fibre network and extensive media facilities. These enable Arqiva to provide world leading organisations with a comprehensive range of services to deliver their data, broadcasts and media across the globe.

Wireless Access provides cellular, wireless broadband, voice and data solutions for the mobile communications, public safety, local government, and commercial markets. Arqiva is the largest independent provider of radio sites in the UK and Ireland. With its own spectrum, the company can provide complete mobile communications networks including backhaul links.

Arqiva has its headquarters near Winchester and other major UK offices in London, Warwick, Buckinghamshire and Yorkshire. Customers include major broadcasters such as the BBC, ITV, BSkyB and the independent radio groups, major telco providers including the UK's five mobile network operators, and the emergency services.

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