

THE AUTHORITY FOR TELEVISION ON DEMAND

The Scope of VOD Regulation in the AVMS Directive

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Co-regulation in the UK

- Co-regulatory model (Ofcom, ATVOD, Industry)
- ATVOD designated by Ofcom
- Notification requirement
- Rules & Guidance
- Fee
- Just under 200 notified services (189 as of 15. May 2012)

Scope Determination

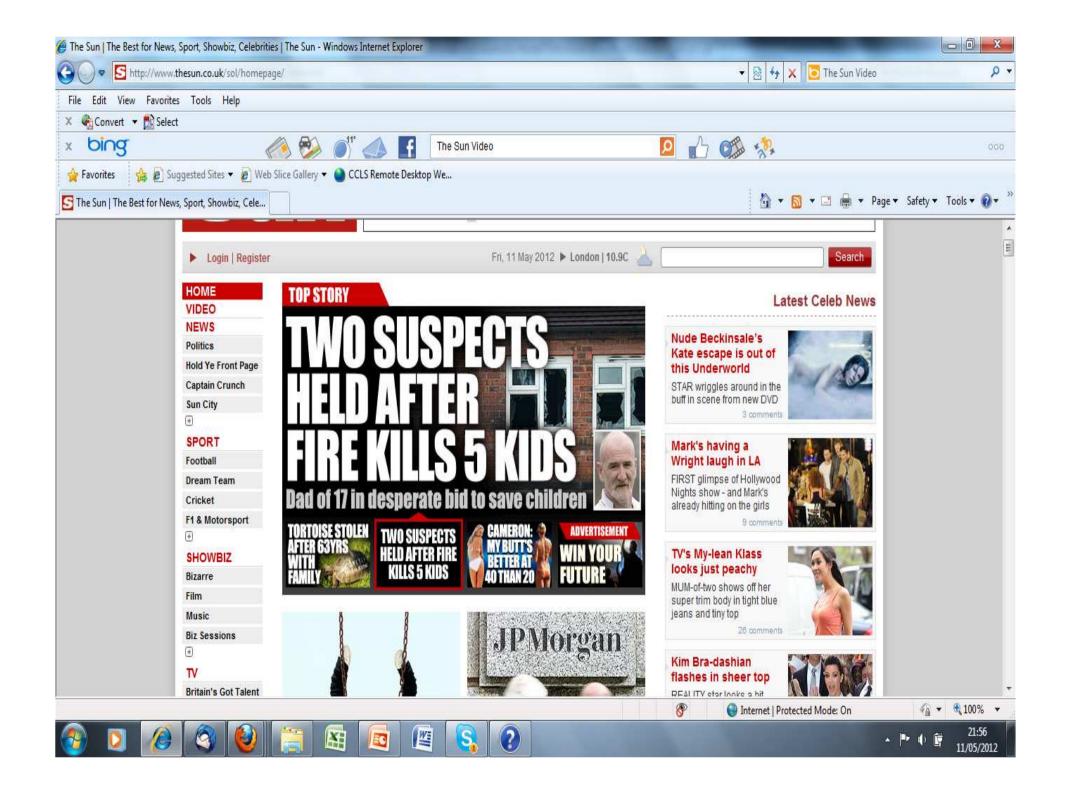
- Principal purpose of [the service] is the provision of [TV-like] programmes
- Art 1 (1) (a) (i) AVMS Directive as implemented in s.368A (1) (a) Communications Act 2003
- Form and content of the programme are comparable to the form and content of TV broadcasting
- Art 1 (1) (b) AVMS Directive as implemented in s.368A (1) (a) Communications Act 2003
- Editorial responsibility: effective control of selection of programmes and their organisation in a catalogue
- Art 1 (1) (c) AVMS Directive as implemented in ss.368A (c) and (4)

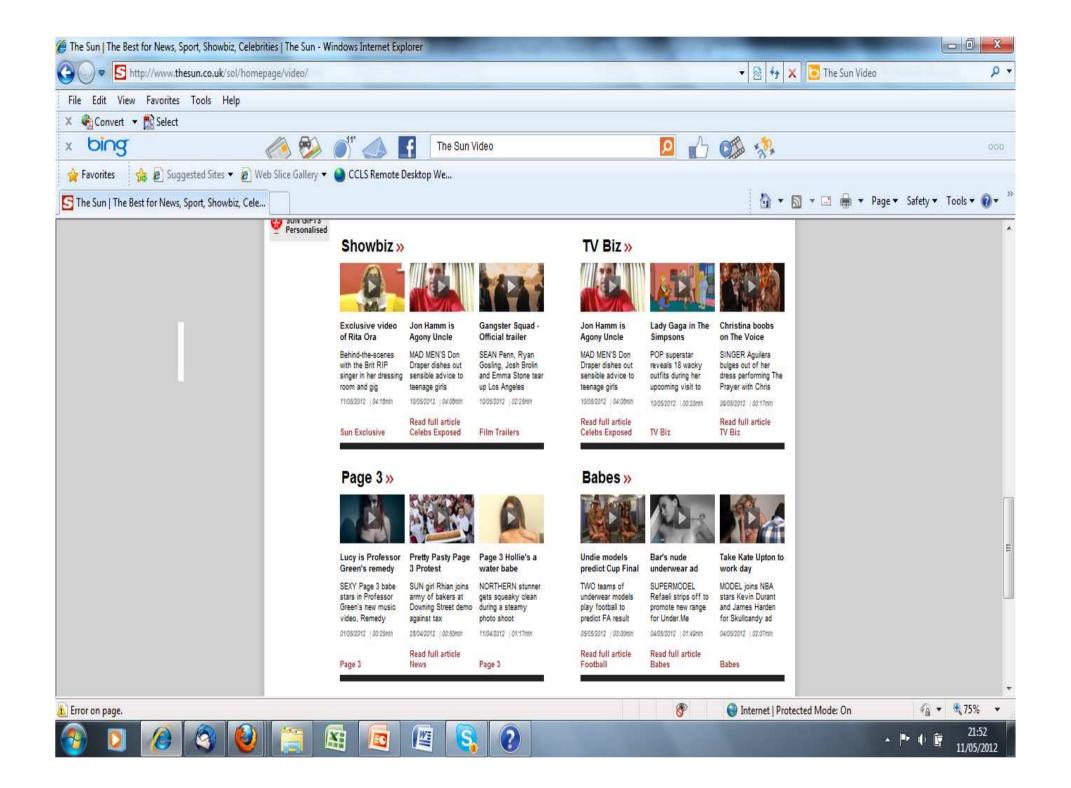
- Example 1: SUN NEWSPAPER
- Ofcom Appeal

http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/

http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/video/







- How to define the relevant service?
- Domain, website or video-section????
- Looking at the whole of what is provided on the website (text, images, audio-visual) and considering whether there is a service whose principal purpose is the provision of TV-like programmes.
- There may be more than one service on the website





- How do they relate to each other?
- Is the video section ancillary to the newspaper and integrated with the newspaper?
- What other services does the website provide?
- Composite Test: not two separate stages

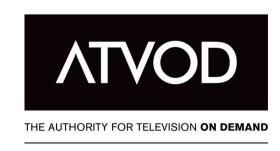




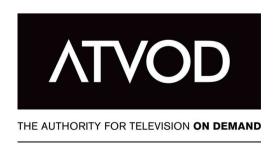
- Recital 28 is not a blanket exclusion for newspapers
- Multi-factor test:
- ODPS own homepage? How prominent on the homepage?
- Not necessarily a homepage; separate point of entry styled as providing a service with its own independent identity
- Audio-visual material catalogued and accessed in separate section of the website?
- Styled, marketed, branded as TV channel?
- Duration
- Programme complete: can it be understood on its own?



- Multi-factor test (...)
 - Mere extracts, clips without editorial integrity ('bleeding chunks')?
 - Access links between A-V material and other service, is the A-V content integrated or embedded?
 - Content links: is the A-V material merely an amplified or enhanced experience of the article (or is it the other way round)?
 - Does the A-V material need to be watched for the information to be conveyed to the user?
 - Is the A-V material the primary means of conveying the information?
 - How much A-V materials and
 - How prominent?



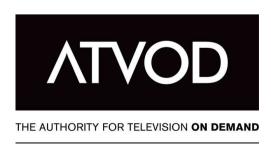
- Challenge: constantly evolving websites
- Users' expectation of regulatory protection and competition (Recital 24 AVMS Directive)
 - Given if principal purpose and TV-like
 - Dynamic nature of linear TV services
- Service- role of search engines, Youtube channels etc- how do users find services?
 - Far from clear yet

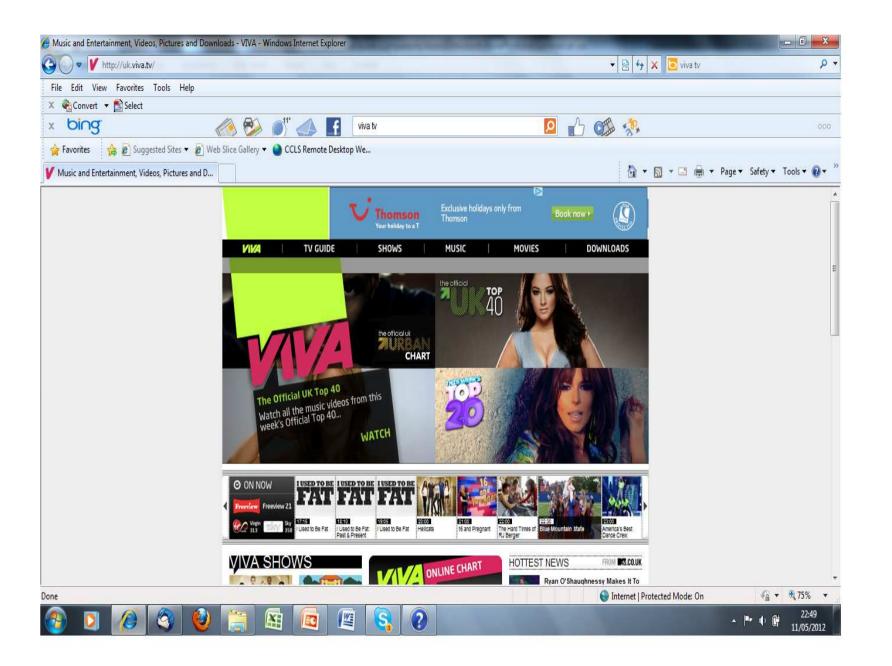


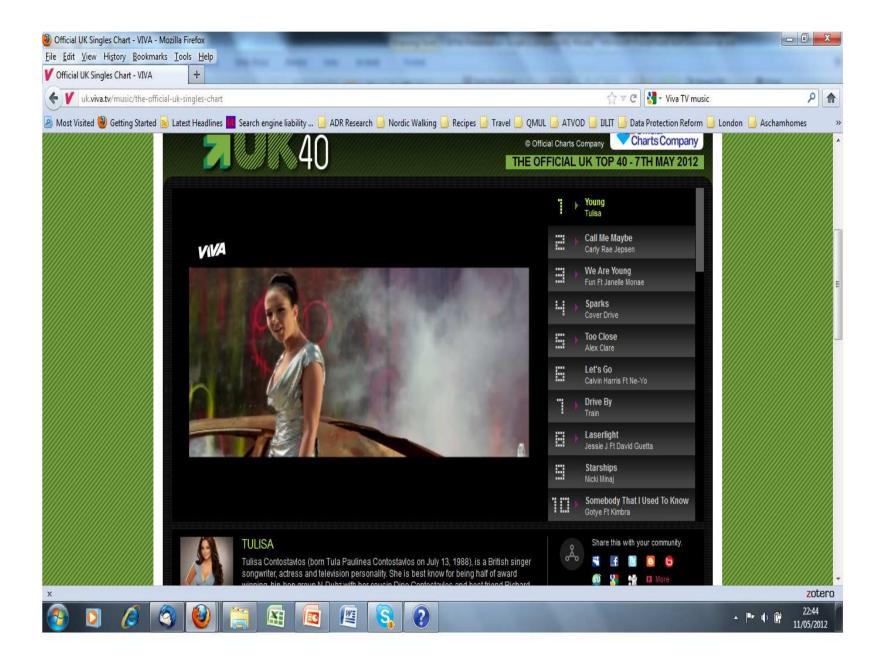
- Example 2: VIVA TV MUSIC (MTV Networks)
 - Ofcom Appeal

http://uk.viva.tv/

http://uk.viva.tv/music/the-official-uk-singles-chart

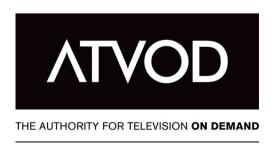






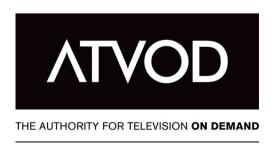
Mixed Content Websites

- Newspaper websites
- Adult websites
- Sports websites
- Radio websites



Comparability

- Comparability test should be applied to programmes not services as a whole
- Eg additional materials
- EXAMPLE 3: Playboy TV
- BBFC category R18 (unsimulated, explicit sex and strong fetish)
- Prohibited under Ofcom Broadcasting Code



Comparability

- Comparable does not mean identical
- Adult sex material in Pay TV: sexual arousal- (22.00-05.30 plus access restrictions)
- Cross-references to Playboy TV Adult Channel (overlap)
- Evasion argument

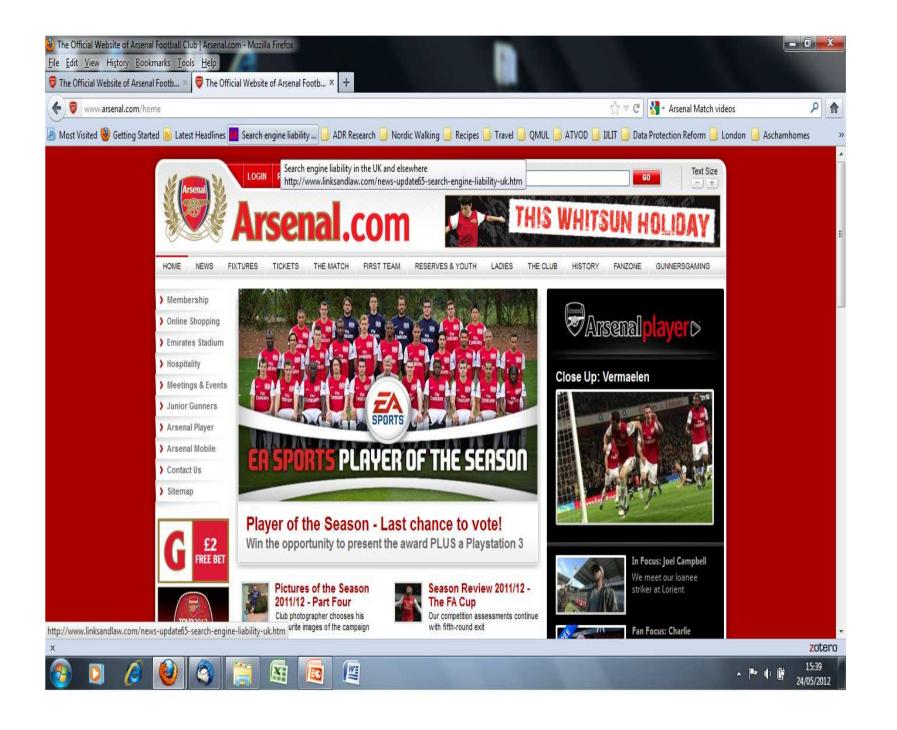


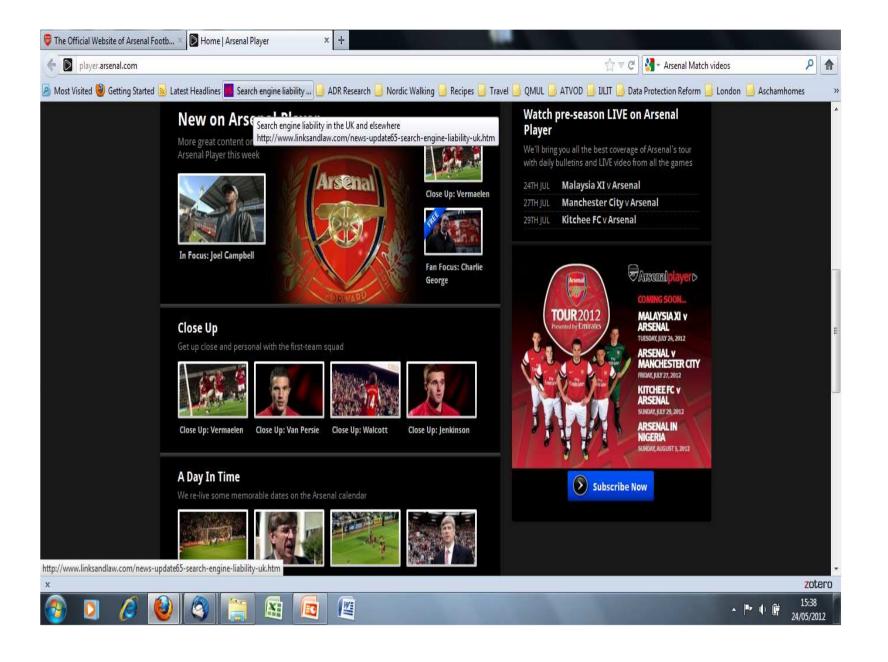
Comparability

• General:

- Self-contained items
- Catalogue
- Episodic, ongoing *
- Sustained duration*
- Introduced by music and title sequences
- Credits to participants/producers
- Dramatic/fictional conceits or plots







Stepping Back Exercise

- Whether the relevant audio-visual material is likely to compete for the same audience as linear TV broadcasts
- Whether the nature of the material and the means of access to it would lead users reasonable to expect regulatory protection
 - Dynamic interpretation
 - Access via the internet does not mean that user is not expecting regulatory protection (Playboy TV)
- Assumed if principal purpose and comparability
- Not a separate test in s.368 (1)



Editorial Responsibility

- Selection & Organisation may be joint:
 - Avails list
 - Final selection eg space considerations
 - Branding
 - Metadata
 - Presentation on platform across EPG
- Starting point: agreement
 - Unless allocating responsibility where it plainly does not lie
 - Agreed conduct and practice



Conclusions

- Convergence issue (newspapers, radio)
- Difficulty of defining the service and its principal purpose
- Dynamic nature of TV programming
- Regulatory expectations and convergence between linear and non-linear services
- Scope becoming more crystallized
- Editorial Responsibility





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