



Information Policy and Compliance

bbc.co.uk/foi

Mr (

By email to:

11 July 2007

Dear Mr

Freedom of information request - RF12007000532

I refer to your request under the Freedom of Information Act ('the Act') of 4 July 2007, for information relating to Television Licensing. I quote the specifics of your request below:

TV Licensing web page quotes the following: You need a TV Licence to use any television receiving equipment such as a TV set, set-top boxes, video or DVD recorders, computers or mobile phones to watch or record TV programmes as they are being shown on TV.

If one of your officers was to enter an unlicensed house, either with the permission of the householder or after being granted a warrant from a magistrate and subsequently discovered that a TV set, set-top box, VCR or DVD recorder was not present at the residence, however, a personal computer which was connected to a broadband internet connection was present, he presumably has the right to inspect the PC to ensure that a television receiving device is not installed on the computer.

What options are available to the officer and Television Licensing once discovering that the PC has been password locked and the householder refuses to unlock the computer?

In accordance with section 1(1) of the Act, the BBC is able to confirm that we do not hold the information you have requested, specifically recorded information relating to the action a visiting officer would take should a personal computer be locked by a householder.

Appeal rights

If you are not satisfied with the response to your request for information as set out above you have the right to an internal review by a BBC senior manager or legal adviser. Please contact us at the 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, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF, telephone 01625 545 700 or see <http://www.ico.gov.uk/>

Your requests

Our records show that you have made ten requests under the Freedom of Information Act to the BBC over the past 10 months for very similar information relating to the technicalities involved in enforcing the Television Licensing regime. The BBC is happy to respond to your requests for information under the Act, however we must consider the time involved in searching for this information and whether these very similar requests are placing a disproportionate burden on BBC resources.

Under section 12 of the Act, we are permitted to decline a request if to compliance would exceed the 'appropriate limit', which is set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. In deciding whether or not the appropriate limit has been reached, the BBC may aggregate requests received which relate to the same or similar information.

We respectfully suggest that in the future that you consider whether or not the BBC has already answered the question you wish to ask. It is our belief, having noted your previous requests and our responses to those requests, that the BBC has provided you with substantial information relating to the television licensing system. We have already explained to you that the BBC has a duty to enforce the television licensing system and it is essential that effective deterrents against evasion are maintained for this purpose. For this reason, the BBC is unable to provide technical specifications about detection equipment as disclosure would be likely to prejudice the detection of and prevention of license fee evasion. We have also explained in respect of a number of your requests that the BBC may where appropriate withhold certain information where disclosure would or would be likely to prejudice the prevention or detection of crime.

Yours sincerely,

Stephanie Simmonds
Senior Advisor - Compliance
BBC Information Policy and Compliance