



Department  
for Culture,  
Media & Sport

Stephanie Peacock MP  
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18 September 2025

Clare Adamson MSP  
Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture  
Committee  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

INT2025/09149/DC

Dear Clare Adamson MSP,

Thank you for your letter of 27 June 2025 to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport about Sporting Events of National Interest.

I am responding as the Minister responsible for sport policy to set out the UK Government's position regarding adding Scotland's World Cup and European Championship qualifiers to Group A events, under the Broadcasting Act 1996.

The UK Government recognises the importance of broadcasting certain sporting events, including the World Cup and the European Championships, to attract significant audience interest. The current listed events regime is designed to ensure that sporting events of national significance are available to as wide an audience as possible, by prohibiting exclusive broadcasting of the event without prior consent from Ofcom. We understand the role of our public sector broadcasters in bringing the nation together for big sporting moments.

Listing does not guarantee that an event will be broadcast live or on a free-to-air channel. Rights holders are not required to sell live rights for listed events, and free-to-air broadcasters are not obliged to purchase them as rights holders and broadcasters are independent of the Government.


In your letter, you note that the BBC has secured an exclusive deal to broadcast Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland's men's international football in the run-up to next year's World Cup. As this example demonstrates, an event not being listed as either Group A or Group B does not prevent a rights holder from selling full live coverage rights to free-to-air broadcasters.

Given sports policy is devolved, it would be appropriate for the Devolved Governments to consider in the first instance whether there is currently the right balance between 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.



Based on all of this, the UK Government believes the current list of events works well to deliver the best outcome and that it strikes an appropriate balance. We will, of course, keep this under review. We would also like to wish Scotland the best of luck in the World Cup Qualifying campaign.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Peacock', with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end.

Stephanie Peacock MP  
**Minister for Sport, Tourism, Civil Society and Youth**

Cc: The Rt Hon Douglas Alexander MP, Secretary of State for Scotland