



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee

Angus Robertson MSP  
Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture  
Scottish Government

**27 June 2025**

Dear Cabinet Secretary

### **Sporting Events of National Interest**

The Committee heard from the BBC Director General and BBC Scotland at our meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2025 and subsequently from Ofcom and then from BBC Scotland at our meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

During those meetings Members raised the coverage of the Scotland men's and women's international football teams on the main free-to-air terrestrial broadcasters.

The Committee notes that the Broadcasting Act 1996 gives the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport the power to draw up a list of sporting events of "national interest". We note that the current list of Group A events which requires full coverage to be offered to free-to-air broadcasters includes the finals of the men's and women's football world cup and European championships but it does not include the qualifying matches.

At the same time we recognise that there is a need to strike the right balance between accessibility, and the ability of sporting organisations to generate revenues to invest in their sports at all levels.

We also note that the BBC has secured an exclusive deal to broadcast Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland men's international football in the run-up to next year's world cup, which is a total of 41 live matches over the next 15 months.

The previous UK Government stated in a response to the Scottish Affairs Committee that – "As sports policy is devolved, it would be for the Scottish Government to consider in the first instance whether there is currently the right balance between Scottish rights holders' ability to generate sufficient income and access for Scottish audiences to those sporting events. The UK Government would then take those considerations into account."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [Public broadcasting in Scotland: Government Response to the Committee's Fifth Report - Scottish Affairs Committee](#)

Contact: Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP. Email [CEEAC.Committee@parliament.scot](mailto:CEEAC.Committee@parliament.scot). We welcome calls through Relay UK and in BSL through Contact Scotland BSL.

The Committee invites you to set out the Scottish Government's view on potentially including expanding the specific Scottish events covered under the listed events regime, to include in Group A, not just the Scottish FA Cup final but also Scotland's World Cup and European Championship qualifiers.

I am copying this letter to the Minister for Drugs & Alcohol Policy and Sport.

**Clare Adamson MSP**

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Clare Adamson".

**Convener**