



Information Policy and Compliance  
[bbc.co.uk/foi](http://bbc.co.uk/foi)

26 September 2007

Dear

**Freedom of information request – RFI2007000747**

Thank you for your request dated 30 August 2007 seeking further information about TV Licensing. Your request is being dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“the Act”).

Please note that “TV Licensing” is a trading name used by companies contracted by the BBC to administer the collection of television licence fees and enforcement of the television licensing system. The majority of the administration of TV Licensing is contracted to Capita Business Services Ltd (which undertakes the majority of the administration of the TV Licensing system), with the administration of our cash related payment schemes contracted to Revenues Management Services Ltd (RMS). PayPoint Network Ltd and PayPoint Collections Ltd are contracted to provide over-the-counter services. The marketing and public relations activities are contracted to the AMV Consortium. The consortium is made up of the following four companies: Abbott Mead Vickers BBDO Ltd, Fishburn Hedges Boys Williams Limited, PHD Media Limited and Proximity London Ltd. The BBC is a public authority in respect of its television licensing functions and retains overall responsibility.

In your request you asked the following (I have numbered your questions for ease of reference):

1. *How many notifications do you receive from the point of sale regarding new equipment purchased each year (the details requested at the retailer)?*

As you may know, the Wireless Telegraphy Act 1967 (as amended) places an obligation on television retailers to supply the name and address of a person who hires or purchases a television set to TV Licensing within 28 days of the purchase date. A retailer would be committing an offence under the Wireless Telegraphy Act if they failed to provide this



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

information. When TV Licensing receives such a notification, a comparison is made with their records and, if there is no record of a licence in the name and address of the purchaser, an initial enquiry letter is sent. It may interest you to know that in 2006-07 TV Licensing sent 1.4 million such initial enquiry letters.

Figures for numbers of dealer notifications received by TV Licensing since 2002 are as follows:

Financial year	Number of dealer notifications
2001/02	7,524,902
2002/03	6,614,833
2003/04	8,303,602
2004/05	11,365,912
2005/06	9,505,506
2006/07	8,913,391

2. *Of these, what percentage have been submitted with obviously fake details?*

An estimate of the percentage of forms submitted with obviously fake details is not held.

As stated above, a dealer notification triggers a mailing to an address in all cases where the name on the notification is different from the name of a television licence holder. Any dealers deliberately supplying TV Licensing with false names will be subjected to follow up by the enforcement team.

3. *What percentage of addresses given already have valid TV licences?*

An estimate of the percentage of dealer notifications received by TV Licensing listing addresses which already have a valid TV licence is not held. However, I can tell you that of the addresses to which we sent initial enquiry letters in 2006-07 as a result of a dealer notification, one third resulted in a confirmation that a current licence was already held for that address under a different name.

4. *What percentage of these pieces of data yield a licence sale as a result?*

As indicated above, in many cases, the sending of initial enquiry letters will result in the purchase of a licence or advice from the customer that the TV set was obtained for another person or address. However, around half of the people we mail in this way do not respond to the letter at all. Of the total number of people we mail in this way, around 10.7% purchased a licence in 2006-07.

It may also interest you to know that our dealer notification procedures generate an income of around £16 million per annum.

## **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 provided, 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/>

I hope this response is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

**Natalie Saunderson**  
**Policy Adviser**  
**BBC TV Licensing Management Team**