INVESTIGATION AND DECISION

Manx Radio Public Service Broadcasting Speech Content Requirements

08 October 2026

Document Number: 24/26

Lught-reill son Gurneil Çhellinsh as Bun-shirveishyn
Communications & Utilities Regulatory Authority

Contents

1. Executive Summary 3
2. Regulatory Framework and Licence Obligations 5
   A. Licence Conditions 5
      Condition 18(1) 5
      Condition 18(5) 6
   B. Station Format 7
      Meaning of "Generally" 7
      Total Output 8
   C. Issue for Determination 8
3. Background 9
   A. Public Service Broadcasting Consultation and Representations 9
   B. Programme Analysis and Engagement with Manx Radio 10
   C. Response to Programme Analysis Report 10
   D. Complaints Regarding Compliance with Public Service Broadcasting Framework 12
   E. Referral to Compliance and Enforcement 12
4. Investigation 13
   A. Request for Information 13
   B. Request for Extension 13
   C. Manx Radio Representation 13
      Manx Radio Speech Assessment 2026 - Monitoring Framework 14
      Manx Radio's Submission on Monitoring Methods and Evidence 15
      Manx Radio's Self-Assessment of Investigation Periods 16
      Statement of Programme Policy 18
      Programme Schedules 19
      Written Representation 19
5. Authority's Assessment 23
   A. Manx Radio Representations 23
      Treatment of "Generally" 23
      Requirement for Cooperation 24
      Evidential Transparency and Independent Sampling 25
      Nature of the Authority's March 2026 Analysis 26
      Representativeness of the Investigation Periods 27
      Speech Percentage as a Metric to Assess Delivery of Public Service Broadcasting 27

Digital, Online, and On-Demand Content 28
Inclusion of Manx Radio Gold 29
Wider Public Service Broadcasting Contribution 29
Commercial Sustainability, Staffing and Funding 29
Statement of Programme Policy, Music and Entertainment 30
B. Conclusion 31
6. Investigation and Monitoring – Detailed Findings 33
A. Assessment Methodology 33
B. Results: Week Beginning 20 April 2026 (Tynwald Week) 33
C. Results: Week Beginning 11 May 2026 (House of Keys Week) 34
D. Results: Estimate for Non-Parliamentary Broadcast Week 35
E. Overall Results 36
F. Conclusion 37
7. Decision 39
8. Proposed Regulatory Response 40
A. Regulatory Powers and Enforcement 40
B. Proposed Direction 40
The Proposal 40
Next Steps and Representation Period for Proposed Direction 41
C. Consideration of Proposed Regulatory Response 41
Seriousness and Duration 41
Gain 42
Consumer Harm 42
Steps to Prevent Breach 42
Prior Knowledge and Awareness 43
Cooperation 43
9. Next Steps 45

1. Executive Summary

1.1. The Communications and Utilities Regulatory Authority ("the Authority") has investigated whether Radio Manx Limited ("Manx Radio") is complying with Condition 18(1) of its Public Service Broadcasting Licence, as read with the Station Format. The Condition requires that Manx Radio fulfils its public service remit, and in doing so, requires the amount of time given to speech shall not generally fall below 40% of total output between 6am and 7pm on weekdays. The Station Format excludes Bank Holidays, special events such as the TT, and the period between Christmas and New Year from the requirement.

1.2. The issue for determination is whether Manx Radio's licenced sound broadcasting services, assessed across its AM and FM output as a whole, met the 40% speech content requirement during the investigation periods. The Authority has assessed compliance based on the actual broadcast output of the licenced frequencies referenced in the Station Format. Online, digital, and on-demand output has not been included in the assessment as it does not form part of the Station Format's Licenced Service.

1.3. The Authority's investigation has considered evidence provided by Manx Radio, including broadcast schedules, audio recordings for the relevant periods, Manx Radio's own speech assessment of the relevant periods, its Statement of Programme Policy, and its written representations.

1.4. Having considered the evidence before it, the Authority's preliminary findings are that the combined AM and FM speech content fell below 40% on eight of the ten days assessed, none of which fell within the exclusions defined in the Station Format.

1.5. The Authority considers that this pattern is significant in the context of the wording of the Licence and the requirement to provide the specified level of speech content. The Authority does not find that the identified shortfalls can be treated as isolated or exceptional.

1.6. Therefore, based on the evidence available to it, the Authority's finding is that Manx Radio has failed to comply with Condition 18(1), as read with the Station Format.

1.7. Accordingly, the Authority is minded to proceed with enforcement in accordance with the Communications Act 2021 and the applicable licence and regulatory framework. Specifically, the Authority proposes to Direct Manx Radio to curtail the inclusion of Manx Radio Gold on its AM service, during relevant hours, to the extent necessary to provide at

least 40% speech content across its combined AM and FM services in accordance with Licence Condition 18(1) and the Station Format.

1.8. Further details of the Authority's investigation, speech assessment and analysis, evidence considered, preliminary determination, and proposed direction to remedy the matter are contained within the relevant sections below.

2. Regulatory Framework and Licence Obligations

2.1. The Communications Act 2021 ("the Act") establishes the regulatory framework under which broadcasting services are licenced and regulated in the Isle of Man. This framework has been established, in line with the 'General Duties of the Authority'[1], to further the interests of all members of the public in the Island in relation to communications matters.

2.2. In furthering the interests of members of the public, the Authority must be transparent, accountable and proportionate, and target only cases in which action is needed. Furthermore, in relation to broadcasting, the Authority shall also use its best endeavours to secure the availability throughout the Island:

> "*a range of broadcasting services which (taken as a whole) are both of high quality and calculated to appeal to a variety of tastes and interests*"

The Authority must also have regard to:

> "*the desirability of promoting the fulfilment of the purpose of Public Service Broadcasting in the Island*"

2.3. Division 6 of Part 4 of the Act provides for Public Service Broadcasting. In particular, section 59 requires the Public Service Broadcaster to comply with Public Service Broadcasting obligations. Those obligations are contained within the Public Service Broadcaster's licence. Section 3 of the Act designates Radio Manx Limited ("Manx Radio") as the Public Service Broadcaster.

A. Licence Conditions

2.4. Condition 18 of the Sound Broadcasting Service Licence issued to Manx Radio[2] sets out the requirements with regard to its 'Public Service Remit and Monitoring'.

Condition 18(1)

[1] The Authority's functions in relation to the 'General duties of the Authority' are laid out under paragraph 2 of Schedule 1 of the Communications Act 2021: https://legislation.gov.im/cms/images/LEGISLATION/PRINCIPAL/2021/2021-0003/2021-0003_1.pdf?zoom_highlight=communications+act+2021

[2] Licence Granted to Radio Manx Limited to Provide a Sound Broadcasting Service under section 17 of the Communications Act 2021 (of Tynwald), reference 202501: https://www.cura.im/media/2073/202501-manx-radio-licence-extended-april_september-2026.pdf

2.5. Specifically, Condition 18(1), states:

> *"Manx Radio shall ensure that it fulfils the public service remit, (or such remit as may from time to time be modified by the Authority) in the provision of the Service. That is to provide a Public Service Broadcasting service in accordance with current legislation which disseminates information, education and entertainment which is responsive to the taste, interests and concerns of the whole community, with the programmes that reflect the varied elements which make up the culture of the people of the Isle of Man and has a special regard for the elements which distinguish that culture, where the programmes have a wide range in their subject matter having regard both to the programmes as a whole and also to the days of the week and the times of the day at which the programmes are broadcast, and where a sufficient amount of time in the programme is given to news programmes and current affairs programmes which are of a high quality.*
>
> *The amount of time to be given to speech is specified in the Station Format."*

2.6. It is noted that this is an absolute obligation; the Condition states that Manx Radio "*shall*"; meaning that there is no specific provision for the Authority to vary or disregard the requirement to fulfil the specified public service remit, including the amount of time to be given to speech.

Condition 18(5)

2.7. In addition to the above, Condition 18(5) provides:

> *"the Authority and the Licenceholder will cooperate on how to assess the percentage of speech as specified in the Station Format."*

2.8. The Authority interprets this provision as requiring the Authority and the Licenceholder to engage constructively with one another concerning the methodology used to assess the percentage of speech. The Authority further notes that this is also expressed as an absolute obligation. The Condition provides that the Authority and the Licenceholder "*will cooperate*" on how speech content is to be assessed. In the Authority's view, this requires both parties to participate meaningfully in discussions concerning the assessment methodology.

2.9. However, this is not a prerequisite for compliance with other obligations in the licence, nor does it require the Authority and Manx Radio to agree on a methodology for assessing speech content. Indeed, the Authority did attempt to cooperate with Manx Radio to resolve this issue, but this was ultimately unsuccessful. This point is addressed further below in response to Manx Radio's representation on this part of its licence.

2.10. Therefore, there is nothing to prevent the Authority from undertaking compliance monitoring (and any subsequent enforcement action), provided the method is applied in a reasonable, transparent, and evidence-based manner.

2.11. A copy of Licence Condition 18 and associated Station Format is attached as Annex 1:.

B. Station Format

2.12. With regard to the amount of time to be given to speech, the Station Format provides:

> "*Speech content should not generally fall below 40% of its total output between the hours of 6am and 7pm each weekday [...]*"

Meaning of "Generally"

2.13. It is important to note at the outset that the term 'generally' is defined in the licence and does not have its ordinary meaning. The Station Format defines the term "*generally*" as:

> *"Generally does not include Bank Holidays, special events such as the TT and the period between Christmas and New Year."*

2.14. Therefore, when assessing the amount of time given to speech, the Authority must have regard to:

a) The days of the week: since the provision only specifies weekdays, the 40% speech content requirement does not apply to weekends.

b) The time: since the provision only specifies output between the hours of 6am and 7pm, the 40% speech content requirement does not apply outside these hours.

c) The time of year: since the provision excludes Bank Holidays, special events such as the TT and the period between Christmas and New Year, the 40% speech content requirement does not apply to days that fall within these periods.

Total Output

2.15. The Station Format also provides that the speech content requirement applies to Manx Radio's "*total output*" during the specified times and periods. The Licence defines the "*Licenced Service*" by reference to the services specified in Schedule 3, as read with the Station Format. Specifically, Schedule 3 states:

> *"The Licenced Service is, except to the extent that the Authority shall otherwise agree in writing, the sound broadcasting service described in the Station Format attached to this Licence"*

2.16. The Station Format specifies that Manx Radio's licenced frequencies are 89.0, 89.5, 97.2, 103.7 MHz (FM), and 1368kHz (AM). As the AM and FM frequencies all form part of the Licenced Service, both Manx Radio's AM and FM services should therefore be assessed as a whole when considering the amount of time given to speech, rather than imposing separate 40% requirements on each AM and FM service.

2.17. Schedule 3, as read with the Station Format, does not reference online, digital, or on-demand output as forming part of the Licenced Service, nor does such content form part of a Regulated Activity as defined by the Act. Accordingly, online, digital, and on-demand outputs are excluded from the Licenced Service, and therefore do not count towards the speech content requirement.

C. Issue for Determination

2.18. The issue for determination in this case is whether Manx Radio has complied with Condition 18(1) of its Licence, as read with the Station Format, during the investigation periods.

2.19. Having regard to the foregoing, to make a finding that Manx Radio has met its obligations to ensure 40% of its total output is speech, the Authority must be satisfied that:

a) An appropriate methodology is used to assess the percentage of speech; and,

b) Whether, on the balance of probabilities, Manx Radio's combined AM and FM Licenced Services generally provided 40% speech content between 6am and 7pm on weekdays during the investigation periods, noting that generally excludes any times that fall within the definition in the Station Format.

3. Background

3.1. An overview of the key events leading up to the Authority's investigation is set out below. A chronology summarising the sequence of events is also attached as Annex 2:.

A. Public Service Broadcasting Consultation and Representations

3.2. In response to the Authority's January 2025 Public Service Broadcaster Licence Consultation[3], stakeholders raised issues concerning the scope and enforcement of Manx Radio's Public Service Broadcasting obligations. These included the treatment of Manx Radio Gold, clarity on Public Service Broadcasting obligations, and the relevance of digital output.

3.3. Specifically, 3FM raised concerns regarding the interaction between Manx Radio's Public Service Broadcasting remit and the commercial activities of Manx Radio Gold. 3FM also sought clearer definition and enforcement of Public Service Broadcasting obligations, including the Station Format output included in monitoring compliance.

3.4. The final decision, confirmed in the Authority's Response to Consultation and Decision[4], concluded that:

> *"Given the broader stakeholder interest and the potential regulatory implications, the Authority believes that holding a further consultation on how the PSB conditions are implemented is appropriate and will assist in informing the Authority's decisions. This aligns with the Authority's statutory obligation to transparency and fairness in decision-making.*
>
> *(a) The further consultation will consider: a) The status of Manx Radio Gold broadcast on the AM frequency, specifically, whether it fits under the umbrella of the Public Service Remit;"*

[3] Public Service Broadcaster Licence Consultation (Document 01/25): https://www.cura.im/media/1963/20250117_psb-broadcasting-licence-consultation.pdf

[4] Paragraphs 3.33-3.36, Response to Public Service Broadcaster Licence Consultation and Decision (Document 29/25): https://www.cura.im/media/2053/29-25-response-to-psb-broadcasting-licence-consultation-and-decision.pdf

B. Programme Analysis and Engagement with Manx Radio

3.5. To facilitate its assessment and future development of Public Service Broadcasting, in December 2025 the Authority undertook a preliminary monitoring and assessment exercise of Manx Radio's speech content. This involved analysing the programme schedules provided by Manx Radio to determine the different types and durations of content, sampling its output by monitoring broadcasts, and analysing and extrapolating the data to estimate speech output. The results indicated that Manx Radio's speech output fell below the 40% requirement specified in the Station Format.

3.6. On 21 January 2026, the Authority convened a meeting with senior representatives of Manx Radio to discuss its speech content requirement. In particular, the meeting considered the results of the Authority's monitoring exercise, including potential mechanisms for monitoring and assessing compliance with the speech content requirements, as well as potential remedies to address the identified shortfall. Manx Radio did not accept the Authority's findings but was unable to provide alternative data to support its position. Consequently, no remedial steps to address the identified speech content shortfall were agreed, and the Authority's concerns remained unresolved. The Authority was also unable to reach agreement with Manx Radio on the methodology for monitoring or assessing the level of speech content.

3.7. Following the meeting, and in response to Manx Radio's request, the Authority prepared and, on 3 March 2026, provided Manx Radio with its Public Service Broadcaster Programme Analysis Report. The report sets out the monitoring and analysis undertaken by the Authority to date, including its methodology, an analysis of Manx Radio's output and speech content, and its findings. The purpose of the report was to provide Manx Radio with the data and analysis underpinning the Authority's concerns and a further opportunity to engage with the Authority to address the matter. The report was not a formal determination of non-compliance or an enforcement decision.

3.8. A copy of the Public Service Broadcasting Analysis Report is attached as Annex 3:.

C. Response to Programme Analysis Report

3.9. Having received no response to its report, the Authority sought further response and engagement from Manx Radio on 23 March 2026 and 20 April 2026.

3.10. On 22 April 2026, Manx Radio provided its formal response, which challenged the Authority's analysis and interpretation of the Licence and legislative framework. Specifically, Manx Radio contended that:

a) The report lacked transparency concerning the Authority's sampling framework, selection criteria, underlying programme logs, listening records, coding rules, classification methodology, how consistency or accuracy was ensured, and an audit trail. Manx Radio considered that such information would enable the findings to be replicated and independently verified.

b) Due to use of representative weeks and application of standardised assumptions, which resulted in indicative annual figures and a best-case scenario estimate, the findings should not be treated as determinative.

c) The Authority's analysis should not be undertaken in isolation from the cost and complexity of producing speech content and the resources required to sustain such output.

d) Manx Radio suggested that it may be inappropriate to measure Public Service Broadcasting performance by the percentage of speech content alone, noting that the metric does not:

i. Reflect quality, relevance, or public value;

ii. Account for modern, multi-platform audience behaviour; or

iii. Align with contemporary broadcasting practices.

e) Manx Radio Gold carries the same news bulletins as its FM station throughout the day, not shorter three-minute hourly news bulletins.

f) Digital and on-demand content should form part of the basis of any analysis of output data.

3.11. Notwithstanding the above, the response also outlined the steps Manx Radio would proactively take from 20 April 2026 to what it claimed would strengthen its speech content provision, confirming changes to scheduled programming intended to increase speech output during peak hours. Manx Radio also advised that it continues to expand its digital and on-demand content.

3.12. Having reviewed Manx Radio's response, the Authority did not consider that the response demonstrated compliance with the speech content requirements set out in Licence Condition 18(1), as read with the Station Format. It did not provide alternative data regarding its speech output, nor did it offer an alternative methodology to assess the percentage of speech. The Authority was also of the view that the proposed changes would not adequately address the concerns that had been raised.

3.13. A copy of Manx Radio's response to the Authority's Public Service Broadcasting Analysis Report is attached as Annex 4:.

D. Complaints Regarding Compliance with Public Service Broadcasting Framework

3.14. While the abovementioned response from Manx Radio was being assessed, on 25 April 2026, the Authority received a formal complaint alleging a potential breach of the speech content obligation. The complaint raised concerns that the 40% speech content requirement may not be consistently met and provided an overview of monitoring they had undertaken on 20 April 2026. The complaint also raised questions regarding the assessment and treatment of speech, and the Authority's monitoring approach.

3.15. A copy of the complaint received is attached as Annex 5:.

E. Referral to Compliance and Enforcement

3.16. On consideration of Manx Radio's response to the Public Service Broadcasting Analysis Report and the complaint received, and the fact that the Authority had provided ample opportunity to resolve the matter collaboratively, the matter was referred to the Authority's Compliance and Enforcement section for formal investigation. The Authority wrote to Manx Radio on 06 May 2026 to inform it of the referral and provide a copy of Information Notice 10/26, which was to be published to formally notify interested stakeholders of the Authority's investigation of alleged non-compliance with Manx Radio's Licence Conditions relating to speech content, as read with the Station Format.

3.17. A copy of the Authority's correspondence and proposed Information Notice is attached as Annex 6:.

4. Investigation

4.1. On 14 May 2026, the Authority published Information Notice 10/26 concerning the Authority's investigation of alleged non-compliance with Manx Radio's Licence Conditions relating to speech content.

4.2. Details of the Authority's investigation are laid out below and a chronology summarising the sequence of events is also attached as Annex 2:.

A. Request for Information

4.3. On 22 May 2026, the Authority wrote to Manx Radio to confirm that it was formally investigating whether Manx Radio is complying with the relevant speech content requirements of the Licence. The Authority also formally requested information relevant to Manx Radio's monitoring of speech content, including evidence of monitoring, the current Statement of Programme Policy, applicable AM and FM schedules, and audio recordings of the relevant broadcasts.

4.4. A copy of the Authority's correspondence is attached as Annex 6:.

B. Request for Extension

4.5. On 22 May 2026, Manx Radio requested an extension to the deadline due to its planned two-week coverage of the TT. Under the circumstances the Authority considered it reasonable to grant the requested extension. A revised deadline of 15 June 2026 was agreed, and in the interim the Authority required that the requested audio recordings be provided earlier, where feasible.

4.6. A copy of the correspondence with Manx Radio is attached as Annex 7:.

C. Manx Radio Representation

4.7. On 4 June 2026, prior to the original deadline of 8 June, Manx Radio provided the requested audio. Audio recordings for broadcasts that fell outside the requested 6am to 7pm time period were also provided.

4.8. On 11 June 2026, Manx Radio provided its written response to the Authority, including its Statement of Programme Policy, AM and FM schedules, and formal representation to the

Authority's investigation. Manx Radio also provided its "Manx Radio Speech Assessment 2026", which outlined its monitoring methods and associated evidence.

4.9. A copy of the correspondence is attached as Annex 7:. Further details of Manx Radio's representations are outlined below.

Manx Radio Speech Assessment 2026 - Monitoring Framework

4.10. In its representation, Manx Radio asserted that the speech content requirement is not an absolute quota, and that the Station Format requires that speech content does not "*generally*" fall below the specified 40%. It further maintained that there is no direct correlation between the Station Format's 40% speech content requirement and the wider Public Service Broadcasting obligations established under the Communications Act 2021. Manx Radio contended that:

> "*any assessment of speech content should therefore be considered as one indicator of Public Service Broadcasting delivery rather than the sole determinant of compliance with the station's wider statutory remit*".

4.11. Manx Radio recognised that the Licence and Station Format contains provisions for speech content, and that the Licence also requires Manx Radio and the Authority to "*cooperate*" on how to assess the percentage of speech. Manx Radio maintained that assessment of speech content requires a pre-agreed methodology, as required under Condition 18(5), and noted that no formal methodology has been agreed.

> "[...] *the assessment of speech content requires the development of a pre-agreed methodology between the regulator and the licence holder and recognises that reasonable differences of interpretation may arise in the absence of such agreement.*
>
> *Manx Radio respectfully notes that, whilst the Station Format establishes a speech requirement, no formal methodology has been jointly agreed between the Authority and Manx Radio regarding how that requirement should be assessed.*"

4.12. Manx Radio asserted that in the absence of an agreed methodology, it had acted reasonably, responsibly and in good faith by adopting practical assessment

methodologies. Furthermore, any assessment of compliance should be viewed in the context of no agreement.

> *"In the absence of such agreement, Manx Radio has acted reasonably, responsibly and in good faith by adopting practical assessment methodologies designed to provide a fair and representative indication of overall speech performance [...]*
>
> *In the circumstances, Manx Radio submits that any assessment of compliance should be viewed in the context of the absence of the agreed methodology"*

Manx Radio's Submission on Monitoring Methods and Evidence

4.13. Manx Radio provided an overview of its historic, recent, and recently introduced AI-based monitoring methods. However, it did not provide detailed methodologies, audit trails, or underlying data sufficient to enable the Authority to verify the methods used or validate the results. Manx Radio outlined its interpretation of the speech content requirement, contending that assessment of limited periods may not be representative of annual speech performance. It maintained that speech should be assessed over representative periods using transparent and agreed methodologies that reflect the totality of its output and wider statutory obligations[5].

4.14. The submission also provided three screenshots to evidence the monitoring Manx Radio has previously undertaken, one for each method of monitoring (historic, recent, and AI-based)[6]. The screenshots provided did not contain a complete methodology, audit trail, or sufficient underlying data to substantiate Manx Radio's monitoring, which it had previously identified in its correspondence relating to the Authority's monitoring. No other evidence of Manx Radio's previous speech content monitoring was provided.

4.15. A full copy of Manx Radio's Speech Assessment 2026[7] is attached as Annex 8:.

[5] Page 8 of Manx Radio Speech Assessment 2026 (attached as Annex 8).
[6] Pages 4, 5, and 6 of Manx Radio Speech Assessment 2026 (attached as Annex 8).
[7] Pages 2-6 of Manx Radio's Speech Assessment 2026 (attached as Annex 8).

Manx Radio's Self-Assessment of Investigation Periods

4.16. Manx Radio's submission provided an analysis and assessment of speech content for the investigation periods identified by the Authority[8].

4.17. The assessment recorded an overall combined speech output of less than 40%. However, the submission does not sufficiently document the methodology or underlying data used to inform the hourly or overall percentages to enable the Authority to verify the results. Nor does it document how Manx Radio determined what constituted speech or non-speech or how it was monitored.

4.18. Manx Radio's overall analysis results recorded:

FM Service Speech Content:	51.51%
AM Service Speech Content:	20.00%
Combined AM / FM Average:	35.75%

4.19. Manx Radio also detailed combined speech output averages per weekday assessed, maintaining that as the licence applies the word "generally" to the requirement, its results must be considered collectively, rather than as individual compliance events.

20 April 2026:	35.01%
21 April 2026:	50.31%
22 April 2026:	38.49%
23 April 2026:	32.94%
24 April 2026:	33.26%
11 May 2026:	34.06%
12 May 2026:	36.21%
13 May 2026:	31.85%
14 May 2026:	32.44%
15 May 2026:	32.96%

4.20. Notwithstanding the above, Manx Radio's analysis concludes that its FM service delivered an average speech content of 51.51% during the investigation periods, which it believed provided strong evidence that Manx Radio continues to fulfil the spirit and substance of its

[8] Pages 9-11 of Manx Radio Speech Assessment 2026 (attached as Annex 8).

obligations. It was therefore of the view that its data did not support a conclusion that Manx Radio has failed generally to maintain the speech content requirement[9].

4.21. The analysis also detailed Manx Radio's assessment of the Licenced Service and Authority's previous monitoring[10], contending:

a) Speech assessment should be by reference to the Licenced Service as a whole, rather than isolated days, programmes or limited monitoring samples.

b) Compliance should be evaluated by considering whether the service "*generally*" maintains the speech-content levels contemplated by the Station Format. Manx Radio was further of the view that a two-week sample period, in isolation, cannot determine this.

c) The investigation period excludes a number of high speech content programmes and other Public Service Broadcasting outputs, including:

> "*Full three day Tynwald sittings;* Budget *coverage; General & Local Election Coverage; Major breaking news events; Motorsport and TT Festival coverage; Live commentary of all home FCIOM weekend football matches; Extended public affairs programming*"

d) A methodology for assessing speech content should:

> "*address matters including:*
>
> - *The period over which compliance is assessed*
> - *The extent to which sampled periods are representative of annual output*
> - *The treatment of different programme types*
> - *The treatment of public service content embedded within entertainment programming; and*
> - *The means by which the word "generally" is to be interpreted for compliance purposes"*

e) If the Authority considers that the Station Format should be interpreted differently to that of Manx Radio's historical understanding, the Authority is requested to:

[9] Page 9 of Manx Radio Speech Assessment 2026 (attached as Annex 8).
[10] Pages 12-13 of Manx Radio Speech Assessment 2026 (attached as Annex 8).

"*clarify as to:*

- *When that interpretation was adopted;*
- *How and when it has been communicated to the licence holder;*
- *Whether it has been applied consistently throughout the period since the current Licence was granted in 2015; and*
- *Whether previous compliance assessments have been conducted on the same basis.*"

f) Findings of non-compliance should be based on a clear and agreed methodology for assessing whether the Licenced Service generally satisfies the speech content requirements of the Station Format.

4.22. A full copy of Manx Radio's Speech Assessment 2026 is attached as Annex 8:.

Statement of Programme Policy

4.23. Manx Radio's Statement of Programme Policy ("the Statement") included Manx Radio's FM Programme Schedule, effective from 20 April 2026, which sets out Manx Radio's proposals for fulfilling its Public Service remit under the Act during the following year. Among other things, the Statement:

a) Confirms that Manx Radio's Programme Schedule has been designed to "*educate, inform and entertain*" and reflect the "*interests, identities, culture and democratic life of the Isle of Man*" as required under the Act. The Programme Schedule therefore includes "*programming that reflects the Island's culture, heritage, interests, language, events, music, community life and entertains the population*"[11].

b) Highlights the introduction of the "*Home Run*" programme with effect from 20 April 2026. It noted that the programme provides a dedicated platform for a range of audience requirements and "*increases the station's speech and overall community output during a key listening period*"[12].

c) Maintains that entertainment is "*a fundamental component of Public Service Broadcasting*". In particular, it maintained that:

[11] Pages 2-3 of Manx Radio Statement of Programme Policy 2026 (attached as Annex 9).
[12] Pages 4-5 of Manx Radio Statement of Programme Policy 2026 (attached as Annex 9).

"*high-quality music and entertainment programming is equally important in ensuring that the station remains relevant, accessible and appealing to all ages and backgrounds. Manx Radio therefore regards music provision not simply as a commercial or audience retention tool, but as an integral component of its Public Service Broadcasting remit*"[13].

d) Maintains that "*in assessing Public Service Broadcasting performance, it is therefore important that music output is considered not as an alternative to public service content, but as a core component of that content*"[14].

4.24. A copy of the Statement is attached as Annex 9:.

Programme Schedules

4.25. A copy of the FM programme schedule for April / May 2026, and AM programme schedules for the weeks commencing 20 April 2026 and 11 May 2026 were provided.

4.26. A copy of the schedules is attached as Annex 10:.

Written Representation

4.27. Manx Radio also submitted a written representation in respect of the Authority's investigation. The representation maintained that:

a) Manx Radio is meeting the Station Format's speech content requirements when assessed over a representative period and using an appropriate methodology[15].

b) The monitoring period selected by the Authority is not representative of Manx Radio's annual output.

c) No definitive finding of non-compliance can be sustained on the basis of the evidence and methodology currently identified.

d) Manx Radio actively monitors delivery of its Public Service Broadcasting obligations through programme policy reviews, editorial oversight, content review processes,

[13] Page 8 of Manx Radio Statement of Programme Policy 2026 (attached as Annex 9).
[14] Page 10 of Manx Radio Statement of Programme Policy 2026 (attached as Annex 9).
[15] Page 1 of Manx Radio Response to CURA Non-Compliance Investigation (attached as Annex 11).

manual speech assessments, programme log analysis, audience review, and AI-assisted monitoring systems[16].

e) Manx Radio's methodologies provide a more accurate indication of overall compliance than isolated monitoring periods[17].

f) The requested audio recordings relate to limited periods which may not accurately reflect Manx Radio's overall annual Public Service Broadcasting output and therefore should be assessed within the context of Manx Radio's wider annual service and statutory remit.

g) The selected periods exclude a range of speech-intensive content, including Tynwald sittings and parliamentary coverage, election coverage, House of Keys proceedings, TT and motorsport coverage, major sporting events, public information campaigns, outside broadcasts, emergency broadcasts, documentary programming, major community events, and cultural and national occasions[18].

h) The Licence requires programming to be considered "*as a whole*" and therefore envisages a holistic assessment of output over a representative period rather than conclusions being drawn from isolated sample weeks.

i) The current monitoring approach does not fully reflect the extensive speech-led public service output delivered across the year, and noted that many contain higher levels of speech than music-led programming[19].

j) The Licence does not impose an absolute daily 40% requirement. Rather, the obligation is qualified by the use of the word "*generally*", and inclusion of the definition confirms the requirement was intentionally framed as a qualified and contextual obligation.

k) The Licence does not support an interpretation where isolated periods that fall below 40% speech content automatically constitute non-compliance[20].

[16] Pages1-2 of Manx Radio Response to CURA Non-Compliance Investigation (attached as Annex 11).
[17] Page 2 of Manx Radio Response to CURA Non-Compliance Investigation (attached as Annex 11).
[18] Page 3 of Manx Radio Response to CURA Non-Compliance Investigation (attached as Annex 11).
[19] Page 5 of Manx Radio Response to CURA Non-Compliance Investigation (attached as Annex 11).
[20] Page 6 of Manx Radio Response to CURA Non-Compliance Investigation (attached as Annex 11).

l) The Licence requires cooperation between Manx Radio and the Authority to agree speech content assessment methodology. Manx Radio contended that no formal agreement exists to establish measurement criteria, categorisation of speech content, treatment of embedded content, treatment of sports commentary and outside broadcasts, averaging and assessment periods, and treatment of content delivered across associated services.

m) Manx Radio is committed to the development of a transparent and mutually agreed methodology for future assessment.

n) The Act establishes a significantly broader Public Service Broadcasting remit, than a simple mathematical assessment of speech percentages during selected sample periods. The statutory remit requires content that informs educates and entertains whilst reflecting the interests, culture and concerns of the Island community. Speech content forms an important element of that remit, but is not the entirety of it[21].

o) The Act includes entertainment as a core component of Public Service Broadcasting. As such, Manx Radio maintained that music programming is not ancillary to the public service remit but forms an integral part of it.

p) Maintaining audience appeal and commercial viability is an essential component of ensuring Manx Radio can fulfil its statutory Public Service obligations in a sustainable manner[22].

q) While the speech percentage requirement applies to the Licenced Broadcast Service, the wider Public Service Broadcasting remit is increasingly delivered through an integrated multi-platform environment. In addition to broadcast radio, it includes online streaming, podcasts, websites, video content, and social media[23].

r) The Licence and Station Format should be interpreted in a technology and service-neutral manner and in a manner that reflects modern Public Service Broadcasting. It should also be interpreted consistently with the wider objectives of the Act, which include informing, educating, entertaining, reflecting community interests, supporting democratic engagement, promoting culture and identity.

[21] Page 7 of Manx Radio Response to CURA Non-Compliance Investigation (attached as Annex 11).
[22] Page 8 of Manx Radio Response to CURA Non-Compliance Investigation (attached as Annex 11).
[23] Page 9 of Manx Radio Response to CURA Non-Compliance Investigation (attached as Annex 11).

s) Focussing exclusively on isolated speech content measurements risks placing a disproportionate emphasis on a single metric at the expense of the wider Public Service Broadcasting objectives[24].

t) Broadcasting complainants should ordinarily raise concerns with the broadcaster before regulatory intervention.

u) Greater transparency would assist Manx Radio's understanding of the investigation, including the nature of the complaint received by the Authority, the methodology applied by the Authority in assessing speech content, the rationale for the selected assessment periods, and the basis upon which compliance is assessed.

v) Manx Radio and the Authority should work collaboratively to establish a clear, transparent, and mutually agreed framework for future assessment[25].

4.28. A copy of Manx Radio's written representation is attached as Annex 11:.

[24] Page 10 of Manx Radio Response to CURA Non-Compliance Investigation (attached as Annex 11).
[25] Page 11 of Manx Radio Response to CURA Non-Compliance Investigation (attached as Annex 11).

5. Authority's Assessment

A. Manx Radio Representations

5.1. The Authority's consideration of Manx Radio's representations is set out below.

Treatment of "Generally"

5.2. Manx Radio maintained that the use of the word "generally" means that the 40% speech content requirement should not be treated as a rigid daily quota.

5.3. The Authority accepts that the word "generally", given its broad use, must be defined. In the Authority's view, the Station Format provides this definition by identifying the limited situations considered exceptions due to special circumstances, meaning they are not representative of 'normal' conditions. Specifically, Bank Holidays, special events such as the TT, and the period between Christmas and New Year[26] are expressly stated as exclusions in the Station Format.

5.4. The Authority therefore does not consider that "generally" permits speech output to fall below 40% on weekdays, especially as a matter of routine, or that under-delivery on some weekdays may be offset or "banked" against high speech output on other days, particularly those that fall on weekends or on the Station Format's specified exclusions. The Authority does accept that the speech content may vary at different times during a given day though; this allows flexibility to meet audience demand, but the day as a whole must meet the overall requirement.

5.5. Therefore, whilst Manx Radio's speech output may be higher during Tynwald sitting broadcasts, any possible increase in speech output as a result of the event cannot be relied upon to meet the requirement. Similarly, while Manx Radio also broadcasts sports programmes, which have higher speech content, its core sports programme, "Saturday Live", is broadcast on a Saturday afternoon, which also falls outside the parameters specified in the Station Format.

5.6. Manx Radio further maintained that periods of lower speech output should be considered alongside periods of higher speech output, and that a lower level in one period may be

[26] It should be noted that this is not an exhaustive list, it may include other 'special events' that could not reasonably be held to form part of 'regular programming'.

offset by higher speech output elsewhere. The Authority does not consider that this approach is supported by the Licence Condition or Station Format. In particular, the definition of "generally" does not permit repeated or sustained periods of below-requirement output to be offset by occasional periods of higher speech output. The Authority recognises that an isolated shortfall may arise in the operation of a broadcasting schedule. However, the question for determination is whether the Licenced Service complied with the 40% speech content requirement on the weekdays and hours to which the requirement applies; it is accepted that the actual amount of speech content will vary from day-to-day, and that even on occasion may dip below the prescribed amount. However, it is not an obligation that is applied hour-by-hour, but this is not the same as permitting the licensee to 'bank' hours from days it happens to over-perform against its obligation.

5.7. The Authority has therefore considered whether the Licenced Service, viewed across the assessment periods and having regard to its normal schedule, provided the required level of speech content. The evidence indicates that it does not.

Requirement for Cooperation

5.8. The Authority has considered Manx Radio's position that Condition 18(5) requires the Authority and Manx Radio to cooperate on how the percentage of speech specified in the Station Format is to be assessed, and that no formal methodology has been jointly agreed. The Authority accepts that Condition 18(5) envisages cooperation between both parties in relation to assessment of performance against licence obligations. However, the Authority does not consider that the absence of a jointly agreed methodology prevents it from assessing compliance with Condition 18(1), or from discharging its statutory and regulatory functions.

5.9. In the Authority's view, Condition 18(5) is understood by both parties as a procedural and cooperative obligation. It requires both parties to engage meaningfully and constructively on how speech content should be assessed. It does not qualify, suspend, or disapply the separate obligation under Condition 18(1) and the associated Station Format to ensure that speech content does not generally fall below 40% of total output between 6am and 7pm on weekdays.

5.10. Accepting that the obligation rests with both parties, the Authority holds that during the course of this matter, it has made reasonable attempts to engage with Manx Radio on the assessment of speech content. This includes the discussions around the initial monitoring exercise, the 21 January 2026 meeting, the March 2026 Programme Analysis Report and subsequent correspondence that followed. Most notable among the foregoing is the meeting on 21 January 2026, which the Authority organised specifically to discuss the issue of monitoring speech content and remedying the issues that had been identified. The Authority is of the view that it tried to meet the spirit and letter of the 'cooperation condition', but being unable to reach a consensus does not prevent it from investigating the matter further (noting the licence condition requires cooperation, not agreement).

5.11. It is noted that Manx Radio has provided limited information about its own monitoring practices, but it has not provided a clearly documented alternative methodology, supported by underlying data, that would enable the Authority to conclude that the Licence requirement has been met during the investigation periods, or any other period. Ultimately, rather than working cooperatively, at each opportunity, Manx Radio has simply challenged most aspects of the Authority's approach.

5.12. The Authority therefore considers that, in light of the circumstances, it was reasonable and necessary for the Authority to apply an assessment methodology as it saw fit for the purposes of this investigation. That methodology, which was also set out in the March 2026 Report, is set out in Annex 12: of this document and is based on the assessment of the actual licenced broadcast output during the relevant periods. The Authority considers that this approach is transparent, evidence based, and sufficient to allow a determination to be made on whether Manx Radio has complied with Condition 18(1). Importantly, it can also be replicated to verify the results.

5.13. Accordingly, the Authority does not accept that the absence of a jointly agreed methodology prevents an assessment of speech content or a finding of non-compliance.

Evidential Transparency and Independent Sampling

5.14. Manx Radio raised concerns regarding evidential transparency and independent verification of the Authority's previous analysis. Specifically, Manx Radio asserted that the analysis did not provide sufficient detail regarding the sampling framework, selection criteria, underlying programme logs, listening records, coding and classification rules,

consistency checks, or audit trail, to enable the findings to be independently verified or replicated. Manx Radio further contended that limited sample periods and standardised assumptions should not be treated as determinative of a finding of non-compliance.

5.15. The Authority acknowledges Manx Radio's submission; however, the formal investigation did not rely upon sampling within the investigation periods. Rather, the Authority analysed the entirety of the actual AM and FM broadcast output during the relevant periods, using audio recordings, schedules and other information provided by Manx Radio. The Authority's investigation replicated the methodology used for its previous monitoring exercise, as detailed in the March 2026 Analysis Report. The details of the Authority's methodology were explained to Manx Radio during the initial monitoring exercise, at the meeting between Manx Radio and the Authority on 21 January 2026. It was also detailed in the Report attached as Annex 3:, which was provided to Manx Radio on 3 March 2026. While Manx Radio subsequently questioned the methodology and the extent to which the results should be treated as determinative, it did not provide an alternative methodology which it considered should be applied to determine compliance with Condition 18(1). In light of the foregoing, the Authority considers the methodology implemented to be sufficiently transparent, consistent, and reproducible to provide an appropriate basis for assessing compliance.

5.16. The Authority has also retained the underlying assessment data to support its investigation findings, including the assessment spreadsheets setting out the classification and calculation of speech and non-speech content. This material forms part of the evidential basis for the Authority's findings and is attached as Annex 12:. The Authority therefore holds that its formal investigation was based on identifiable broadcast material, recorded assessment data, and a transparent calculation process, rather than on extrapolated or indicative sampling assumptions.

Nature of the Authority's March 2026 Analysis

5.17. Manx Radio submitted that the Authority's March 2026 Analysis Report was a preliminary and indicative monitoring exercise and should not be treated as a definitive compliance assessment.

5.18. The Authority accepts that the Report was preliminary and does not rely upon it alone to establish non-compliance. However, it is noted that the results of the formal compliance

investigation were consistent with the concerns identified in the initial monitoring exercise and therefore corroborated the earlier assessment that speech content was below the required level. The results were also consistent with Manx Radio's own assessment report insofar as the combined AM and FM speech content was also found to be below 40% for the investigation periods.

5.19. For the avoidance of doubt, the present determination is based on the formal compliance investigation, including the actual broadcast recordings, schedules, and other information provided by Manx Radio for the purposes of the investigation, not on the basis of the monitoring outlined in the March Report.

Representativeness of the Investigation Periods

5.20. Manx Radio maintained that limited investigation periods cannot be relied upon to establish annual compliance.

5.21. However, the Authority does not rely on the investigation periods as a model of Manx Radio's entire annual output. Rather it has assessed the actual broadcast output during the identified weekdays and hours, as per the requirements of the Station Format. The results confirm that Manx Radio's speech content was below the 40% speech content requirement on eight out of the ten days assessed.

5.22. The Authority accepts it is technically not investigating Manx Radio's annual compliance; however, it has extrapolated its investigation results to provide an indicative average daily speech content figure across a year to illustrate the potential effect of its current programming on speech content. These extrapolated results have not been used to inform the Authority's investigation decision, rather they should be used as a tool for assessing programme policy. In any event, the fact that for 80% of the monitored period the speech content obligation was not met is sufficient evidence to make a finding of non-compliance.

Speech Percentage as a Metric to Assess Delivery of Public Service Broadcasting

5.23. Manx Radio submitted that speech percentage is a limited quantitative measure which does not necessarily reflect the quality of content, type of content, relevance or public value required under its wider Public Service Broadcasting obligations.

5.24. The Authority accepts that the speech content percentage is not, of itself, a complete measure of Manx Radio's Public Service Broadcasting performance, but it was never held as such either. The Authority's investigation has not been to establish Manx Radio's compliance with the wider Public Service Broadcasting obligations; rather whether Manx Radio complied with the express speech content requirement as required under Licence Condition 18(1) and the Station Format. The Authority must therefore assess compliance with that requirement as it currently applies.

5.25. Any wider consideration of whether the regulatory framework should be amended is a separate policy or licencing matter. The Authority has been engaging with Manx Radio, industry, and other stakeholders on the form and effect of Public Service Broadcasting licencing, and this will continue to be the case.

Digital, Online, and On-Demand Content

5.26. Manx Radio has argued that digital, online, and on-demand audio content should be taken into account when assessing its output.

5.27. The Authority acknowledges that audience behaviour is changing, and that online streaming, podcasts, website content, video content, and social media may form part of the wider way in which Manx Radio engages with audiences in the Isle of Man. The Authority also accepts that such content may provide some public value and may be relevant when considering Manx Radio's wider public service role. However, the Authority does not accept that this alters the Authority's compliance assessment for speech content provision. The issue in this investigation is not whether Manx Radio has delivered its Public Service Broadcasting obligations or speech content obligations across all available platforms, but whether it has complied with the specific speech content requirements as they relate to Regulated Activities (which are covered by the licence and legislation).

5.28. The obligation under Condition 18(1), as read with the Station Format, applies to the Licenced Service, which the Station Format identifies as the licenced AM and FM broadcast frequencies; it does not extend to online, digital, or on-demand content. The Authority cannot therefore consider digital, online, or on-demand content to offset broadcast content, nor accept it as a remedy to otherwise satisfy the speech content requirement. Whilst such content may be relevant to Manx Radio's broader activities, it is not relevant for

the purposes of assessing compliance with the 40% speech content requirements in this investigation.

5.29. The question for the Authority is therefore whether the Licenced broadcast service complies with its Licence Condition, not whether Manx Radio's wider portfolio of audio output contains sufficient speech content.

5.30. Should Manx Radio wish for the Station Format or Licence Conditions to be amended to reflect digital, online, or on-demand output in light of changing audience engagement, its submissions may be relevant in Public Service Broadcasting Licence reviews, which have been and continue to be subject to public consultation.

Inclusion of Manx Radio Gold

5.31. Manx Radio made representations concerning the status of Manx Radio Gold within the Licenced Service, maintaining that it is not a separate licenced broadcasting service.

5.32. The Authority agrees with Manx Radio's representation and considers that Manx Radio Gold is broadcast on Manx Radio's AM frequency. As explained in paragraphs 2.15 - 2.16, both Manx Radio's AM and FM services form the Licenced Service. Therefore, as had been previously concluded by the Authority, Manx Radio Gold does not constitute a separate Licensed Service and therefore its output contributes to the speech content requirement.

Wider Public Service Broadcasting Contribution

5.33. Manx Radio referred to the wider public service contribution of its programming and the broad range of content variety it provides.

5.34. The Authority recognises that wider contribution; it does not, however, displace the specific speech content requirement contained in the Licence. The question for determination is whether the Licenced Service achieved the level of speech content specified in the Licence.

Commercial Sustainability, Staffing and Funding

5.35. Manx Radio made representations concerning commercial sustainability, audience requirements, staffing, operational considerations, and Public Service Broadcasting funding, including references to sections 64 and 65 of the Communications Act 2021.

5.36. The Authority has taken those circumstances into account when considering the proportionality, timing, and nature of any appropriate regulatory response. They do not, however, provide a basis for treating the 40% requirement as optional or applying a lower compliance threshold. The requirement forms part of the Licence and is not expressed to be conditional upon Manx Radio's commercial or financial circumstances. However, acknowledging the production and delivery of speech content is more costly than music content, it is noted that Manx Radio receives funding from Treasury to ensure it is able to meet its Public Service remit, including the delivery of its 40% speech content output.

Statement of Programme Policy, Music and Entertainment

5.37. The Authority has considered the Statement of Programme Policy insofar as it is relevant to the present investigation. Specifically, whether speech content on the Licenced AM and FM services, assessed as a total output between 6am and 7pm on weekdays, should not generally fall below 40%. The wider public service value of music, entertainment, digital output, or other programming does not, of itself determine whether content is 'speech' for the purposes of that requirement. However, it could be held that the Statement is relevant context for Manx Radio's position that certain programmes, including "Home Run", and public service content embedded within entertainment-led output, should be taken into account when assessing speech content.

5.38. In reality, this is a moot point; the Authority's investigation of the assessment periods considered the actual speech content produced by different programme types. This included speech-led news and current affairs type programming such as "Home Run", entertainment style programming, and music-led programming where speech content was lowest. The Authority's assessment indicates that different programme types made materially different contributions to the overall speech percentage:

a) Public Service Broadcasting programming, such as parliamentary, news, and Manx Gaelic programmes, contributed a higher proportion of speech content;

b) Entertainment programmes contributed to speech where they contained presenter discussion;

c) AM service entertainment programmes contributed significantly less speech than FM service entertainment programmes, leading to a focus on Manx Radio Gold as potentially the root of the issue at hand; and,

d) Music-led programmes with no presenter contributed to speech only to the extent that they contained identifiable spoken elements such as news bulletins, travel, weather, and public information (which are covered by a) above).

5.39. Consequently, while Manx Radio considers music and entertainment programming to be part of its wider Public Service Broadcasting remit, such content only forms part of the Authority's investigation to the extent that they contribute to speech output[27]. The Authority accepts that "Home Run" was introduced to increase speech. However, the Authority's assessment, which is based on all actual speech broadcast and included the "Home Run" broadcasts, finds that overall speech was still below the 40% requirement on eight out of ten weekdays assessed.

B. Conclusion

5.40. The Authority has carefully considered Manx Radio's representations in full, including its comments on the absence of an agreed speech assessment methodology, the representativeness of investigation periods, the wider Public Service Broadcasting remit, the relevance of digital and on-demand output, the treatment of Manx Radio Gold, and its interpretation of the applicable regulatory obligations. It is acknowledged that these matters are relevant to the broader context in which Manx Radio delivers its wider Public Service Broadcasting remit, however, the issue for determination in this investigation is narrower; whether Manx Radio is complying with the specific speech content requirement contained within Licence Condition 18(1) and Station Format during the relevant investigation periods.

5.41. In particular, the Authority assessed actual AM and FM services broadcast output, as identified in the Licence and Station Format. Manx Radio Gold, being broadcast on Manx Radio's AM service, formed part of that assessment. Furthermore, the Authority considers that Manx Radio's online, digital and on-demand content cannot be relied upon to satisfy a requirement that applies solely to licenced "broadcast" services, and that both its AM and FM outputs form part of that service for assessment purposes.

5.42. While Manx Radio's representations explain its position and provide relevant context, they do not alter the Authority's assessment that the required level of speech content was not

[27] What constitutes 'Public Service Broadcasting' is a separate question and one that is far beyond the scope of this investigation; the findings in this matter should not be seen as inferences of the Authority's wider views on public service broadcasting.

met during the periods examined. Accordingly, while the Authority has taken Manx Radio's representations fully into account, it remains of the preliminary view that, on the balance of probabilities, the evidence available supports a finding of non-compliance with Condition 18(1) of the Licence, as read with the Station Format. The following chapter provides more explicit details of the Authority's findings.

6. Investigation and Monitoring – Detailed Findings

A. Assessment Methodology

6.1. The Authority's methodology for the investigation's assessment of speech is consistent with the methodology implemented by the Authority for previous speech monitoring activities. Details of the investigation methodology, raw monitoring data, and analysis are attached as Annex 12:.

B. Results: Week Beginning 20 April 2026 (Tynwald Week)

6.2. Table 1 below details the daily speech output that was observed for Manx Radio's AM, FM, and combined AM and FM services from Monday 20 April 2026 to Friday 24 April 2026.

Date	AM	FM	AM and FM
Monday, 20 April	26.15%	49.78%	37.96%
Tuesday, 21 April	55.99%	53.85%	54.92%
Wednesday, 22 April	32.21%	52.28%	42.24%
Thursday, 23 April	19.87%	52.82%	36.35%
Friday, 24 April	23.11%	53.78%	38.45%

Table 1: Speech Content Output 20 April 2026 - 24 April 2026

6.3. Taking the FM service in isolation, the Table 1 results indicate that daily speech content was consistently above 49.78%, almost 10 percentage points higher than the 40% requirement.

6.4. With the exception of 21 April 2026, Table 1 also indicates that the AM service was consistently below 32.21%. Furthermore, on days with no Tynwald broadcasts (20 April 2026, 23 April 2026, and 24 April 2026), speech content on the AM service was found to be 23.63 to 32.95 percentage points lower than the speech content broadcast on the FM service.

6.5. During the week commencing 20 April 2026, Tynwald broadcast for a total of 5.5 hours on 21 April 2026. This was split into two programmes of 3 hours and 2.5 hours, with a resumption of Manx Radio Gold programming while Tynwald recessed. Tynwald also broadcast for 2 hours on 22 April 2026. The Tynwald programme broadcasts had the effect of raising the AM service speech output, and therefore the combined AM and FM services speech output on these days was raised to 54.92% and 42.24% respectively.

6.6. Overall, the combined AM and FM service result was therefore found to meet the 40% speech content requirement on Tynwald sitting days (21 April 2026 and 22 April 2026). However, the results also indicate that the combined AM and FM services did not meet the

requirement on 20 April 2026, 23 April 2026, and 24 April 2026, where 36.35% to 38.45% speech content output was found.

6.7. The Authority's results in Table 1 align with the results from Manx Radio's self-assessment of the combined AM and FM speech content submitted in its representation. Manx Radio's results, detailed in Table 2 below, also indicate that, with the exception of 21 April 2026 (a full Tynwald sitting broadcast day), speech content was less than 40% each day.

Date	AM & FM
20 April 2026:	35.01%
21 April 2026:	50.31%
22 April 2026:	38.49%
23 April 2026:	32.94%
24 April 2026:	33.26%

Table 2: Manx Radio Self-Assessment Results 20 April 2026 - 24 April 2026

C. Results: Week Beginning 11 May 2026 (House of Keys Week)

6.8. Table 3 below details the daily speech output that was observed for Manx Radio's AM, FM, and combined AM and FM services from 11 May 2026 to 15 May 2026.

Date	AM	FM	AM & FM
Monday, 11 May	25.06%	49.42%	37.24%
Tuesday, 12 May	28.40%	51.38%	39.89%
Wednesday, 13 May	19.94%	53.78%	36.86%
Thursday, 14 May	20.38%	51.22%	35.80%
Friday, 15 May	21.57%	51.09%	36.33%

Table 3: Speech Content Output 11 May 2026 - 15 May 2026

6.9. Taking the FM service in isolation, the Table 3 results indicate that daily speech content output was consistently above 49.42%, at least 9 percentage points higher than the 40% requirement. The level of speech content was consistent with the April week results detailed in Table 1, showing little deviation from the mean. The results detailed in Table 3 also indicate that the AM service speech output was consistently below 28.40%, meaning it did not meet the combined AM and FM 40% speech requirement on any day during the observed May week. The percentages recorded on Monday, Thursday, and Friday were consistent with the same weekdays from the April week monitored.

6.10. During this week, a House of Keys programme was broadcast for 1 hour on 12 May 2026. This had the effect of slightly raising the AM service speech output; however, the combined AM and FM services speech output was still under the 40% requirement on this day. Therefore, even with the increased speech output from the House of Keys broadcast, the

combined AM and FM services result did not meet the 40% speech content requirement on any day during the May week observed (11 May 2026 to 15 May 2026).

6.11. The Authority's results in Table 3 align with the results from Manx Radio's self-assessment of the combined AM and FM speech content submitted in its representation. Manx Radio's results, detailed in Table 4 below, also indicate that speech content was less than 40% each day.

Date	AM & FM
11 May 2026:	34.06%
12 May 2026:	36.21%
13 May 2026:	31.85%
14 May 2026:	32.44%
15 May 2026:	32.96%

Table 4: Manx Radio Self-Assessment Results 11 May 2026 - 15 May 2026

D. Results: Estimate for Non-Parliamentary Broadcast Week

6.12. The week commencing 20 April 2026 included Tynwald programming, and the week commencing 11 May 2026 included House of Keys programming. As the Authority did not monitor a week that contained no parliamentary programming, it also undertook a supplementary analysis to illustrate the potential effect of parliamentary programming on speech content output. The results from this analysis are detailed in Table 5 below. It does not form part of the assessment of the actual broadcasts aired and is not relied upon as a separate compliance test or finding of non-compliance. The average daily figures are set out below and are provided for explanatory purposes only.

Day	AM	FM	AM & FM
Monday	25.61%	49.60%	37.60%
Tuesday	20.53%	52.61%	36.57%
Wednesday	19.94%	53.03%	36.48%
Thursday	20.13%	52.02%	36.07%
Friday	22.34%	52.44%	37.39%

Table 5: Estimated Speech Content Output for a Non-Parliamentary Broadcast Week

6.13. The Table 5 results illustrate that, as expected, Tynwald programming produces a substantial increase in speech content on days when it is broadcast, which in turn highlights the impact of Manx Radio Gold on the overall speech content figures.

6.14. Tynwald programmes are broadcast regularly; Question Time weekly for House of Keys, and Tynwald for up to 3 days monthly. They are therefore a recurring feature of the normal

annual schedule, rather than one-off exceptional events. Accordingly, the Authority's view is that such days fall within the "generally" definition.

E. Overall Results

6.15. Table 6 below details the overall speech content results for each week observed, and the estimated speech content result for a non-parliamentary broadcast week.

Period	AM	FM	AM & FM	Parliamentary programming
w/c 20 April 2026	31.47%	52.50%	41.98%	Tynwald
w/c 11 May 2026	23.07%	51.38%	37.22%	House of Keys
Non-parliamentary week (estimate)	22.09%	51.94%	37.02%	None

Table 6: Overall Weekly Speech Content Output

6.16. The figures detailed in Table 6 are aggregate figures provided for explanatory purposes only and do not constitute separate AM, FM, or weekly compliance tests.

6.17. The results demonstrate a substantial difference between the levels of speech content on the separate AM and FM services. In particular, the materially lower level of speech on the AM service was a significant contributor to the combined Licenced Service falling below 40% on the investigated weekdays; this draws particular attention to the inclusion of the Manx Radio Gold service on AM. The results also align with the results of the Authority's previous monitoring exercise, which used the same methodology, and estimated a combined AM and FM speech content for Tynwald weeks to be 41%, 35% for House of Keys weeks, and 34% for non-parliamentary weeks[28].

6.18. The core finding that can be drawn from the analysis is that the Manx Radio Gold service is not compatible with the speech requirements in the licence; whilst its impact could potentially be offset by increasing speech content on the FM service, it is more logical to seek to restrict the Manx Radio Gold service on the AM service.

6.19. For illustrative purposes, a comparison of the average speech content results per programme type is provided in Table 7 below.

[28] Paragraph 3.12 of March 2026 Public Service Broadcaster Programme Analysis Report (Document 04/26).

Programme Type	Average Speech
Community Entertainment & Events	28.13%
Manx Radio Gold (music-based presenter-less)	20.83%
News / Current Affairs / Topical Speech / Audience Engagement	61.40%
Public Service Broadcasting (Parliamentary Programming)	100.00%
Public Service Broadcasting (Manx)	77.04%
Public Service Broadcasting (All Other Arts, Culture & Music)	95.63%
Sport	95.42%

Table 7: Average Speech Content Results by Programme Type

F. Conclusion

6.20. The 40% speech content requirement applies to all Licenced Services each weekday between 6am and 7pm, subject to the exclusions contained in the Station Format's definition of "generally". Neither investigation period contained a weekday falling within those exclusions.

6.21. The methodology used assumptions that calculated an optimistic, best-case scenario. For example, sponsorship credits and programme / promotional trails were counted as speech, even though the Station Format explicitly excludes them from speech content[29].

6.22. The combined AM and FM services result fell below 40% on eight of the ten weekdays assessed. Had the Authority taken a less permissive approach, the 40% requirement would likely not have been achieved on any day other than Tuesday, 21 April 2026, a full Tynwald sitting broadcast day.

6.23. FM service speech content exceeded 40% on each of the ten weekdays, while AM service speech content was materially lower most days and was the principal contributor to the combined result falling below 40%. With the exception of Tynwald broadcast days, this is due to the scheduled AM programmes containing predominantly music and very little speech.

6.24. The Authority has also considered Manx Radio's own speech content calculations. Those calculations record an overall combined AM and FM services average of 35.75% across the assessment period, while also identifying separate AM and FM averages. The Authority

[29] This should not be read as the Authority endorsing such content as 'public service broadcasting' content, it is simply a demonstration that even when the Authority adopted the most permissive approach it could, the licence obligation was not met.

notes that, even on Manx Radio's own combined calculation, the speech content was below 40% across the assessment period, with the exception of 21 April 2026, a Tynwald programme day. The Authority's assessment is based on the evidence and methodology detailed in the previous sections, and data contained within Annex 12:. Whilst Manx Radio has not supplied the Authority with the same, the Authority remains of the view that its approach provides a transparent and reproducible basis for assessing the amount of speech content actually broadcast during the relevant periods.

6.25. The Authority's assessment therefore concludes that Manx Radio has failed to comply with Condition 18(1) of the Licence, in relation to speech content, as read with the Station Format, on eight of the ten weekdays investigated.

6.26. The significance of the results is not that individual programmes or individual days fell marginally below 40%. The Authority accepts that some variation in speech output is inherent in a broadcasting schedule. The concern is the repeated nature of the shortfall across the monitoring period.

6.27. The Authority does not consider those instances of non-compliance to be isolated or exceptional. They occurred across both of the April and May investigation periods and included three of the five weekdays in the first period and all five weekdays in the second. Six of the eight instances fell on each Monday, Thursday, and Friday, days which contained no parliamentary programming. Despite containing some speech-led parliamentary programming for House of Keys during the second week, it was still not sufficient to meet the 40% threshold.

6.28. As called out above, the inclusion of the Manx Radio Gold programming on the AM service can be identified as the root of the current issue; it has easily the lowest observable speech content across the portfolio of content that is otherwise, or has historically been, carried on the AM service. It is therefore the target of the Authority's proposed Direction to remedy the non-compliance.

6.29. A full copy of the Authority's assessment methodology, raw monitoring data and analysis are attached as Annex 12:.

7. Decision

7.1. The Authority determines that, on the balance of probabilities, Manx Radio failed to comply with Condition 18(1) of its Licence as the combined AM and FM speech content was below 40% on eight of the ten weekdays assessed during the two investigation assessment periods.

7.2. Furthermore, the Authority determines that this failure is continuing; the Authority presented its concerns and previous speech content monitoring results to Manx Radio prior to the Authority's investigation, and Manx Radio has not implemented sufficient remedies to ensure it meets its requirement.

7.3. In reaching this determination, the evidence considered by the Authority includes previous engagement with Manx Radio on the matter, including on the March 2026 Analysis Report, audio recordings provided by Manx Radio, the AM and FM programme schedules, Manx Radio's own speech assessment and written representations, and the Authority's analysis of the broadcast outputs, which:

a) Assessed AM and FM together because the speech content requirement applies to the Licenced Service as a whole;

b) Included parliamentary programming actually broadcast and treated it as speech;

c) Counted sponsorship credits and promotional trails as speech, thereby applying a methodology favourable to Manx Radio.

8. Proposed Regulatory Response

A. Regulatory Powers and Enforcement

8.1. Where the Authority considers that a Licenceholder is not complying with a condition of its Licence, the Act provides a range of regulatory and enforcement powers.

8.2. Section 35 gives the Authority power to issue a written Direction requiring a Licenceholder to take specified action in respect of a regulated activity or to comply with the Act or a condition of its Licence.

8.3. The Authority may also consider other relevant enforcement powers under section 128 concerning financial penalties and shortening of a licence period, or section 129 concerning suspension or revocation of a broadcasting licence.

8.4. The Authority's provisional view is that a financial penalty, shortening of the Licence, suspension, or revocation would be disproportionate at this stage. However, having determined that Manx Radio has failed to comply with Licence Condition 18(1) as read with the Station Format, the Authority considers that a Direction under section 35 would be an appropriate and proportionate response as it would secure compliance with the Licence requirement going forward.

B. Proposed Direction

The Proposal

8.5. Subject to consideration of any representations made by Manx Radio, the Authority proposes to Direct Radio Manx Limited ("Manx Radio") to curtail the inclusion of Manx Radio Gold on its AM service, during relevant hours, to the extent necessary to provide at least 40% speech content across its combined AM and FM services in accordance with Licence Condition 18(1) and the Station Format[30].

[30] It should be noted that the Authority is of the view that determining what should replace Manx Radio Gold on the AM service is a matter for Manx Radio to determine; the Authority does not involve itself in editorial or content matters. It would, however, hope that in the spirit of Public Service Broadcasting that new and unique content would be found or developed as a replacement.

8.6. The Authority proposes to direct Manx Radio to conclude the implementation of its increases to speech content output as soon as possible and in any case by no later than 28 calendar days from the implementation date of the Direction.

Next Steps and Representation Period for Proposed Direction

8.7. Section 35 of the Act provides the basis for the Authority to issue written directions to a licenceholder. A direction may require a person to take specified action in respect of any regulated activity. Any such direction must be issued in accordance with the Procedural Fairness Requirements laid out under sections 26 to 30 of the Act.

8.8. The Procedural Fairness Requirements provide that the Authority must issue a "Proposal Notice" stating the proposal, the reasons for the proposal, and the period within which the licenceholder may make written representations to the Authority about the proposal. In line with established precedent, the Authority is allowing 28 days for representations to be made in respect of this Notice.

8.9. Written representations in respect of the Authority's proposal may be submitted to enquiries@cura.im.

8.10. Once the representation period has ended, or the relevant licenceholder has given the Authority its written representation about this Proposal Notice or confirmed that it will not be making any representations, the Authority will consider any representations made to it in forming its final decision in respect of the proposed direction.

C. Consideration of Proposed Regulatory Response

8.11. In considering what sanction would be appropriate and making its proposed direction, the Authority has taken account of the following factors:

Seriousness and Duration

8.12. The investigation established shortfalls on eight of the ten weekdays assessed. The Authority considers the repeated nature of those shortfalls relevant to the seriousness of the compliance issue. Furthermore, the Authority's prior monitoring highlighted similar shortfalls, and despite multiple attempts to engage with Manx Radio on the matter, Manx Radio has failed to remedy its low speech content output since it was first brought to its

attention in January 2026. The repeated and ongoing nature of non-compliance with the speech content requirement has therefore been treated as an aggravating factor.

Gain

8.13. The Authority has not identified evidence of any specific financial or other quantifiable gain attributable to the non-compliance. Gain has therefore not been treated as an aggravating factor.

8.14. The Authority has considered whether the commercial operation of Manx Radio Gold on its AM frequency could have affected competing commercial broadcasters by providing a lower level of speech content than required. However, the focus of the Authority's investigation has been on the delivery of the combined AM and FM speech content requirement. The Authority has not identified evidence of specific or quantifiable competitive harm and has therefore not treated this as an aggravating factor in determining the proposed regulatory response.

Consumer Harm

8.15. The Authority has not identified evidence of specific actual financial loss to consumers arising from the non-compliance.

8.16. The principal potential harm is the failure to provide the level of speech content required as part of Manx Radio's Public Service Broadcasting obligations.

8.17. Consumer harm has therefore not been treated as an aggravating factor in this case.

Steps to Prevent Breach

8.18. The Authority previously reported preliminary findings of low speech content and attempted to engage with Manx Radio to remedy the matter prior to the Authority's investigation.

8.19. The Authority has taken into account the changes made by Manx Radio from 20 April 2026, since this engagement took place (as detailed in Manx Radio's representations), which it maintained increased its speech content provision. However, the changes did not meaningfully increase Manx Radio's speech content output, and the subsequent formal

compliance investigation demonstrated that the required speech content level is still not achieved on eight out of the ten weekdays assessed.

8.20. The Authority therefore concludes that the breach is continuing and, therefore, has been treated as an aggravating factor.

Prior Knowledge and Awareness

8.21. The Authority considers that Manx Radio was aware of its concerns regarding speech content before the investigation assessment periods.

8.22. Those concerns were raised with Manx Radio on multiple occasions between December 2025 and March 2026.

8.23. Rather than address or constructively engage with the Authority on the matter, the Authority holds that Manx Radio has challenged the Authority's approach.

8.24. Manx Radio's prior knowledge and awareness of its speech content requirements and continuing breach of its requirements has therefore been treated as an aggravating factor.

Cooperation

8.25. The Authority has considered the extent to which Manx Radio engaged with the Authority following the initial monitoring exercise and the concerns raised regarding compliance with the 40% speech-content requirement.

8.26. The Authority recognises that Manx Radio subsequently provided information, recordings, and written representations and engaged with the formal compliance investigation. The Authority therefore does not consider that Manx Radio failed to cooperate with the investigation in a procedural sense.

8.27. At the meeting on 21 January 2026, the Authority sought to discuss its preliminary findings, the basis for the identified shortfall, and potential mechanisms by which Manx Radio could address the issue and regularise its compliance. The meeting did not resolve the Authority's concerns or result in agreement on the methodology or remedial steps to address the identified shortfall.

8.28. The Authority considers this relevant because Manx Radio had been given an early opportunity to address the Authority's concerns before the matter proceeded to a formal compliance investigation. However, Manx Radio did not accept the Authority's findings nor did it take the opportunity to regularise its affairs. Changes to Manx Radio's programme schedule were identified from April 2026 through the Authority's monitoring, but they were ineffective in addressing the non-compliance. Nevertheless, the formal compliance investigation demonstrated that the required level of speech content was still not achieved on the majority of weekdays assessed.

8.29. The Authority does not treat Manx Radio's disagreement with the Authority's methodology or conclusions as, in itself, a failure to cooperate. However, the Authority considers it relevant that, despite the many opportunities provided to address the Authority's concerns and discuss potential remedial steps, those concerns were not resolved, and the matter subsequently progressed to formal compliance investigation.

9. Next Steps

9.1. Manx Radio is now duly notified of the Authority's Preliminary Assessment, Decision, and Proposed Direction intended to remedy its findings.

9.2. In line with established precedent, the Authority is allowing a period of 28 days from the date of issue of this document to make representations on this Decision and Proposed Direction. Any such representations are to be made in writing and may be submitted to enquiries@cura.im.

9.3. In accordance with the Authority's Decision-Making Framework, Manx Radio may seek review or appeal by the Authority's Board in the first instance. Any representations received will be assessed by the Board of the Communications and Utilities Regulatory Authority before issuing its Confirmation Decision and Direction. The Act also provides statutory rights of appeal in relation to specified decisions, including a right of appeal to the High Court under section 140.

9.4. In the event that no representations are received, the Confirmation Decision and Direction will automatically issue 28 days from the date of this notice. Manx Radio will be duly notified of the Board's determination in writing. Appeal of the Confirmation Decision and Direction would be by way of the High Court and must be made within 28 days of the date on which the Authority's Confirmation Decision and Direction is made.

Contact Details:

Communications and Utilities Regulatory Authority
Ground Floor, Murray House
Mount Havelock
Douglas, Isle of Man
IM1 2SF
Tel: 01624 677022

Email: enquiries@cura.im
Web: www.cura.im

Annex 1: Licence Condition 18 and Station Format



Annex 1.pdf

Annex 2: Chronology of Events



Annex 2.pdf

Annex 3: Public Service Broadcasting Programme Analysis Report



Annex 3.pdf

Annex 4: Response to Public Service Broadcasting Programme Analysis Report



Annex 4.pdf

Annex 5: Complaint to Authority



Annex 5_Redacted.pdf

Annex 6: Investigation Correspondence

Annex 6.pdf

Annex 7: Manx Radio Extension Request and Representations

Annex 7.pdf

Annex 8: Manx Radio's Speech Assessment 2026

Annex 8.pdf

Annex 9: Manx Radio's Statement of Programme Policy

Annex 9.pdf

Annex 10: Manx Radio's Programme Schedules

Annex 10.pdf

Annex 11: Manx Radio's Formal Representation



Annex 11.pdf

Annex 12: Authority's Investigation Assessment Methodology, Data and Analysis



Annex 12 Methodology.pdf



Annex 12 Data & Analysis.xlsx