

ACCOUNTABILITY

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KEEPING CONTENT

The BBC is accountable to its audiences. Their continuing trust in the BBC is a crucial part of our contract with them. We will act in good faith by dealing fairly and openly with them.

We are open in admitting mistakes when they are made and encourage a culture of willingness to learn from them.

We will use the BBC's online presence to provide proper reporting to the public on complaints we have received, and actions we have taken.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The Board of Governors act as the trustees of the public interest. Among the Governors' responsibilities are:

- approving the remit and strategy for all the BBC's activities.
- regulating the BBC on content issues, in particular impartiality and accuracy.
- ensuring the BBC meets its fair trading obligations.
- leading a series of transparent, independent reviews of BBC services, including issues raised by audiences.
- appointing the BBC's Director General.
- publishing the BBC's Annual Report.
- ensuring that complaints are properly handled by the BBC (including taking appeals on editorial complaints handled by the Editorial Complaints Unit and Divisional Directors).

They are supported by the Governance Unit which is independent of BBC senior management.

The Governors draw on the support of a broad network of external advisory bodies to provide advice on the BBC's services for different parts of the UK. These include the Broadcasting Councils for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and Regional and Local Advisory Councils for the English Regions.

FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS

Audiences are at the heart of everything the BBC does. Audience feedback is invaluable to us and helps to improve programme quality.

Our commitment to our audiences is to ensure that complaints and enquiries are dealt with quickly, courteously and with respect.

The first point of contact for a complaint should be BBC Information, although people can contact programmes directly if they prefer. We are committed to responding to complaints within ten working days of their first receipt and to keeping complainants informed of progress.

A licence fee payer may be unhappy with the response from BBC Information or a programme department. If the complaint concerns a breach of the editorial standards set out in the Editorial Guidelines or relates to a particular broadcast, programme or specific web content they can appeal to the Editorial Complaints Unit to investigate the issue independently.

The BBC has a Code of Practice for complaints handling which sets out these procedures in more detail.

LETTERS AND ARTICLES FOR PUBLICATION

People who work for the BBC who wish to write a letter or article for publication dealing with BBC issues, must clear it with their head of department and the relevant press office.

EDITORIAL COMPLAINTS UNIT

The Editorial Complaints Unit deals with serious complaints about breaches of the BBC's editorial standards. It deals with complaints about any BBC service or product where the BBC has editorial responsibility. This includes international, public and commercial services and BBC branded magazines.

If complainants are not satisfied by the Editorial Complaints Unit finding, they can appeal to the Governors' Programme Complaints Committee.

For the most serious upheld complaints, an apology or correction from the BBC may be published online or on air.

GOVERNORS' PROGRAMME COMPLAINTS APPEALS COMMITTEE (GPCC)

The GPCC considers appeals against decisions and actions of the Editorial Complaints Unit and Divisional Directors in dealing with serious editorial complaints.

The GPCC considers appeals which allege:

- the complainant has suffered unfair treatment in a transmitted item.
- the complainant's privacy has been unjustifiably infringed, either in the programme or item as transmitted or in the process of making the programme or item.
- there has otherwise been a failure adequately to observe any of the BBC's values and standards set out and codified in the BBC Editorial Guidelines: on truth and accuracy, impartiality and diversity of opinion, editorial integrity and independence, serving the public interest, harm and offence, children, and accountability.

KEEPING CONTENT

The BBC is obliged by law to keep recordings of all broadcast programmes: television for 90 days and radio for 42 days.

The BBC online policy is that we make best efforts to keep a record of the last 90 days of text based output.