

13/09/2011

BBC Governors - What we do

BBC GOVERNORSThis is an archive site, please go to **BBC Trust**

WHAT WE DO

As Governors of the BBC, our main role is to ensure that the BBC remains independent of political or commercial interference and is run solely in the interests of viewers and listeners.

We supervise its activities, particularly those of senior management, and ensure its accountability to licence payers both directly and via Parliament.

In some ways we're like the Board of a plc, in that we're here to keep an eye on those running the Corporation and make sure they do it properly. In other ways, we're like a regulator, making sure the BBC does what it's obliged to by its Charter, Agreement and Statute.

However, the BBC is a unique institution. It is funded by the licence fee and therefore owned by the British people and is independent of political and commercial interests. Therefore, we act for licence fee payers, and are here to make sure the BBC offers value for money. (Having said which we also oversee the BBC's operating subsidiaries such as BBC Worldwide Limited and BBC Resources Limited: commercial operations which do aim to make profits for investment in programme making.)

We operate under the terms of our Charter, Article 7 of which lays down specific things we must do, such as:

- approve clear objectives and promises for the BBC's services, programmes and other activities, and monitor how well it meets the objectives and keeps the promises
- hold the BBC to the terms of its agreement with the Secretary of State, its fair trading commitments and the highest standards of probity, propriety and value for money
- determine the BBC's strategy for providing services, programmes and other activities in the UK, making sure they reflect the public's needs and interests
- make sure the BBC consults closely with the National Broadcasting Councils in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and the English National Forum and Regional Advisory Councils, about services for each nation and region
- ensure that comments, proposals and complaints are properly handled
- determine the strategy for and oversee the provision of the BBC's commercial operating subsidiaries (those not funded by the licence fee) to make sure they're funded, operated and accounted for separately from the Public Services
- help determine the BBC's strategy relating to broadcasting or transmission of World Service programmes
- establish and maintain an Audit Committee
- appoint the Director General and, with him, the rest of the Board, and other key managers
- make sure broadcasts that can be received outside the UK comply with all applicable international obligations

Related links

[The Department for Culture, Media and Sport](#)
[Ofcom](#)

[The Future of the BBC](#)

[DCMS Charter Review Website](#)

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- make sure the BBC fulfils its legal and contractual obligations, particularly regarding impartiality and standards of taste and decency, and that it complies with any directions from the Office of Communications (OFCOM)
- produce an Annual Report each year
- determine senior executives' remuneration

We're briefed on these responsibilities when we're first appointed, and receive ongoing training while serving, to make sure we're fully familiar with them as they are, and as they develop over time.

The Board's Standing Orders

The Board has adopted Standing Orders that outline the Governors' responsibilities and the operations of the Board and its committees. You can download this document below.

[PDF \(31Kb\)](#)

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Conflict of Interests Regulations

The Board's Conflict of Interests Regulations outline how the Board deals with actual, potential and perceived conflicts of interests. The purpose of these regulations is to ensure that the deliberations and decisions of the Board of Governors are made in the best interests of licence fee payers. You can download the regulations below.

[PDF \(30Kb\)](#)

[Text only](#)

Register of Interests

Governors individual declarations of interests can be found in the section **Who we are**, however to view them in one document, please see below.

[PDF \(70Kb\)](#)

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Expenses Policy

The BBC's standard policy for claiming expenses in the course of business forms the basis of the Board of Governors' regulations for expenses and benefits, but the regulations differ in some respects, reflecting the Governors' different role and responsibilities from that of BBC employees. The Governors' regulations can be downloaded below. In addition to the process of approval prior to reimbursement, Governors' expenses are reviewed retrospectively twice-yearly by the **Audit Committee**.

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