



Information Rights

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Mr M. Whitfield

Via email: [request-387742-3ea897a6@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-387742-3ea897a6@whatdotheyknow.com)

6 March 2017

Dear Mr Whitfield

**Request for Information – RFI20170264**

Thank you for your request of 6<sup>th</sup> February 2017 under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act') seeking the following information:

*"There have been a number of stories in the media about increasing numbers of assaults upon TV Licensing staff. At the same time, I don't think there has ever been a news story about someone being prosecuted for such an assault.*

*Please can you tell me for each of the years, 2013, 2014 and 2015, how many assault incidents involving TV Licensing field staff were reported to TV Licensing management. Where the outcome of those incidents is known, please provide summary figures (of the outcome). e.g. whether the assault was serious or not, whether the Police were involved, whether there was a prosecution or not."*

Please note that "TV Licensing" is a trade mark 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 ('Capita'). Over-the-counter services are provided by PayPoint plc ('PayPoint') in the UK, and by the Post Office in the Isle of Man and Channel Islands. Marketing and printing services are contracted to Proximity London Ltd. Media services are contracted to Media Planning Limited trading as Havas Media UK. The BBC is a public authority in respect of its television licensing functions and retains overall responsibility.

Firstly, I should explain that TV Licensing considers all forms of unwarranted physical contact by members of the public to be unacceptable. This includes any actions, such as the physical removal of items belonging to enquiry officers, which may cause them to perceive a threat to their safety.

Please see overleaf the number of physical assaults suffered by TV Licensing enquiry officers during the years you have specified: all such incidents are reported to the police.

| <b>Calendar year</b> | <b>Physical assaults</b> |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 2013                 | 30                       |
| 2014                 | 44                       |
| 2015                 | 95                       |

Since the specific details of each incident are contained in individual case files, we would need to retrieve and manually review each relevant file to ascertain the salient aspects of each incident. I estimate that to identify, locate and extract information that is relevant to your request 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 what is referred to as the 'appropriate limit'. 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).

Please be advised that we do not grade incidents in terms of their severity and therefore determining the seriousness of each case is likely to amount to creating new information not already held and therefore would fall outside the scope of the Act.

### **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 SK9 5AF. Tel: 0303 123 1113 (local rate) or 01625 545 745 (national rate) or see <http://www.ico.gov.uk/>.

Kind regards

Rupinder Panesar

**Freedom of Information Advisor, TV Licensing Management Team**

