



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

05 March 2008

Dear ,

**Freedom of information request – RFI20080154**

Thank you for your request received on 07 February 2008 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 message you asked the following:

*How many people in Northern Ireland have been prosecuted for not having a TV licence?*

It is important to highlight that the BBC/TV Licensing does not prosecute except where it has sufficient evidence and it is in the public interest to do. This is a key principle of the Crown Prosecution Guidelines which TV Licensing publicly states that it adheres to and a magistrate would not convict if there was not sufficient evidence and public interest. Independent third parties (a magistrate or, in Scotland, a sheriff) also consider whether evidence presented by TV Licensing in support of prosecutions (and applications for search warrants) has been obtained fairly and lawfully.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Although you specifically mention the Freedom of Information Act in your request, information is exempt under section 21(1) of this Act if it constitutes information which is accessible to the applicant by other means. In relation to your particular question, official statistics on prosecutions are retained by the Home Office and published in their annual report *Criminal Statistics England and Wales*. The latest versions of the report can be found on the Home Office website at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/>. At various points these statistics have been made public, particularly in relation to questions asked in parliament (which are available in Hansard) and other government publications.

### **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**