



# **Gender Equality Scheme Performance Summary 2008/2009**

## **Introduction**

Section 4 of the Gender Equality Scheme (GES) sets out in detail the steps the BBC has taken to meet the Gender Equality Duty, including:

- Arrangements for gathering information about the performance of the BBC on gender equality and to examine the gender effects of policies and practices which are related to performance of the relevant public functions
- How information has been and will be used to set, review and revise gender equality objectives and subsequent schemes
- Assessment of the impact of the BBC's current and future policies and practices on gender equality
- Details of how women, men and trans people have been consulted as part of the development of this Scheme
- Ensuring implementation of the Scheme's objectives

This Performance Summary reflects an annual review of the GES and highlights both the BBC's performance across its public functions following year 1 and year 2 and key activities identified for year 3. All of the objectives for each of the public function areas are outlined below, together with corresponding progress and priorities for next year.

## **Public function: TV Licensing**

(For further detail on the range of public functions which relate to TV Licensing, see the Annex to the Gender Equality Scheme.)

**Objective 1:** To communicate, wherever practicable, in a way that is accessible and appropriate to facilitate clear understanding of television licensing obligations for all sections of the community

### **Key achievement during 2008/2009**

- TV Licensing (TVL) reviewed its equality impact assessment (EIA) on a representative sample of TVL communications in advance of the three-year deadline set during the previous EIA process. The review found that further improvements in communications material had been initiated since the previous EIA (for example, by commissioning a leading linguistic expert with substantial experience in the needs of people with low literacy levels to analyse a selection of TVL letters and recommend ways in which they could be made more accessible), and that a number of other projects were ongoing to continuously ensure that TV Licensing meets the needs of all people in its communications.

**Objective 2:** To ensure that all BBC TVL staff and contractors fully understand their duty to promote gender equality and are active in implementing actions identified

### **Key achievements during 2008/2009**

- TVL completed the rollout of its equality training to existing and new staff who deal with customers' queries and complaints and to TV Licensing visiting officers.
- The TV Licensing complaints database was amended in order to be able to record and analyse information on complaints and comments which are related to gender and related cultural issues and to put systems into place to formally record gender-relevant requests relating to gender-specific issues.

### **Areas for improvement**

- A procedure will be established for analysing information from TVL's customer satisfaction survey to determine whether there are differences in men's and women's experiences of contacting TV Licensing.
- TVL will ensure that all complaints monitoring is carried out according to diversity. The information will then be used to inform future action and review as necessary.

**Objective 3:** To continually review and wherever possible improve or develop service support (including technology) to provide accessible, convenient support and advice services and encourage all sections of the community to engage with TVL as necessary

For detail on progress against this objective and the related action, see Section 8, Action Plan Part I, of the Gender Equality Scheme.

**Objective 4:** To develop and maintain a strategic and systematic approach to integrating gender equality into all TVL activities

**Key achievements during 2008/2009**

- EIAs were carried out on the new Voice User Interface (VUI) system and on the new refunds policy. EIAs were also initiated on the website refresh project, a project to redesign TV Licensing's databases and a proposal to increase contact with TV Licensing's customers by text message
- Initial work began to draw up a three-year programme of EIAs on existing BBC and contractor policies and functions which are relevant to the duty.
- The BBC TVL Equality Working Group met eight times, discussed progress against each of the actions within the Scheme and received regular updates on equality legislation. The TVL Management Team Policy Adviser gave presentations on the Equality Working Group's progress to a number of TVL team meetings to assist the senior management team to review the work of the Group. This will continue in year 3 (2009/2010).

**Area for improvement**

- TVL will continue conducting EIAs on relevant policies and projects and will continue work to establish a three-year EIA programme relating to existing BBC (and contractors') policies and functions which are relevant to the duty.

**Objective 5:** To maximise the potential for data and information management systems to enhance and promote gender equality

**Key achievements during 2008/2009**

- An EIA was initiated on a project to redesign TV Licensing's databases. This is due for completion by mid-2009. Any outcomes will be used to inform further changes to any information management systems.
- The TV Licensing complaints database was amended in order to be able to record and analyse information on complaints and comments which are related to gender and related cultural issues and to put systems into place to formally record gender-relevant requests relating to gender-specific issues.

**Objective 6:** To develop and maintain strategic leadership and commitment to the broad implementation of the GES and the TVL Action Plan

**Key achievement during 2008/2009**

- The TVL Management Team Policy Adviser gave presentations on the Equality Working Group's progress to a number of TVL team meetings to assist the senior management team to review the work of the Group. This will continue in year 3 (2009/2010).

**Objective 7:** To ensure that all payment methods and processes are accessible and appropriate for a range of needs and lifestyles

**Key achievement during 2008/2009**

- Initial work began to establish a three-year EIA programme to assess whether there is equality of opportunity in payment method. No complaints or issues on equality of payment method were identified during the BBC Trust's recent review of TV licence fee collection.

**Objective 8:** To ensure a strategic approach to integrating gender equality into all TVL procurement activities

**Key achievement during 2008/2009**

- Re-procurement of the contract to supply TV Licensing's over-the-counter services on Jersey reflected the Gender Equality Duty throughout the process.

For more detail on each of the objectives relating to TVL and the corresponding actions, see Section 8, Action Plan Part I, of the Gender Equality Scheme.

## **Public function: the BBC Trust in relation to certain functions under the BBC Charter and Agreement**

(For further detail on the range of public functions which relate to the BBC Trust, see the Annex to the Gender Equality Scheme.)

**Objective 1:** To ensure that the Trust actively engages with and seeks the views of women and men, including trans people, and that engagement activities encourage participation and are accessible.

### **Key achievements during 2008/2009**

- We conducted an equality and diversity review of all our activities to identify how we could integrate equality and diversity better through every element of our work. The review pointed to the importance of conducting equality impact assessments (EIAs) at the start of planning a public consultation so that the process can assist our Project Managers to explore different ways of reaching more people, including more women. We have made progress here but there is more to do.
- We ran a number of public consultations this year, some of which received large numbers of responses. The consultation linked to the Trust's review of BBC Children's Services (CBBC, CBeebies, some content on Radio 4) is the first Trust consultation which heard from more women than men. Our staff leading the Service Review of Services for Younger Audiences (Radio 1, IExtra and BBC Three) worked with the BBC Executive to ensure that promotion for the consultation was trailed on BBC Switch (which we know is more likely to be used by young women) to address an initial gender imbalance appearing among responses. After this intervention, the consultation received a good gender balance in its responses overall.
- We also spent time this year looking at how we communicate with licence fee payers. We are developing a clearer and more straightforward use of language which we hope will be far more accessible to more people. We are also testing new ways of speaking with people, for example planning to use shopping centres as part of our consultation for our review of Radio 2 and BBC 6 Music. We hope we will reach a broader range of people, including more women, through this approach.

### **Area for improvement**

- Our review of equality and diversity pointed to our practice in this area and challenged us to think harder about how we reach more people, in particular women given that women are persistently less likely to respond to our public consultations. We hope to make progress on our EIA practice and that this will help to ensure that we are hearing from more women.

**Objective 2:** To ensure that Audience Councils are fully inclusive and as far as possible reflect the diversity of society they represent. The Trust will actively encourage membership from a gender-balanced membership wherever practicable and possible. The Trust will also work with Audience Councils to ensure that they engage effectively with diverse communities to enhance members' understanding of audience concerns.

#### **Key achievements during 2008/2009**

- Audience Council Scotland has doubled its representation of women on the council this year from two to four members. Although there is some way to go before we reach parity, this is very welcome progress. Our three other Audience Councils in Northern Ireland, Wales and England have a gender-balanced membership.
- We are currently working with Audience Councils to explore audience views on portrayal of all audiences.

#### **Areas for improvement**

- Continuing to broaden our engagement with seldom heard groups and communities through our Audience Councils.

**Objective 3:** To monitor and assess the BBC's compliance with its equalities duties and on an annual basis publish its observations of such. The Trust will also monitor and assess its own compliance with the equalities duties and on an annual basis publish its observations.

#### **Key achievements during 2008/2009**

- We held an event with Trustees and invited senior external figures to discuss with them the importance of equality and diversity in their oversight role.
- This year we ran a wholesale review of the BBC Executive's arrangements to collect the licence fee. The equality duties apply to these responsibilities which gave us a further opportunity to look at how the BBC is meeting its commitments in its equality schemes, including the Gender Equality Scheme, in relation to TV Licensing. Incorporating oversight of the relevant aspects of the equality schemes informed our approach to research and suggestions for improvement made in the report.
- Our equality and diversity review highlighted improvements we could make to our equality impact assessment (EIA) practice – in particular ensuring that we are starting the process early enough to really make a difference. As a result we have already begun developing a series of information guides for our staff centred around each of the equality strands, including gender and gender reassignment. We are presenting these to our staff using workshops which together we hope will improve our practice further.

- This year we decided to report back to licence fee payers on our activities differently. We have recently tended to write a single annual report but we recognise that this does not meet everyone's needs. As a result, one way we will be reporting back to licence fee payers this year is through a short pamphlet giving information in a much more accessible way which we hope will benefit more people, including women.

**Objective 4:** To provide licence fee payers with equal and fair access to the BBC's complaints process regardless of their gender.

**Key achievements during 2008/2009**

- We are currently running a project over the next two years to test the effectiveness of the BBC Executive's complaints processes. Equality and diversity have been key to our thinking and we are finding ways to investigate whether who you are or what you complain about affects what happens in any way.
- We influenced the BBC Executive's procurement process for audience services, including the complaints process. The tender process will ask prospective contractors to consider how they would collect equality data on both complainants and complaints (including gender) as part of ensuring equality in the process.
- This year we advertised for freelance Editorial Advisers (who advise us on individual editorial complaints at the final stage) through an open process for the first time. We hope this will result in a pool of advisers from a broader range of professional and individual backgrounds.

**Objective 5:** To ensure that women and men including trans people have equality of access to consultations and are involved in Trust decision-making regarding issues which are of a public nature.

**Key achievement during 2008/2009**

- We ran a number of public consultations this year, some of which received large numbers of responses. The consultation linked to the Trust's Review of BBC Children's Services was the first Trust consultation which heard from more women than men. Our staff leading the Service Review of Services for Younger Audiences (Radio 1, iXtra and BBC Three) worked with the BBC Executive to ensure that promotion for the consultation was trailed on BBC Switch (more likely to be used by young women) to address an initial imbalance which was appearing in responses to the consultation. After this intervention, the consultation achieved a good gender balance in its responses overall.

**Area for improvement**

- Our review of equality and diversity pointed to our practice in this area and challenged us to think harder about how we reach more people, in particular women given that women are persistently less likely to respond to our public consultations. We hope to make progress on our EIA practice and that this will help enormously to ensure that we are hearing from more women.

**Objective 6:** To ensure that, where appropriate and reasonable, the Trust's public reports and communications (including online) are accessible (in language, format and content) for women and men, including trans people.

**Key achievements during 2008/2009**

- We are developing ways to communicate with licence fee payers using more accessible language which we hope will make us more approachable. Part of this work includes reviewing our website to ensure that it is easier to navigate and to find information. We are communicating with more people with our email updates to promote our work but we know there is far more to do here, given what we know about gendered use of the internet.

**Objective 7:** To ensure that diversity and equality matters are integrated into the Trust's governance tools.

**Key achievements during 2008/2009**

- Finding ways to integrate diversity within our governance tools was the main objective of our equality and diversity review, which highlighted a range of challenges which we are working to address. Some early progress includes:
  - Packs of relevant information ("equality narratives") and the accompanying workshops will equip staff to conduct more meaningful EIAs in Trust work, including its regulatory tools. To support this further, Project Managers will have an individual objective to follow Trust Unit guidelines relating to project management and EIAs.
  - Developing a comprehensive handbook for our staff on running service reviews which includes guidance to start an EIA during the first stage of the review, which should be shared with Trustees along with other documentation relating to the project.
  - The Trust Unit's senior management team meets quarterly to discuss progress on diversity generally, including the challenges highlighted in our equality and diversity review. This complements the work of our Equalities Working Group which meets monthly with representation from every team across the Trust Unit.

For further detail on each of the objectives relating to the Trust and the corresponding actions, see Section 8, Action Plan Part 2, of the Gender Equality Scheme.

## **Public function: the BBC's obligations in relation to digital switchover**

(For further detail on the range of public functions which relate to digital switchover, see the Annex to the Gender Equality Scheme.)

**Objective 1:** To aim to provide appropriate, responsive and sensitive communications and advice to all communities of interest

### **Key achievements during 2008/2009**

- The Digital Switchover Help Scheme (Help Scheme) branding and equipment undergo significant user testing in order to identify and mitigate potential barriers for women and men within the target group audiences.
- Ongoing engagement of Digital UK Regional Managers with community organisations includes consumer groups, charities, volunteer groups and social services departments within local authorities.

**Objective 2:** To ensure that the transition to digital-only broadcasting is a fully inclusive process

### **Key achievements during 2008/2009**

- We established a programme, Maximising Reach, designed to ensure that we are confident that as many people eligible for the scheme as possible have the opportunity to use it. We propose to work with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to help identify eligible people better. This will help us to work more efficiently with people working locally in the regions and give seldom heard people a better opportunity to access the Help Scheme.
- Our overall outreach programme is designed through various community organisations, groups and individuals to promote awareness and understanding and help us engage with people at greatest risk of being left behind. Research carried out by the Help Scheme identified three key sectors within the community likely to interact with eligible people:
  - Community professionals (home visit based, volunteers, neighbourhood-based, practice-based or public services)
  - Local businesses and services (in-home services, threshold services, out-of-home services)
  - Local residents (community-minded peers)

We are prioritising community elements, and our Networkers and other volunteers will target them to make them aware of the Help Scheme, and assist and train them, if necessary, to disseminate messages about the Help Scheme.

- We consult every year to hear the views of eligible people on key aspects of the scheme's policy and delivery. Futures Company conducted our consultation this year, running workshops and interviews with 150 eligible people and carers across the UK. The results of the consultation showed that the Switchover Help

Scheme promise – to provide for users and to make it simple to switch to digital – really connects with people and creates high expectations. While most people welcome choice, some people found the scheme stressful to navigate and more complicated than they expected. There was a risk that people would make the wrong choice for them, or walk away from the scheme altogether because of the perceived complexity. As a result the Scheme Agreement has been amended to rule out for the standard offer services which include time-based trials.

- The Code of Service Standards outlines the level and standard of service that people using the Help Scheme can expect. The Code of Service Standards is a living document and has been amended following consultation with people. For example:
  - Promotion of our face-to-face options – we have now stated explicitly that home visits are available with chaperones before, during and after installation.
  - Increased provision for minority ethnic and cultural considerations, for example leaving shoes at the door and consideration of prayer times.
- Digital UK created two Help Scheme TV adverts in November 2008, one specifically targeting older audiences and one specifically targeting disabled audiences – and their friends and colleagues.
- Following research identifying key groups of people who interact with the most seldom heard and who could be motivated to help pass on the Help Scheme message, Digital UK developed a series of A5 leaflets aimed at in home carers, threshold service workers and peers to be distributed by on-the-ground teams. These were piloted in the West Country region in March and April 2009.

### **Area for improvement**

- Focus is needed on identifying and addressing any issues relevant to women, given we know that they make up the majority of people eligible for the Help Scheme.

**Objective 3:** To ensure that all DSO and Help Scheme related information and modes of communication are appropriate, flexible and accessible for the target audience

### **Key achievement during 2008/2009**

- Help Scheme communications materials underwent significant user testing to identify and mitigate potential barriers for people within the target group audiences, including women. Examples included TV advertising campaigns, where we found that the advertisement focused on older people worked well but the advert targeted at disabled people was less effective. As a result we revisited our approach and engaged Eleanor Simmonds, a British double gold medal winner at the 2008 Paralympic Games, with promising results. The scripts for the advert were tested with focus groups with disabled people in February 2009. This informed the use of Eleanor Simmonds as the lead character and the script.

**Objective 4:** To consult with a range of women and men including younger and older people in the planning and rollout of DSO

**Key achievement during 2008/2009**

- We consult annually with people eligible for the Help Scheme specifically to ensure that the scheme is shaped by its users.

**Objective 5:** To gather and use information effectively in order to monitor and assess the impact of current and planned DSO policies and practices with regard to gender equality

**Key achievements during 2008/2009**

- We set up a Help Scheme Equalities Working Group, which meets quarterly, and established terms of reference for the group. The group will monitor and report on progress related to commitments in each of the BBC equality schemes, including the Gender Equality Scheme.
- Eaga plc tested the information pack, which is sent to potential users to inform them of their rights under the Help Scheme, with people from the target groups to identify and remove any barriers, and this process is ongoing.
- The existing customer satisfaction survey, customer complaints procedure, installation inspections and call centre mystery shopping are all being designed and reviewed systematically to monitor gender equality. Issues will be logged and progress monitored in the equalities action plan. We have completed the first round of mystery shopping, which demonstrated a strong call centre performance in dealing with the needs of eligible people.
- The Digital UK tracker informs us of awareness and understanding of the Help Scheme among women and men. This is used in evaluating the current contact strategy.

**Area for improvement**

- We will extend mystery shopping beyond the contact centre into other areas of the service.

**Objective 6:** To ensure effective internal monitoring and GES outcomes evaluation

- All four of the major-decision making forums, namely the Design Authority, the Operations Group, the Markets Direction Group and the Marketing and Communications Group, are now explicitly charged with undertaking EIAs on all major decisions.
- Quarterly research will accompany our annual consultation to assist us to review our progress against our commitments in the BBC equality schemes, including the Gender Equality Scheme to identify lessons and any remedial action.

## **Other BBC public functions (under the BBC Agreement)**

### **Public function: Making the UK public services widely available**

For more detail on this public function and the related actions, see Section 9, Action Plan, Part 3 (ii), of the Gender Equality Scheme.

### **Public function: Code relating to provision for deaf and visually impaired people and power to modify targets**

For more detail on this public function and the related actions, see Section 9, Action Plan, Part 3 (ii), of the Gender Equality Scheme.

### **Public function: Reports and accounts about the commercial services**

For more detail on this public function and the related actions, see Section 9, Action Plan, Part 3 (ii), of the Gender Equality Scheme.

### **Public function: The BBC may be requested to broadcast or distribute announcements in relation to defence and emergency arrangements**

For more detail on this public function and the related actions, see Section 9, Action Plan, Part 3 (ii), of the Gender Equality Scheme.

For more detail on each of these public functions and the related actions, see Section 9, Action Plan, Part 3 (ii), of the Gender Equality Scheme.