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JM Deamer  
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19 June 2015

Dear JM Deamer

### **Freedom of Information Act 2000 – RFI20150868**

Thank you for your request under the Freedom of Information Act ('the Act') of 26 May 2015, seeking:

I read with interest the recent announcement of the latest BBC Global Audience Measure, including Facebook and YouTube data for the first time. ("BBC's combined global audience revealed at 308 million", <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/latestnews/2015/combined-global-audience>)

I'd like to understand the methodology that was used to calculate this, in particular how the contribution of YouTube and Facebook is calculated, eg. how double-counting's avoided, what assumptions are made, what data sources are used and similar.

Could you please share any documents or guidelines that:

- a) show the full calculations used to reach the figure of 308 million (possibly an Excel spreadsheet, for example)
- b) outline the methodology / business rules for calculating audience measures, particularly online content

I can confirm that the BBC holds information relevant to your request, however, I estimate that to deal with 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 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). I estimate that this would take more than two and a half days as the BBC is currently in the process of creating a written document (regarding this information) and the process of finalising it would require considerable project resource exceeding the two and a half day limit.

That said the BBC is hoping to complete the documentation of the process over the next six months and I invite you to repeat your request at such time.

Under section 16 of the Act the BBC has a duty to provide advice and assistance to the requestor, so far as it is reasonable to do so, and therefore in the interests of assisting you I can confirm the following:

### **The BBC Global Audience Measure (“GAM”)**

The GAM is effectively a collation of the latest data available at that date. The estimate covers 240 countries and territories and produces more than 70,000 data records (whereby each GAM record consists of an audience number attributable to a platform, a country, and a service). The figure is calculated country by country and is based on the most recent data available for each country.

Each BBC audience member is counted only once regardless of how many platforms they have used to listen, watch, or read BBC content. The overall GAM figure is therefore a “*de-duplicated*” number (i.e. if a person is listening to BBC content on radio and watching it on television, that person is only counted once in the total number).

### **Data Sources Used to collate the GAM Number:**

- Nationally representative surveys, either conducted by the BBC or in collaboration with the BBG (<http://www.bbg.gov/about-the-agency/>) and other public service broadcasters around the world. Multiple questions are asked (about platform ownership, time consumed, language understanding, etc.) to ensure as much robustness and accuracy as possible in calculating reach. These surveys are at the heart of the GAM. In addition to understanding platform consumption, they also (in many cases) supply the ratios we use to *deduplicate* audiences between platforms.
- Radio audience ratings (in countries where we have no recent survey data and we believe the ratings to be robust and accepted in the country as universal currency). Examples are USA and Philippines.
- TV audience ratings: for example, all the BBC Worldwide numbers that were used this year, giving an indication of the BBCs non-news branded services. For these ratings we take average viewership per week for the period December- February.
- Online traffic data: for all countries and all services this comes from the analytics systems that we use (in this instance Adobe Omniture). For the purposes of GAM, we take the average traffic per week in the period December- February.
- Social media analytics data: data from Facebook and YouTube (but with some caveats and assumptions, see below). For the purposes of GAM, we take the average traffic per week in the period December- February.

## **Facebook & YouTube**

This year was the first time we included Facebook and YouTube reach data in the GAM. As you may be aware, the 'reach' numbers provided by these social media do not necessarily correlate with the way broadcast media reach would be calculated.

As with standard GAM practice, we were conservative about what figures we included. When trying to establish reach of all BBC Facebook accounts globally, rather than use the standard reach statistics we only included those instances where the individual has 'liked' or 'commented' on BBC content on Facebook.

Across all BBC services that went into the GAM, Facebook and YouTube together only contributed 5.8m incremental audiences (i.e. people accessing BBC content only on Facebook or YouTube and not on any other platforms). Therefore, out of the 308m global figure for news and non-news branded services this year, the Facebook & Youtube component is 5.8m.

*Deduplication* across social media is even more of a challenge than it is across other platforms, given that there is no single source that provides a *deduplicated* reach across both platforms (i.e. we cannot easily tell how many people consume content via a BBC website and a BBC Facebook page).

To tackle this challenge we have done the following:

- used a long-standing media planning formula for calculating *deduplicated* or unduplicated reach, known as the Sainsbury formula, which is basically an extension of simple probability theory. Note, though, that there are other more advanced formulae for calculating *deduplicated* reach, which are also under consideration for us to further improve our calculations next year to get to *deduplicated* reach.
- YouTube provided us with its own *deduplicated* figure for all World Service YouTube accounts. To avoid an outcome where the *deduplicated* total is higher than the sum of its components for each country we select the smaller of:
  - a) *Deduplicated* reach provided by YouTube in country; and
  - b) sum of all single services.

Note also that YouTube provides unique cookies only for PCs. So as to not overestimate the mobile usage, we took the ratio between views on PCs and cookies on PCs and applied that across platforms.

BBC has a number of services which own more than one Facebook page. When a service operates more than one page the reach data needs to be *deduplicated* so that the relevant service can have

one (and only one) entry under its Facebook reach. In each of these cases the Sainsbury formula has been used to *deduplicate*.

Finally, there is the issue of topline *deduplication* (ie between Facebook and YouTube in the first instance, and then across social and online, and then finally all offline and all online including social).

We have used Global Web Index (“GWI”) data to get duplication ratios for BBC usage on BBCs own sites, on Facebook and on YouTube for 32 countries. For other countries, the Sainsbury formula has again been applied. Please note that we do not use GWI data for reach, only to derive the ratios that allow us to *deduplicate* between BBC sites, Facebook, and YouTube.

The ratios between offline (TV and Radio together) and online (Online and Social Media together) duplication are based on the latest country surveys. (Note: for online reach the data always comes from analytics systems; but the ratios between online and offline are drawn from the surveys).

You may request an internal review of our decision that your request exceeds the appropriate limit. 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, Tel: 0303 123 1113 (local rate) or 01625 545 745 (national rate) or see <http://www.ico.gov.uk/>

Yours sincerely,

Catherine Blizzard – Director of Marketing and Audiences, BBC World Service

