



Information Policy & Compliance
bbc.co.uk/foi

By email to

18 March 2008

Dear

Freedom of information request – RFI20080271

Thank you for your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 dated 17 March 2008. Your requests and the response to each are set out below.

1. How many requests have been received by the organisation to date since January 2005 (approximate figures)

Below are the figures for the number of requests received each year to date:

2005 – 971

2006 – 777

2007 – 1082

2008 (to 17th March) - 271

2. How many staff are employed for the purposes of responding to requests for information.

The BBC has used a partially decentralised system to provide answers under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). In practice this means there is a small central team who process and co-ordinate the requests received, but that the bulk of the answers are generated by staff across the BBC, as part of their normal workload. The Information Policy and Compliance team co-ordinates these responses and provides central expert and legal advice on both FOIA and the Data Protection Act. It has nine full-time members of staff, including a team assistant who administers the working of the team as a whole. Approximately half of the eight remaining staff's time is spent on FOIA, with most of the rest of their time spent on Data Protection Act compliance.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

3 How many staff are employed by the organisation across the UK

The number of staff employed by the BBC (excluding its commercial subsidiaries BBC Worldwide Ltd and BBC Resources Ltd) was 21,235, as at 29 February 2008.

4 On how many occasions has the BBC applied the exemption at section 14 of the FOIA (vexatious requests) and, of these refusals, how many have been challenged by the applicants.

2005 – 23. These were multiple requests from a single applicant, and the applicant did challenge the BBC's decision. The Information Commissioner's Office decided that the BBC had correctly refused the requests under section 14(1). The reference number for the decision notice is FS50086298 and it is published on the Information Commissioner's website at http://www.ico.gov.uk/upload/documents/decisionnotices/2007/fs_50086298.pdf

2006 – 0

2007 – 2. We are not aware of any challenge to the Information Commissioner's Office.

2008 to date – 0

5 What guidance is provided to staff in determining whether a request should be declined as vexatious?

The BBC does not have any internal guidance or policies on determining whether a request should be considered vexatious under the Act. Each case is considered on an individual basis, with reference to guidance published by the Information Commissioner and the Ministry of Justice. Internal or external legal advice may be taken if necessary.

Appeal Rights

If you are not satisfied with this response 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, Wycliff House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF, telephone 01625 545 700 or see <http://www.ico.gov.uk/>

Yours sincerely

Rachel Hallett
Advisor, Information Policy & Compliance