



Information Policy & Compliance

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Wayne Pearsall

Via email: [request-187632-d7c6aea2@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-187632-d7c6aea2@whatdotheyknow.com)

23 December 2013

Dear Mr Pearsall

**Request for Information – RFI20131793**

Thank you for your request of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2013 under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act') seeking the following information:

*"I previously informed your team in September 2013 that I no longer required a TV License, as I was leaving the UK. I was subsequently told that I would require proof that I have left the UK before being issued with a refund of the six months payments upon my account / tv license.*

*I am now writing to request stored information.*

*1) I would like the release of your latest customer care assistant / customer service / helpline staff call scripts / responses (pre-planned [sic] responses to customer queries) and training materials ETC.*

*1)a) If this script has changed since Sept 2013, please provide all amended versions.*

*2) Please provide me with any document (AKA Information) that you might hold (electronically [sic] or clerical) that might explain why a consumer would be required to provide the BBC / TV Licensing with "Proof" that they had left the UK to receive a refund. Obviously as a TV License is only required for those who use a TV to receive a live broadcast [sic] in the UK it appears clear that somebody would be entitled to a refund even if they had not left the UK.*

*3) Please provide me with the information you hold on how a person who previously purchased a TV License can request and actually receive a refund for the payments upon account. So far I have personally sent yourselves the signed declaration / form your team sent to me, a letter from my Landlord in Ireland stating I live in Ireland and still no refund has been issued.*

*4) Please provide me with the following statistical data:*

*a) How many people have telephoned your helpline or contacted your team via your website to request a refund*

*b) of the people who contacted yourselves (a) how many actually received a refund?*

*c) if (b) is lower than (c) please provide all recorded information that outlines the reason for this.*

5) Please provide me with any document that provides your legal argument for only issuing a refund of unused quarters [sic] of a TV license, and not a pro-rata refund."

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 Mediaedge:CIA International Limited ("MEC"). The BBC is a public authority in respect of its television licensing functions and retains overall responsibility.

#### Questions 1 and 1a)

Due to the significant work involved in reviewing the information we hold that is relevant to these parts of your request, we anticipate that we will not be able to provide the response to you within the 20-working-day period set by the Act. We estimate that it will take approximately two weeks to review the document, and we aim to send the response in the week ending 10<sup>th</sup> January 2014. If this is not possible, we will write again then to update you.

#### Question 2

Recorded information relevant to this part of your request is contained in TV Licensing's Refund Policy which is available at <http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/resources/library/BBC/policies/TVLicensing-RefundsPolicy.pdf> and the following internal guidance document:

Disclosure Document - Applying for a Refund – Guidelines for "What is the correct & Most Appropriate Evidence required?"

#### Question 3

Recorded information relevant to this part of your request is contained in TV Licensing's Refund Policy (web-link provided above) and the following sections of the TV Licensing website concerning refunds:

<http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/check-if-you-need-one/topics/cancellations-and-refunds-TOP7/>  
<http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/faqs/FAQ77/>

#### Questions 4a)

As you have not specified a timeframe for your request, I have interpreted this as relating to the 2012-13 financial year. I have provided below the number of refund requests received by TV Licensing by telephone and via the TV Licensing website for this period. Please note that whilst refunds statistics are available for these channels, the outcomes of some refund request received by telephone are not recorded; specifically refund requests where no evidence is required as only one quarter of the TV Licence fee is being claimed. Consequently, not all refund requests are captured in the figures provided.

	Financial Year 2012-13
Requests for refunds received via the TV Licensing helpline	71,257
Refund applications received via the TV Licensing website	67,597

**Questions 4b) and 4c)**

Please note that it is not possible to disaggregate the number of refunds granted that directly relate to the requests received above without manually checking each individual case. I estimate that to locate and extract the information requested 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).

**Question 5**

The BBC has a discretion under section 365 of the Communications Act 2003 to make refunds in such cases as we may determine. The Communications Act is available online at the following link:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/21/contents>

**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

Rupinder Panesar

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

