



Information Policy & Compliance

[bbc.co.uk/foibbc.co.uk/privacy](http://bbc.co.uk/foibbc.co.uk/privacy)

Mr S Craig

By email: [request-262914-45bfb081@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-262914-45bfb081@whatdotheyknow.com)

31 July 2015

Dear Mr Craig

### **Freedom of Information request – RFI20150585**

Having revisited our original response as a result of your complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), we have decided to provide a further response to the request you originally made on 11 April 2015 seeking the following information:

1. *How much was spent in total in 2014/15 on internal BBC hospitality on all charge codes associated with:-*
  - *the Director of News,*
  - *the office of the Director of News,*
  - *central News Division administration,*
  - *Senior Managers and all other staff working in the central administration of BBC News Division?*
2. *How many charge codes relate to these individuals/business areas?*
3. *Break down total 2014/15 spend on:-*
  - *Leadership/James Harding Lunches,*
  - *Leadership/James Harding Breakfasts,*
  - *Executive Board meetings,*
  - *Future of News activities.*

### **Question 1 a) - Spend on internal hospitality in 2014/2015 by the Director of News**

Since 2009 the BBC has voluntarily published the expenses for all senior managers who have a full time equivalent salary of £150,000 or more or who sit on a major divisional board. The BBC also publishes the salaries, total remuneration, declaration of personal interests, and gifts and hospitality register for these individuals.

The Director of News has submitted seven claims for internal hospitality in 2014/2015 which have been published on the BBC's publication scheme. You can find these claims clearly marked under the grouping 'Internal hospitality' at the following link:

We can confirm that we hold further information which is relevant to your request. However, this information is held by the BBC for the purposes of 'journalism, art or literature' and is therefore excluded from the Act. As explained in our original response, Part VI of Schedule 1 to the Act provides that information held by the BBC and other public service broadcasters is only covered by the Act if it is held for 'purposes *other* than those of journalism, art or literature'.

Despite this information not being subject to the Act, the remainder of the Director of News' spend on internal hospitality in 2014/2015 will be published on the BBC's publication scheme later this year. If the ICO considers that the requested information is not held for the purposes of journalism, we consider the requested information at the date of your request would be exempt under section 22 (future publication).

Under section 22 of the Act, information is exempt if the information is held by the public authority with a view to its publication, by the authority or another person, at some future date (whether determined or not). On this occasion, the BBC considers that it is reasonable to withhold the information prior to publication. As section 22 is a qualified exemption, we have considered whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption would outweigh the public interest in disclosing the information ahead of the planned schedule.

In favour of release we acknowledge that there is a public interest in increasing the accountability and transparency of publicly-funded organisations. Despite this, we do not consider that there is a strong public interest in the early release of this information when the information for Quarter 4 2014/2015 will be published shortly, and the publication of information about the Director of News' expenses is ongoing and in line with an established practice.

In favour of disclosing this information in line with the planned schedule, we believe that it is in the public interest that this information should be disclosed to all licence-fee payers at the same time.

Having considered these factors, we are satisfied that even if the information was subject to the Act, at the date of the request the public interest in maintaining the exemption would outweigh the public interest in disclosing the information ahead of schedule.

#### **Question 1 b) - Spend on internal hospitality by the office of the Director of News**

We have interpreted your request as referring to the following roles within the office of the Director of News:

- Director of News and Current Affairs
- Personal Assistant to Director of News
- Business Manager
- Managing Editor, News and Current Affairs
- Deputy Director of News and Current Affairs (also the Director of BBC World Service Group)
- Personal Assistant to Director of World Service Group

All of the Managing Editor's expenses relating to internal hospitality in 2014/2015 can be found at the following link:

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc/insidethebbc/managementstructure/biographies/blackmore\\_keith/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc/insidethebbc/managementstructure/biographies/blackmore_keith/)

The Deputy Director of News and Current Affairs' expenses are also published by the BBC and can be found at the following link:

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc/insidethebbc/managementstructure/biographies/unsworth\\_francesca](http://www.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc/insidethebbc/managementstructure/biographies/unsworth_francesca)

In her role as the Deputy Director of News and Current Affairs, Francesca Unsworth has not made any claims for internal hospitality in 2014/2015 which have been published.<sup>1</sup> We can confirm that we hold information which is relevant to your request. However, we consider this information is exempt from release because at the date of your request it was held with a view to its publication. We are therefore withholding this information under section 22 for the same reasons as set out above. Similarly, we have concluded that the balance of the public interest favours maintaining the exemption.

We can confirm that the Personal Assistant to Director of News, Business Manager and Personal Assistant to Director of World Service Group did not make any claims for internal hospitality in 2014/2015.

**Question 1 c) - Spend on internal hospitality by the 'central News Division administration'**

The 'central News Division administration' is not a defined term that is used at the BBC. The most accurate description of 'central News Division administration' would include the positions that have been identified above as the office of the Director of News. Therefore the answer to this question is the same as the answer to question 1 b) above.

**Question 1 d) - Spend on internal hospitality by Senior Managers and all other staff working in the central administration of the BBC News Division**

Again, the central administration of the BBC News Division can most accurately be described as including those positions that have been identified above. Therefore any spend on internal hospitality by Senior Managers and all other staff working in the central administration of the BBC News Division is addressed under the BBC's response to question 1 b).

**Question 2 - How many charge codes relate to these individuals/business areas?**

Charge codes are generally set up with regards to a specific purpose rather than with individuals in mind. We consider there are three charge codes that could be described as relating to these individuals/business areas.

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<sup>1</sup> She has made two requests for internal hospitality in relation to her role as Director World Service Group and details of these claims have been published.

### **Question 3 a) - Break down total 2014/15 spend on Leadership/James Harding Lunches**

The purpose of these lunches you have referred to is to brief editors and senior managers on developments in news operation and policy, to discuss editorial plans and ideas and to get feedback. Accordingly, any spend on internal hospitality in connection with these lunches (albeit, in itself not 'journalistic' information) is held for the purposes of journalism because it closely supports the running of these briefings. Therefore the information you have asked for is excluded from the Act.

### **Question 3 b) - Break down total 2014/15 spend on Leadership/James Harding Breakfasts**

We can confirm that there has not been any spend on internal hospitality in relation to any 'Leadership/James Harding Breakfasts' in 2014/2015.

### **Question 3 c) - Break down total 2014/15 spend on Executive Board meetings**

The Executive Board runs the BBC. It is responsible for delivering the BBC's services in accordance with the strategy agreed with the BBC Trust, and for all aspects of operational management. The Board is made up of executive directors from within the BBC and a number of non-executive directors, who bring external expertise and insight to the operation of the Board. The BBC holds the following information in relation to spending on internal hospitality for Executive Board meetings in 2014/2015:

<b>Date of Executive Board meeting</b>	<b>Amount</b>
16/09/2014	£490.80
21/10/2014	£416.20
15/12/2014	£277.30
13/01/2015	£65.95
11/02/2015	£15.90
19/03/2015	£204.00

The BBC does not hold any information about spending on internal hospitality for the Executive Board meetings which took place in April, May, June, July and November 2014. There was no Executive Board meeting in August 2014.

If you are intending to use the information provided here for publication, we have provided the quote below that should be included in any article as an on the record BBC spokesman statement:

*"These meetings can be lengthy and substantive, with attendees having to work through lunch so limited food or refreshments are provided. The average cost for these six meetings was £11 per person."*

### **Question 3 d) - Break down total 2014/15 spend on Future of News activities**

The Future of News project is intended to capture the many different views of what is happening in the news industry as a whole and set out the thinking that will shape BBC News' plans for the future.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> For further information, see BBC 'Future of News', <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk/30999914>

The first part of the Future of News project, a report commissioned by the Director of News, was published earlier this year. The report was pulled together with input from BBC members of staff and people outside the BBC, including journalists, academics, media leaders and technologists.

The total spend on the Future of News is held for the purposes of 'journalism, art or literature' and is therefore excluded from the Act. However, we can confirm that the BBC did not incur any spend on internal hospitality in relation to the Future of News project in 2014/2015.

We hope that the information and further explanations contained in this letter address your complaint. A copy of this further response has been sent to the ICO.

Yours sincerely

BBC Information Policy and Compliance

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