

## Consultation 1 / 2026

### Publication of Operating Budget for The Office of the Adjudicator – Broadcast Transmission Services

**1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027**

The Office of the Adjudicator – Broadcast Transmission Services Ltd. (OTA-BTS) 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 2026 to 31 March 2027.

The Annual Budget is composed of two parts. The first is the operational budget which reflects staff costs, office and IT facilities, book-keeping, and provision of legal and expert consultancy 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 2025/26 was **£793,524**, with a contingency of **£470,000**. The 2026/27 Annual Budget is **£991,029** with a contingency of **£470,000**. In its budget consultation on this budget, Ofcom highlighted that 2026/27 represents a spike in the resources required by OTA-BTS and the expectation is that the budget required for the following year (i.e. 2027/28) will be lower.

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

<b>Category</b>	<b>2026/27 Budget (incl. VAT)</b>	<b>2025/26 Budget (incl. VAT)</b>	<b>Change year-on-year</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Core Team	£480k	£465k	+£15k	1
Legal Advice	£120k	£84k	+£36k	2
Economic Expert Advice	£264k	£175k	+£89k	3
Technical Expert Advice	£50k		+£50k	4
Office Rental	£39k	£31k	+£8k	5
Overheads	£38k	£38k		6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£991k</b>	<b>£794k</b>	<b>+£197k</b>	

### Notes

1. The core team consists of Glyn Jones, Megan Donald, Professor Geoffrey Myers, Jeff Astle and Simon Mason, all working on a part-time basis. The budget includes a 3% increase. The Adjudicator will continue to work with a mix of advisers and external consultancy firms to maximise efficiency and effectiveness.
2. An increase in legal fees to ensure the Adjudicator has adequate legal advice when it is needed.
3. An increase in budget for external economic consultancies to include analysis and advice to inform a decision about the WACC (this was last done in 2015) and the inflation adjustment mechanism. Also to implement recommendations from work in 2025/26 to review the Cost & Pricing Models and changes to the Regulatory Accounts.
4. A budget for specialist external technical consultancy to carry out checks at sites and associated databases (e.g. installed equipment such as electricity meters or antennas).
5. The Adjudicator has indicated to Ofcom that he hopes the actual Office Rental costs can be held at, or very close to, the spend in 2025/26 and positive discussions have taken place to secure this outcome.
6. Overheads include travel expenses, training, attendance at conferences, insurance and audit.

31 March 2026