Appendix B   Consultation and Consensus Forming Process

Introduction

After consideration of various ways in which the consultation and consensus-forming process may be achieved it was decided that no one could be really considered to be an expert in "t-learning" as a specific domain. Therefore, it was decided to capture the views of a wide cross-section of people or potential stakeholders who would have some expertise in any potential developments towards "t-learning".

The consultation and consensus-forming process consisted of three elements: -

- Learning Opportunity in the Home Survey
- Future Scenarios Survey
- Comments received from the Consultation Paper

Methodology

It was decided to target two overlapping groups of people and make a third group aware of the existence of the study in order to invite comment.

One group of people had already expressed an interest in the t-learning Study and have wanted to be kept informed of developments. They now form a database of over 700 people who have been regularly emailed the news-clip service and the research newsletter. They would have been made aware of the study through an email sent out during the research and consultation stages of the study or already on the database from the earlier study. The email addresses have been regularly updated to ensure that they are "live" contacts. It is important to capture the views of this group of people as the results of the study is most likely to be of value to them in the first instance. A small number of these people were identified as having expertise in certain aspects of interactive digital TV and were added to the list of those with some sort of expertise as are described later.

The procedure for capturing the views of the first group of people (Interested in t-learning Study Group) is as follows: -

1. They were first invited via email to complete the online "Learning Opportunities in the Home Survey" This online survey was actually available from mid October 2002 and closed end of February 2003. There were 140 responses received. Details of this survey are given in Appendix C and D.

2. All those who completed the survey by mid January 2003 and supplied their email addresses were sent the Consultation Report via email and invited to make comments. In addition the Consultation Report has been

sent out those in this group who requested the report but may not have completed the "Learning Opportunities in the Home Survey".

3. Everyone in this group has also been invited to complete each of the ten online surveys covering the Future Scenarios. These surveys were closed by the end of February 2003 after which the results were analysed. (Details of the Future Scenarios Survey are given in Appendix XX with an analysis in Chapter X of the main report)

In order to ensure the widest possible distribution of the Consultation Paper a second group of people (Maybe Interested Group) were also emailed directly with the Consultation or invited through an online discussion group to request the Consultation Paper. One sub-group consisted of those on a discussion group (Broadbandbananas) who are interested in interactive digital TV and broadband issues. It is perhaps the interactive TV industry's best-known discussion group. It is understood that this group has 10,600 subscribers worldwide. Compared to the size of the group only a handful of responses were received. However this may be an indication of the general lack of interest in learning through interactive TV at present.

A second sub-group consisted of those who are on the UK Wired-up Communities Initiative (approx. 140). Details of the Consultation Paper were also distributed to Education members of the European Broadcasting Union's via the Head of the Education Unit of the EBU, but due to delays at the EBU this was not done until mid January 2003 and no comments appear to have been received via this method to date.

A third group (Those with some expertise) was also identified. This was a key group whose comments to the Consultation Paper and the Future Scenarios were weighted highly as they would be considered as having expertise in at least one of the component parts that would be needed to enable t-learning services to be developed. The criteria for choosing these people were they have expertise in at least one of the following areas: -

- Involved in developing e-learning
- Involved in interactive TV
- Traditional educational broadcasters
- Traditional broadcasters and personalised TV developments and other related services.

In addition, an attempt have been made to ensure that there was a good European spread although some people have been chosen from outside Europe. More than 60 people were invited to respond with 25 responses received.

This group were invited to comment on the Consultation paper and to complete the online Future scenario surveys. (Appendix F lists experts with a brief description of their credentials. The Final version of this report incorporates comments received)