

BBC Charter Review Consultation,
LONDON
SW1Y 5DH.

14th March 2004.

Dear Sir,

Having noticed your leaflet, "YOUR BBC, YOUR SAY", I would like to offer the following comments.

I have been generally happy to watch BBC TV programmes for many years on analogue TV & only recently started to receive digital programmes.

I spend a lot of my time driving my car ferrying patients to & from hospitals & the car radio is always in the "ON" position, usually to BBC Radio 2 & sometimes to BBC Radio Berkshire or BBC Radio Oxford. When I have passengers the sound is "OFF", with RDS & TP set "ON" to receive traffic reports.

My main concern is with the un-professional quality of some BBC Radio programmes particularly under two headings;

- 1) RDS Traffic Information reports.
- 2) Inefficient time-keeping.

1) RDS/TP - Traffic Information Reports.

These bulletins are transmitted by BBC local radio stations at regular intervals during the day giving very useful road & traffic information to any vehicle driver with their radio tuned-in to receive the bulletin. Depending on the location of the vehicle it will receive reports from local radio stations within its area of travel & these reports override whatever the driver was listening to, whether it was Radio, Tape or C.D..

(2)

My concern is that when "TP" cuts in on many occasions you hear a part of a programme or a non-sensical discussion between the programme presenter & the travel reporter which means nothing to the listener who has just been connected to that wavelength by the T.P. connection. On some occasions this crazy banter is for so long that all the traffic information is not heard before the "TP" is disconnected by the system.

Another problem locally concerns the traffic reports from neighbouring BBC Radios, Berkshire & Oxford. At peak times these reports sometimes over-ride each other so it is not possible to hear both. As these counties neighbour on to each other it is essential for many travellers to be able to hear both reports. If this is not technically possible, then both reports should be merged into a joint bulletin on both wavelengths, as, I believe, used to be the case.

Finally, on Travel Reports, I am unhappy that the opportunity seems to be taken by some programme presenter to promote what is coming up next on their wavelength before the "TP" bulletin is switched off. This is not the purpose of the "TP" facility & I believe it to be unacceptable.

2) Inefficient time keeping.

In the "good old days" it was always considered that the BBC had a very professional way of presenting programmes, but, I'm afraid this is not always the case nowadays.

My particular concern is that News Bulletins which are planned for certain times are sometimes late in occurring. I have particularly noticed frequently on a Saturday morning the 11-00hrs bulletin on BBC Radio 2 has been late because the programme


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presenter Jonathan Ross seems unwilling or unable to end his discussions at the correct time for the News Presenter to proceed. On such occasions no apology is offered for a late changeover.

Summary

I believe the BBC Charter should be renewed & it kept in the Public Sector financed by the licence fee. However, there is a need for a greater control to be kept on the quality of its output both by internal procedures & by an external body with the power to demand changes.

I hope the foregoing may be of use to you, but if not & you'd like to forward it to a suitable person within the BBC I'd be happy for you to do.

Yours faithfully,


(J.V. SALTER)