

# Your BBC – Your say : BBC Charter Review - public consultation by DCMS 2004

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) is asking the British public to give its views on the BBC now and in the future. The BBC's activities are governed by a Royal Charter – a document that shapes what the BBC is for, what it does and how it does it. A review of the BBC, called the Charter review is now being carried out. Once it is completed, the DCMS will be able to consider what the BBC of the future will look like.

Anyone with a television pays for the BBC through its licence fee. That gives them a stake in its future. Since 1927, a review has been carried out every 10 years or so to see how the BBC is serving the public and to consider its future.

You can play a role in this review by letting the DCMS know what you think. Your views matter. Nothing is ruled in or out of the review. It's your BBC; have your say. (More info' is on the BBC & Charter review website - [www.bbccharterreview.org.uk](http://www.bbccharterreview.org.uk) or at local libraries.)

## KEY QUESTIONS

To help people think about the BBC, the DCMS have drawn up a list of key questions. They want you to send them your responses. Their key questions have been set out here as a questionnaire by mediamarch, with space provided for your comments, thus making it easier for you to respond.

Please note you do NOT have to respond to every question. (If you need more space, continue on the back of this sheet.) The questions are:

- **What do you value most about the BBC?** e.g. is it the news, sports, arts or educational coverage? How well does it serve different nations, regions and communities in the UK? What subjects does it cover less well?  
*I HAVE NO EXPERIENCE OF THIS.*
- **How should the BBC adapt to cope with changes in technology and culture?** e.g. how should it take account of the rise in use of the internet or digital TV?  
*THOROUGHLY BUT CAUTIOUSLY SO AS NOT TO EXCLUDE VIEWERS OR LISTENERS WHO ARE SLOW IN KEEPING UP WITH THE TECHNOLOGY*
- **What do you think of the TV, radio and online services the BBC provides?** What changes if any would you like to see?  
*I HAVE NO EXPERIENCE OF THIS.*
- **Should the BBC run commercial services?** The BBC produces magazines like The Radio Times and DVDs of popular programmes like The Office. Its main commercial arm, BBC Worldwide, put £123m back into public services in 2002/03. Do you think the BBC should continue running commercial operations?  
*THE PRESENT METHOD IS QUITE SATISFACTORY*
- **How should we pay for the BBC?** Is the licence fee the best method or can you suggest any alternative?  
*LICENCE IS THE BEST WAY @ THE MOMENT. COMMERCIAL SERVICES 1/10 ADVERTISING SPACE*  
*COULD LEAD TO "SPONSORS" CONTROLLING CONTENT.*
- **Is the BBC organised in the most effective and efficient way?** Is it set up to provide the very best services for the public?  
*I HAVE INSUFFICIENT KNOWLEDGE OF THE BUSINESS TECHNICALITIES, AND PREFER NOT TO COMMENT*
- **How should the BBC be run? How should it be regulated?** The BBC's Governors currently have a dual role. First, overseeing how the BBC is run internally. Secondly, regulating on behalf of the public interest, e.g. making sure it meets standards of accuracy, impartiality and fair trading. Is this the best approach?  
*BOTH ROLES ARE ESSENTIAL, HOWEVER, THE STANDARDS QUOTED MUST NOT BE SUBSERVIENT TO MANAGEMENT CONVENIENCE, NEITHER TO DOCTRINAL (OR POLITICAL) CONTROL. SPECIAL CARE MUST BE TAKEN OVER MATTERS WHICH HAVE RELIGIOUS ... \**
- **How do we ensure that the BBC is properly accountable to the public and to Parliament?** Should the public have a greater say and influence on the BBC? If so, how?  
*BY BEING READY TO ACKNOWLEDGE BOTH COMMENT AND CRITICISM – AND BY PUBLICISING THAT THIS IS DONE.*

Other Comments (continue on back of this sheet if necessary):

\* ... MORAL OR CULTURAL CONTENT; SOME OF THESE ARE PROTECTED BY LAW, BUT IN OTHER CASES THE BOUNDARIES ARE VERY VAGUE.

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Return this sheet to: BBC Charter Review Consultation, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2-4 Cockspur Street, London SW1Y 5DH Tel: 020 7211 6418 Email: [bbccharterreview@culture.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:bbccharterreview@culture.gsi.gov.uk)

The DCMS aim to publish all responses within 10 working days of receipt. You can request that your response be kept confidential. You can also give your views directly to Ministers at public meetings being held across the UK. See Charter review website for details.

Closing date for your response to arrive at DCMS : March 31<sup>st</sup> 2004

1. MORE "CARE" & SYMPATHY NEEDED IN CERTAIN INTERVIEWS.  
TOO OFTEN AN ADVERSARIAL ROLE IS ADOPTED BY THE INTERVIEWER WHO IS USUALLY SKILLED IN THIS TECHNIQUE.  
THIS CAN OFTEN (USUALLY?) RESULT IN A BIASED OUTCOME - AND ON CERTAIN OCCASIONS A PREDETERMINED OBJECTIVE, FREQUENTLY NOT SHARED BY THE INTERVIEWEE,

2. NEWS ITEMS ARE FREQUENTLY COMBINED WITH BOTH "EXPERT" AND ILL-THOUGHT COMMENTS AND OPINIONS" PLUS REPETITIONS, RECORDINGS AND "LIBRARY PICTURES" WHICH RESULT IN A DISTORTION OF THE SUBJECT WHICH IS BEING REPORTED - OBSCURING THE TRUTH WITHOUT DENYING IT.

~~INJUDICIOUS CHOICE OF WORDS OCCURS ALL TOO FREQUENTLY: -~~

ROW for a difficult or intense discussion.

FUDGE for a compromise.

WHITEWASH when there has been no immediate result or no-one to blame.

3. ON OCCASIONS THE "CHAIRMAN" IN DISCUSSIONS WILL SEEK TO DOMINATE THE PROGRAMME RATHER THAN CONTROL OR GUIDE IT - SUCH THAT THE SITUATION DESCRIBED IN "1" ARISES.

4. MANY PROGRAMMES HAVE TOO MUCH INTRUSIVE BACKGROUND MUSIC - BOTH CONVENTIONAL & ABSTRACT, WHICH CAN BE ANNOYING OR EVEN DISTURBING (THIS HAS FOR MANY YEARS BEEN EXPLOITED BY "SUSPENSE" OR "HORROR" FILMS) THE EMOTIONAL EFFECT OF THIS REMAINS IN THE HOME AFTER THE PROGRAMME HAS FINISHED (IN CONTRAST TO IT BEING CURTAILED & LESSENED BY GETTING BACK INTO THE "REAL WORLD" ON LEAVING THE CINEMA.) NOW IT CAN BE RE-ENFORCED BY REPEATED SHOWING OF VIDEO RECORDINGS.

5. THERE ARE TWO OTHER WAYS IN WHICH THE SITUATIONS DESCRIBED IN "4" ABOVE CAN BE UNDESIRABLE.

i) IN OFT REPEATED "TRAILERS", WHICH CAN BE PARTICULARLY MISLEADING AND DISTURBING IN THE WAY SCENES OF SEX, VIOLENCE & HORROR, ASSOCIATED WITH ("JUST WATERSHED" ITEMS!?) ARE INTRODUCED EARLIER IN THE DAY.

ii) THE WAY IN WHICH "JINGLES" AND "MUSRAIL" ARE PLAYED BEHIND eg: - ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ROAD TRAFFIC REPORTS, MAKING THEM SO DIFFICULT TO HEAR AND UNDERSTAND THAT THERE COULD BE DANGEROUS CONSEQUENCES

6. ---- THIS WOULD BE BEST FACILITATED BY THERE BEING A STATUTORY INDEPENDENT BODY TO OVERSEE THE CONTENT OF PROGRAMMES WITH REGARD TO VIOLENCE, SEX AND DEPRAVITY WITH SPECIAL REGARD TO THE WELL-BEING OF THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE AND TO ADVISE THE GOVERNORS OF THE SAME.