



MERGER ANNOUNCEMENT - M/16/064

Competition and Consumer Protection Commission clears proposed joint venture (Britbox) controlled by the BBC and ITV

19 January 2017

On 18 January 2017, the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission cleared the proposed transaction whereby BBC Worldwide Americas, Inc., an indirect wholly-owned subsidiary of the British Broadcasting Corporation, and ITV SVOD Holding Inc., an indirect wholly-owned subsidiary of ITV plc, would: (i) acquire joint control over BBC Extra LLC (to be renamed Britbox LLC) through the acquisition by each of BBC Worldwide Americas, Inc. and ITV SVOD Holding Inc. of an equal share of the membership interest (capital and voting rights) in BBC Extra LLC;¹ and, (ii) acquire joint control over BB Rights LLC (a related company for the purposes of licencing content) through the acquisition by each of BBC Worldwide Americas, Inc. and ITV SVOD Holding Inc. of an equal share of the interest in BB Rights. The proposed transaction was notified under the Competition Act 2002, as amended (“the Act”) on 13 December 2016. Given that both the BBC and ITV carry on “media business” within the State (as defined in section 28A(1) of the Act), the proposed transaction constitutes a “media merger” for the purposes of Part 3A of the Act.

The Commission has formed the view that the proposed transaction will not substantially lessen competition in any market for goods or services in the State, and, accordingly, that the acquisition may be put into effect subject to the provisions of section 28C(1) of the Act. The Commission will publish the reasons for its determination on its website no later than 60 working days after the date of the determination and after allowing the parties the opportunity to request that confidential information be removed from the published version.

Additional Information

The BBC, through its commercial arm, BBC Commercial Holdings, has controlling interests in a number of subsidiaries worldwide, the purpose of which is to support the BBC’s public service mission and to generate revenue for the BBC group. This includes investing in, commercialising and showcasing content from the BBC around the world.

ITV is an integrated producer-broadcaster, operating one of the largest commercial family of television channels in the UK (including both free to air and pay channels). ITV’s programming is primarily funded by television advertising revenues. In addition to traditional broadcasting on its channels, ITV also delivers content on-demand through numerous platforms, both by licensing content to other parties and directly via the ITV Hub. Through its ITV Studios business, ITV produces content for both its own channels and third parties in the UK, as well as overseas.

¹ AMC Networks Inc. will hold a 19% membership interest (capital) in Britbox but will not have any control rights, negative or otherwise, over Britbox.



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AMC Networks owns and operates several popular brands in U.S. cable television, such as AMC, IFC, SundanceTV, WE tv and IFC Films, which produce and deliver distinctive and culturally relevant content and which are available across multiple platforms in the U.S. AMC Networks also operates BBC AMERICA, through a joint venture with the BBC, and operates a global division.

Britbox will launch a video-on-demand service in the United States of America in the first quarter of 2017, offering primarily British content under an ad-free subscription service to viewers.