



Information Policy & Compliance
bbc.co.uk/foi

J Slim
request-206-xxxxxxx@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.xxx

15 May 2008

Dear J Slim,

Freedom of information request – RFI20080413

Thank you for your request received on 16 April 2008 seeking further information about TV Licensing. Your request is being dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“the Act”).

Please note that “TV Licensing” is a trading name used by companies contracted by the BBC to administer the collection of television licence fees and enforcement of the television licensing system. The majority of the administration of TV Licensing is contracted to Capita Business Services Ltd (which undertakes the majority of the administration of the TV Licensing system), with the administration of our cash related payment schemes contracted to Revenues Management Services Ltd (RMS). PayPoint Network Ltd and PayPoint Collections Ltd are contracted to provide over-the-counter services. The marketing and public relations activities are contracted to the AMV Consortium. The consortium is made up of the following four companies: Abbott Mead Vickers BBDO Ltd, Fishburn Hedges Boys Williams Limited, PHD Media Limited and Proximity London Ltd. The BBC is a public authority in respect of its television licensing functions and retains overall responsibility.

In your message you asked the following (I have numbered your questions for ease of reference):

1. *I would like information about the number of people in the UK who have been caught and prosecuted for not owning a TV licence in the year 2007.*

Regarding the number of people in the UK who have been caught, I assume by this question that you are referring to the number of people from whom prosecution statements have been taken.



The figures for evaders who were caught across the UK and broken down by nation during 2007 are as follows:

Location	Number of evaders caught
England	291857
Scotland	82408
N Ireland	18541
Wales	20858
Total	413664

Regarding the number of people prosecuted, please note TV Licensing reviews all first offence cases on their individual merits and does not prosecute except where it is in the public interest to do so.

Although you specifically mention the Freedom of Information Act in your request, information is exempt under section 21(1) of this Act if it constitutes information which is accessible to the applicant by other means. In relation to your particular question, official statistics on prosecutions are retained by the Home Office and published in their annual report *Criminal Statistics England and Wales*. The latest versions of the report can be found on the Home Office website at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/>. At various points these statistics have been made public, particularly in relation to questions asked in parliament (which are available in Hansard) and other government publications.

2. *I would also like to know what the success rate of those prosecutions was.*

In practice, TV Licensing has a 99.9% conviction rate for cases of TV licence evasion which are prosecuted in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (prosecutions in Scotland are carried out by the Procurator Fiscal and not TV Licensing, hence we are not aware of the number of actual convictions in Scotland. However, the Scottish Executive may have these figures).

3. *Finally I would like to know what it costs the BBC annually to enforce the TV Licence.*

The answer to your question is contained in the enclosed document, *TV Licensing Costs of Collection*. As you will see, this contains details of the licence fee revenue, total costings and a breakdown of collection costs.

Appeal rights

If you are not satisfied with this response you have the right to an internal review by a BBC senior manager or legal adviser. Please contact us at the address provided, explaining what you would like us to review and including your reference number. If you are not satisfied with the internal review, you can appeal to the Information Commissioner. The contact details are: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF, telephone 01625 545 700 or see <http://www.ico.gov.uk/>

I hope this response is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Natalie Sanderson
Policy Adviser
BBC TV Licensing Management Team