

## Consultation 1/2025: Publication of Operating Budget for 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

The Office of the Adjudicator-Broadcast Transmission Services (OTA-BTS Ltd) was set up as a requirement of the Competition Commission’s report into the merger of Arqiva and NGW in 2008. The purpose and functions of the Office are set out in the Undertakings <https://ota-bts.org.uk/the-undertakings/>

Paragraph 17 of Appendix 1 to the Undertakings requires Ofcom to set an annual budget for the operation of OTA-BTS. Among other matters, the Undertakings set out that the “budget will be for an amount sufficient in the view of Ofcom alone to enable the Adjudicator properly to discharge his functions in an effective and timely manner”. They also require Ofcom to consult with the Adjudicator, Arqiva and its customers in ways it considers appropriate. Ofcom is grateful to the stakeholders who responded to its consultation and has taken those submissions into account.

Ofcom has now set the Annual Budget for the year 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

The Annual Budget is composed of two parts. The first is the operational budget which reflects staff costs, the use of office and IT facilities, book-keeping and the provision of legal, expert consultancy and economic advisory work that can be anticipated and is necessary for the functions of the Adjudicator. The second is a contingency sum that will only be called on for the additional expense relating to the determination of any Dispute (as defined in the Undertakings) and any non-budgeted work that meets certain criteria. None of this contingency has been used over the years.

The operational budget for 2024/25 was **£698,402**, with a contingency sum of **£470,000**. For the 2025/26 the Annual Budget is **£793,524** with a contingency sum of **£470,000**.

### Operational Budget Summary

Due to the structure and status of OTA-BTS Ltd, and in line with previous years, the Draft Annual Budget figures include VAT at 20%.

Category	2025/26 Budget (including VAT)	Notes (see page 2)
Core Team	£465k	1
External Advice	£259k	2
Office rental	£31k	3
Overheads	£39k	4
In-year Contingency	£0	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£794k</b>	

In addition to the operational budget of £793,524, the contingency budget of £470,000 will only be called on for the additional expense relating to the determination of any Dispute (as defined in the Undertakings) and any non-budgeted work that meets certain criteria.

## Notes

1. The core team consists of Glyn Jones, Megan Donald, Geoffrey Myers, Jeff Astle plus a part-time consultant who will review information provided by Arqiva.
2. External advice includes legal fees and budget to commission reports and analysis from external consultancy firms. Compared to the Draft Annual Budget, the element for work by external consultancy firms has been increased by £55k
3. A revised agreement with Ofcom, to provide office space and meeting rooms at Riverside House, is under discussion but has not yet been finalised. £31k is a prudent assessment of the expected cost.
4. Overheads include travel expenses, training, attendance at conferences, insurance and audit.
5. Compared to the Draft Annual Budget, this line has been reduced by £55k.

The consultation on the Draft Annual Budget asked stakeholders to comment on areas of work they believe should be treated as priorities in the work plan for 2025/26. Having considered stakeholder responses, the Adjudicator will make a statement about priorities in the next Quarterly Report.

3 March 2025