



Information Policy & Compliance
bbc.co.uk/foi

Peter Jones
Via email: request-87292-6417fb4f@whatdotheyknow.com

21 October 2011

Dear Mr Jones,

Request for Information – RFI20111165

Thank you for your request of 24th September 2011 under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act') seeking the following information:

I am interested in TV Licensing representatives that have been convicted of criminal offences committed in the course of their duties with TV Licensing. By representatives I mean any person employed by the BBC or any of the TV Licensing contracted companies acting on the BBC's behalf as Licensing Authority.

Background information:

I have previously made a similar request, RFI20110731, but given the recently publicised rape conviction of Middlesbrough-based TV Licensing officer Gary Catterick the information you provided back then is now obsolete. The clear implication of several newspaper articles is that Catterick was engaged in paid TV Licensing business (e.g. out on his normal TV Licensing rounds) at the time he raped his pregnant victim.

My request:

Please provide me with the number of TV Licensing representatives that have been convicted of criminal offences committed during the course of their TV Licensing duties since the year 2000. Also provide details of the offences they have been convicted of, their dates of employment with TVL and the geographic location (county, town or city) they were based.

In closing I would draw your attention to the fact that I am requesting additional information from that previously provided in response to RFI20110731. It is now reasonable to assume the BBC holds such additional information and it would not be reasonable for the BBC to reject this request on the basis that the information had already been disclosed.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

I can confirm that, since the date of your previous request (reference RFI20110731), there has been one further conviction of a TV Licensing representative where the individual committed the offence in the course of undertaking TV Licensing duties. This was the conviction of a former TV Licensing call centre employee (not a Visiting Officer) for Credit Card fraud. Following an extensive investigation by TV Licensing and Lancashire police, the individual was prosecuted and pleaded guilty to eight counts of fraud. They were sentenced to 18 weeks imprisonment at Preston Crown Court on the 28th September 2011.

I can confirm that the individual concerned was dismissed from their role with TV Licensing in May 2009; and as can be ascertained from recent press coverage within the public domain, this individual was based in Middlesbrough. However under section 40(2) of the Act I am withholding the details of the individual's exact employment dates because these details constitute personal information relating to the individual. Personal information about living individuals is exempt under the Freedom of Information Act if disclosure to a third party would breach one or more principles of the Data Protection Act 1998. As individuals have a reasonable expectation that details relating to their employment with TV Licensing will not be disclosed, to do so would be unfair; therefore, disclosure would breach the first principle of the Data Protection Act 1998 which requires data to be processed fairly and lawfully.

Contrary to any inference in press coverage you may have read we can confirm that, regrettable as it was that this individual was employed by TV Licensing, Gary Catterick was not undertaking TV Licensing duties when he committed the offence for which he was recently convicted.

Please note that having investigated this matter further, I have established that the scope of the search conducted for the purposes of our previous response (to your request RFI20110731) was limited to TV Licensing Visiting Officers. It is clear to me that the scope of your previous request should have been more widely interpreted to encompass all staff working for TV Licensing.

I therefore requested that searches be undertaken to confirm that no other staff employed on TV Licensing duties have been convicted of criminal offences committed in the course of their TV Licensing duties since 1st Jan 2000.

I can confirm that to the best of our knowledge no offences, other than those referenced above and in our previous response, have been committed in the course of their TV Licensing duties by any person employed by the BBC or any of the TV Licensing contracted companies (acting on the BBC's behalf) in the period in question. However, I estimate that to conduct a fully comprehensive search in order to confirm this conclusively would take more than two and a half days; under section 12 of the Act, we are allowed to refuse to handle the request if it would exceed the 'appropriate limit'. This is because in order to find the information we would need to examine every retained personnel file for every individual who has worked for any of our service providers or their subcontractors in the period in question. This would number several thousand files. The appropriate limit has been set by the Regulations (SI 2004/3244) as being £450 (equivalent to two and a half days work, at an hourly rate of £25).

We can however be sure that any offences committed by TV Licensing Visiting Officers in the course of their TV Licensing duties since July 2002 have been included in the information for this response.

Appeal Rights

If you are not satisfied that the BBC has 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 under the Act 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/>

Kind regards

Louise Wright

Senior Policy Advisor, TV Licensing Management Team

