



Information Rights

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

B Willis

By email: [request-420414-8ae6aaa8@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-420414-8ae6aaa8@whatdotheyknow.com)

16 August 2017

Dear sir or madam,

### **Freedom of Information request – RFI20171085**

Thank you for your request to the BBC of 21 July 2017, seeking the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act'):

*Please tell me how many patents the BBC or the TV Licensing section of the BBC have registered since the BBCs/ TV Licensing inception, in regards to any equipment whose primary function is to detect TV signals i.e as used by TV detector Vans or hand held TV signal detectors .*

### **Response**

Under section 1(1) of the Act, we can confirm that the BBC does not hold this information because the BBC does not register patents for such equipment. The reason for not registering patent for such equipment is that were the BBC to do so, the details (including how they works) would be made public and such public availability could potentially aid evasion of the Licence Fee.

### **Appeal Rights**

If you are not satisfied that we have 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 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 [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

Yours sincerely,

The Information Policy & Compliance Team  
**Workplace & Information Rights**

**BBC Legal**

## **Freedom of Information**

From January 2005 the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000 gives a general right of access to all types of recorded information held by public authorities. The Act also sets out exemptions from that right and places a number of obligations on public authorities. The term “public authority” is defined in the Act; it includes all public bodies and government departments in the UK. The BBC, Channel 4, S4C and MG Alba are the only broadcasting organisations covered by the Act.

### **Application to the BBC**

The BBC has a long tradition of making information available and accessible. It seeks to be open and accountable and already provides the public with a great deal of information about its activities. BBC Audience Services operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week handling telephone and written comments and queries, and the BBC’s website [bbc.co.uk](http://bbc.co.uk) provides an extensive online information resource.

It is important to bear this in mind when considering the Freedom of Information Act and how it applies to the BBC. The Act does not apply to the BBC in the way it does to most public authorities in one significant respect. It recognises the different position of the BBC (as well as Channel 4 and S4C) by saying that it covers information “held for purposes other than those of journalism, art or literature”. This means the Act does not apply to information held for the purposes of creating the BBC’s output (TV, radio, online etc), or information that supports and is closely associated with these creative activities.

A great deal of information within this category is currently available from the BBC and will continue to be so. If this is the type of information you are looking for, you can check whether it is available on the BBC’s website [bbc.co.uk](http://bbc.co.uk) or contact BBC Audience Services.

The Act does apply to all of the other information we hold about the management and running of the BBC.

### **The BBC**

The BBC's aim is to enrich people's lives with great programmes and services that inform, educate and entertain. It broadcasts radio and television programmes on analogue and digital services in the UK. It delivers interactive services across the web, television and mobile devices. The BBC's online service is one of Europe's most widely visited content sites. Around the world, international multimedia broadcaster BBC World Service delivers a wide range of language and regional services on radio, TV, online and via wireless handheld devices, together with BBC World News, the commercially-funded international news and information television channel.

The BBC's remit as a public service broadcaster is defined in the BBC Charter and Agreement. It is the responsibility of the BBC Trust (the sovereign body within the BBC) to ensure that the organisation delivers against this remit by setting key objectives, approving strategy and policy, and monitoring and assessing performance. The Trustees also safeguard the BBC's independence and ensure the Corporation is accountable to its audiences and to Parliament.

Day-to-day operations are run by the Director-General and his senior management team, the Executive Board. All BBC output in the UK is funded by an annual Licence Fee. This is determined and regularly reviewed by Parliament. Each year, the BBC publishes an Annual Report & Accounts, and reports to Parliament on how it has delivered against its public service remit.

