



Information Policy & Compliance
bbc.co.uk/foi

Mr D Bilham

Sent by email to: request-66002-bce37298@whatdotheyknow.com

11th May 2011

Dear Mr Bilham,

Freedom of Information request – RFI20110362

Thank you for your request to the BBC of 20th March 2011 seeking information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act) as to how, when and how many applications are made to the Land Registry by or on behalf of the BBC.

The unique reference for your request is RFI20110362. I am sorry for the delay in replying. In order to respond to your request we identified the most likely areas to hold relevant information to your request and have sought information from the Television Licensing and Property Legal Departments, who respond as follows:

- 1. The original starting date (dd/mm/yyyy) the BBC started requesting information from the Land Registry, i.e. day, month, year the BBC commenced contacting the Land Registry for requesting information.*

TV Licensing has been investigating, since June 2009, whether information on the Land Registry database may be a useful source of information for checking the accuracy of TV Licensing's address database. Such checks are necessary to ensure the TV Licensing database remains up-to-date and are already made using external data sources like the edited electoral roll and Royal Mail's Postcode Address File. No decision has yet been made on whether TV Licensing will use the Land Registry's services.

Regarding Property Legal, ad hoc applications to the Land Registry for office copies and copy documentation for estate management purposes have been made for many years. Applications have been made when required for estate management purposes.

Due to the ad hoc nature of the applications no central record has been kept within the BBC of when the first application was made. The BBC is not obliged to retain records dating back to the period when the first application was likely to have been made.

2. *The total number of requests made to Land Registry from original starting date (dd/mm/yyyy) to 31st December 2010, including: b1) average / actual requests made per day b2) average / actual requests made per week b3) average / actual requests made per month*

TV Licensing has not, to date, made any requests for information from the Land Registry.

The BBC does not have a current Land Registry account for estate management purposes or a central record of applications made since the first application. The BBC is not obliged to retain records dating back to the period when the first application was likely to have been made. Ad hoc applications, when required, are usually obtained on behalf of the BBC, by its retained external solicitors.

3. *Excluding requests for programme making purposes, journalism, art or literature, what 'methods' were used to request information from the Land Registry from original starting date (dd/mm/yyyy) to 31st December 2010, i.e. how does the BBC make requests for information from the Land Registry, for example, written requests, online requests (email), telephone requests, fax, online account, etc between the original start date (day, month, year) to 31st December 2010*

TV Licensing has not, to date, made any requests for information from the Land Registry.

Regarding Property Legal the BBC does not have a current Land Registry account. Ad hoc applications, when required, are usually obtained on behalf of the BBC, by its retained external solicitors.

4. *Excluding requests for programme making purposes, journalism, art or literature, once data has been obtained from Land Registry, please could the BBC indicate:*
 - a. *whether title holders of registered estates are contacted direct by the BBC*
 - b. *what methods of contact are used to contact title holders of registered estates, i.e. are title holders of registered estates contacted via letter, telephone, email, other*
 - c. *whether title holders of registered estates are informed that their contact details were obtained by the BBC via the Land Registry, when contacted*
 - d. *what means are made available by the BBC for title holders of registered estates to reply / contact, for example, full postal address, telephone number, email address, fax number, online website, other*

TV Licensing has not, to date, contacted any title holders of registered estates.

Regarding Property Legal:

a There may be estate management reasons to contact such registered owners. In most cases contact will already have been made with the owner prior to any search. For example details of registered owners are obtained from the Land Registry from time to time to check the land's ownership prior to taking a lease. .

b Contact with registered owners for estate management reasons can be via letter, telephone, email, or in person or through agents or solicitors depending on the nature of the matter

c It will depend on the transaction and the solicitors dealing. However in any dealings with land an owner would expect any tenant or purchaser's solicitors to obtain details of the registered owner.

d For estate management purposes, contact is usual with BBC Workplace, BBC Property Legal or its external agents and solicitors.

5. *Excluding requests for programme making purposes, journalism, art or literature, which departments in the BBC use data obtained from Land Registry in connection with deducing the title holders of registered estates*

The BBC's Legal Department may from time to time use data obtained from the Land Registry, notably its Property Legal Department.

6. *For what purpose does the BBC contact title holders of registered estates, for example, compiling statistics, questionnaires, updating TV Licence database records, other*

In relation to TV Licensing and estate management, please see answer to question 4 above.

The BBC's Property Legal Department or its external managing agents may from time to time contact registered owners for estates management purposes

7. *How long does the BBC keep data obtained from the Land registry on record regarding title holders of registered estates, for example, 12 months, 5 years, 10 years, other*

Regarding Television Licensing, please see answers to questions 2 and 3 above.

In relation to Property Legal, the BBC does not retain a central register of information obtained from the Land Registry, due to the transient nature of entries on the Land Register

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 above, 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/>

Yours sincerely,

H Padley
Advisor
Information Policy & Compliance