



Information Policy & Compliance
bbc.co.uk/foi

Ms Angela Wileman
request-18847-1348xxxx@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.xxx

27 October 2009

Dear Ms Wileman,

Request for Information – RFI 2009 1365

Thank you for your email of 30 September 2009, submitted via the 'whatdotheyknow.com' website, making a request for information about TV Licensing under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act').

It may be helpful if I first confirm the nature of the relationship between TV Licensing and the BBC. 'TV Licensing' is a trade mark of the BBC and is used under licence by companies contracted by the BBC to administer the collection of television licence fees and enforcement of the television licensing system. The majority of administration is contracted to Capita Business Services Ltd. ('Capita'), with cash related payment schemes contracted to Revenues Management Services Ltd. ('RMS'). Over-the counter services are provided by PayPoint plc ('PayPoint'). Marketing and public relations activities are contracted to the AMV Consortium ('AMV'), which is comprised of the following four companies: Abbott Mead Vickers BBDO Ltd., Fishburn Hedges Boys Williams Ltd., PHD Media Ltd. and Proximity London Ltd. The BBC is a public authority in respect of its television licensing functions and retains overall responsibility.

In your email, you asked the following questions:

Would the BBC agree that tv licences should be reduced for those who are paying subscription to sky/cable service considering these people are generally watching other channels and not the BBC? If not please state your reasons why?(other than affecting your salaries and pensions).

I believe there are in excess of 2 million people on facebook UK who have signed a petition to scrap TV licence altogether.

What percentage of the adult population or number would you accept that tv licence should be scrapped and you should pay for programmes via adverts and sponsorships as does the other tv channels?

Also would the BBC agree that people on benefits should not have to pay TV licence ? If not why not?



The answer to all four of your points is the same, and is as follows: in accordance with section 1(1) of the Act, I can confirm that we do not hold the information you have requested.

The Freedom of Information Act is concerned with the disclosure of pre-existing recorded information by public authorities. It does not place any requirement upon public authorities to create new information in order to answer requests when the information does not already exist – and that includes providing an opinion on a particular matter when such an opinion is not already documented.

The requirement to hold a TV Licence is a statutory one, and both the BBC and TV Licensing are in that respect subordinate to the legislation that defines how the system operates (specifically, the Communications Act 2003 and the Communications (Television Licensing) Regulations 2004). Any comments you might have regarding how the TV Licence system and how it operates (including what concessions should be permitted) should be addressed to the relevant Government department, which is the Department for Culture, Media & Sport, 2-4 Cockspur Street, London, SW1Y 5DH.

I hope this is helpful.

Your appeal rights

This enquiry has been dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act. If you are not satisfied that we have complied with the Act in responding to your request, you have the right to an internal review by a BBC senior manager or legal adviser. Please contact us at the address above explaining what you would like us to review and including the reference number given at the start of this letter. If you are not satisfied with the internal review, you may appeal to the Information Commissioner, whose contact details are as follows: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF; telephone: 01625 545700; www.ico.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Neil Gardner
Senior Policy Adviser, TV Licensing Management Team