

BBC implementation plan: Review of Licence Fee Collection

The BBC Trust reviewed Licence Fee Collection in March 2009. Following publication of Trust's report, the BBC Executive has now agreed an action plan to implement the Trust's recommendations.

BBC Trust Recommendation	Action planned	Proposed Completion Date
<p>The BBC should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • re-evaluate its efforts to place more emphasis on targeted enforcement. • develop a more explicit model for ensuring an appropriate trade off between loss of value to licence fee payers from evasion rates versus increased enforcement costs. • engage with other collection agencies and explore how it might establish benchmarking arrangements and identify how operations can be improved to increase efficiency. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Variations in enforcement methods will be trialled. 2. Existing models will be further enhanced. 3. We are in the process of benchmarking with other TV licence fee collection agencies in Europe. 4. We have regular dialogue with the DVLA and other collection agencies and will now conduct a benchmarking exercise with a range of organisations, including a review of best practice. 	<p>March 2010</p> <p>September 2009</p> <p>December 2009</p> <p>December 2009</p>
<p>The BBC should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue to work with Capita, who maintain the database, to assess the quality of the information stored on the database. Key performance indicators should be introduced which will allow the BBC to measure how accurately information is being recorded. • provide an audit report on the work being carried out with Capita on the ongoing programme of development 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We will complete the work already started on developing a "data dashboard" to monitor data quality. 2. The audit report will go to the Trust in December. 	<p>December 2009</p> <p>December 2009</p>

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and improvement to the database and the systems surrounding it.		
<p>The BBC should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> discuss with the Trust and the Government whether current payment plans can be simplified and whether more efforts can be made to remove barriers to payment, especially for people on low incomes. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> In order to test a new payment plan a trial will be required to assess customer behaviour to ensure the schemes meet customer needs and can be managed cost effectively. This will require Government permission (and new Regulations to be laid in Parliament). Concurrently, we will explore whether customer communications can be improved. 	<p>April 2011</p>
<p>The BBC should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> agree a new set of key performance indicators which are correctly aligned with the communications strategy and are able to measure the impact of both national and regional communication campaigns. It should also take appropriate action to address any underperformance against the new agreed KPIs. When future contracts are negotiated with advertising agencies the Executive should consider including formal incentives for performance against KPIs. seek to improve public awareness of the TV licensing law surrounding the use of technology, such as the internet, to access television services. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> We will look at additional ways of assessing our communications strategy. Annual KPIs for advertising activity will be set prior to each financial year and monitored regularly. Incentives for performance against KPIs will be included in contracts when tendered. Requirements are detailed on our current letters and we will review all communications which go direct to customers (e.g. our letters and the TV Licensing website). We will also run an online advertising campaign to raise awareness 	<p>June 2010</p> <p>April 2010</p>

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	of this issue.	
<p>The BBC should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work with its advertising agencies to revise the early reminder letters to ensure they are easy to read, polite and non-accusatory. • ensure the prominence of messages regarding what people should do if they have already bought a TV licence; if they do not own a TV or if they require the information in an alternative format. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We are currently examining how we can simplify all our letters. In a two-stage process, the first and second reminders will be rewritten and simplified, using clearer messages for people who don't require a TV licence. New letters will be developed and tested by December 2009. Success will be measured by broad acceptability to the public and whether the letters remain effective in encouraging the public to become properly licensed. 2. New guidelines for ensuring prominence of this message will be introduced. To keep costs as low as possible, each letter will be updated when it is being revised for other purposes. 	<p>December 2009</p> <p>April 2010</p>
<p>The BBC should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consider replacing, in the most cost-effective way, its 084 numbers with 03 contact numbers or equivalent for its dealings with consumers. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New numbers will be introduced when letters are revised for the new licence fee amount, in order to keep costs as low as possible. 	<p>April 2010</p>
<p>The BBC should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the enforcement model to increase the likelihood of an enforcement officer making contact with an occupant. The BBC Executive and its TV Licensing contractors need to use their 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A range of sources will be used to enhance knowledge on which addresses are occupied. We will examine how the new handheld units used by Enquiry Officers, 	<p>January 2010</p>

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<p>research and knowledge of evader characteristics and behaviour to revisit the enforcement model to develop ways of increasing the contact rate. By using the database to target those unlicensed addresses which are most likely to contain evaders, and by a means which is more likely to result in contact, TV Licensing could increase the number of licences sold at this stage of enforcement.</p>	<p>which gives live information directly from TV Licensing's database, can be used to further improve data validation. Additional initiatives will take place to increase the rate of contact.</p>	
<p>The BBC should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consider ways to make it easier for people without TV sets to let TV Licensing know that they do not have a TV, and should review the procedures in place to minimise the risk of errors when recording notification of no set from households. • improve the acceptability of standard letters received by households that have not yet informed TV Licensing that they do not have a TV by increasing the prominence of messages about what to do if you have no set. • look again at the customer journey for those who do not have a television to find ways to make it easier and more effective for the individual whilst still providing appropriate checks to combat evasion. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The TVL website will be updated to provide an easy to use service for notifying TVL that no licence is required at an address. We regard minimising errors as a very important part of our work and will look again at the process of recording these notifications. 2. The prominence of messages in letters will be improved for those not requiring a TV Licence (as per previous recommendation). 3. We have completed a full review of the policy for customers making claims that they do not have televisions and the new policy will be introduced by January 2010. One example of the changes is a complete rewrite of all letters to these customers. 	<p>By April 2010</p> <p>April 2010</p> <p>January 2010</p>