



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR ENERGY

Director-General

Brussels, **11 FEB. 2011**
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David Daniels
Chairman of the Steering Committee
Voluntary Agreement on Complex
Set Top Boxes Under the Ecodesign
Directive
British Sky Broadcasting
6 Centaurs Business Park
Grant Way
Isleworth
Middlesex
TW7 5QD

Dear Mr Daniels,

Thank you for your letter from 23 April 2010 addressed to Commissioner Oettinger in which you asked him to endorse the Voluntary Agreement (VA) on Complex Set Top Boxes under the Ecodesign Directive 2009/125/EC. Having completed a key part of the procedure leading to the formal recognition of voluntary agreements within this framework, we can now provide you with further guidance and feedback on the initiative of the Digital Interoperability Forum (DIF).

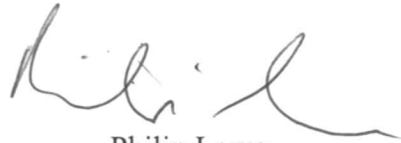
I would like to start by thanking you and all members of DIF for the efforts that have been put into this project. Since October 2009, when the VA on Complex Set Top Boxes was discussed at the Consultation Forum for the first time, your group has made substantial progress in implementing it. A Steering Committee has been formed, an independent inspector is being selected, the signatories have started a discussion on the revision of the targets, and more companies have subscribed to the agreement. As this is the first such scheme under the Ecodesign Directive, you are setting the template and benchmark for future proposals.

In parallel the Commission services have been carrying out the actions that will lead to the formal recognition of the voluntary agreement under the Ecodesign Directive. An impact assessment has been completed (it is attached to this letter) and showed that the VA on Complex Set Top Boxes is a viable alternative to regulation. It meets the criteria set out in Annex VIII of the Directive and offers in the short and mid-term energy savings similar to those obtainable from a possible regulation, with a somewhat smaller administrative burden than the latter. The impact assessment however also showed that in

order to realise the full energy-saving potential the industry needs to agree on more ambitious future targets. You will find this and other recommendations for the future of the agreement annexed to this letter.

DG Energy is now in a position to propose to the Commission a decision on the formal endorsement of the VA. The decision would then be published in the Official Journal in the coming months. We will continue to keep you informed about the process.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Philip Lowe', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Philip Lowe
Director-General

Annex. Recommendations

- 1) The impact assessment showed that the long-term improvement potential goes way beyond the current targets of the VA. The current industry proposal is expected to reduce by 2016 the annual electricity consumption of CSTBs by some 30% percent, while the full implementation of low-power standby and power management could add a further 20 percentage points. In the short term the implementation of these solutions would be difficult given the need for changes not only to the design of the boxes, but also to the infrastructure support systems of TV service providers. Given that the main advantage of the VA compared to regulation stems from that fact that it brings manufacturers from across the value chain, the Signatories are invited to agree on a timeframe for the implementation of low-power standby and power management. This could be done under revised Tier II targets or under a Tier III.
- 2) The Code of Conduct for Digital TV Services orchestrated by the Joint Research Centre aims at developing innovative solutions to drive the efficiency of set-top boxes. It is therefore complementary to the VA which sets minimum efficiency requirements. The industry is therefore encouraged to work together with the Commission services, Member States and NGOs to find synergies between these two initiatives, especially regarding the setting of future targets.
- 3) The industry is invited to ensure full openness and transparency of the VA. While certain sensitive data, such as sales figures will be protected and available only to the independent inspector, other data, and in particular those on the energy consumption of CSTBs should be made available to the members of the Steering Committee and consumers.
- 4) The preparatory study found that in addition to energy consumption, a significant environmental impact of CSTBs is linked to waste and materials acquisition. The industry is therefore encouraged to explore the possibility of including in the VA commitment on these elements, possibly on the basis of existing standards (e.g. IEC 62430 “Environmentally conscious design for electrical and electronic products”).
- 5) The industry is called on to put in place without delay the remaining practical elements of the VA, such as the appointment of an independent inspector.