

Note to Broadcasters

Monitoring of diversity and equal opportunities in broadcasting

Introduction

In February we published a note for broadcasters in Ofcom's Broadcast and On Demand bulletin¹, explaining our planned next steps for carrying out the annual television and radio diversity monitoring exercise. This note provides an update on the status of **stage one** of the monitoring exercise and further detail on **stage two**.

Monitoring of the television and radio industry

Stage one information request

On 1 March 2021 we sent out an initial information request to television broadcasters which you will have received if you told us last year that your employees totalled **50 or under**, or if you are a new licensee. For radio broadcasters, the initial information request was sent out on 8 March 2021.

The stage one information request asked for information related to your number of employees and the number of days you are licensed to broadcast per year, to identify whether you are required to complete a full questionnaire at stage two (see below). This request was sent to licence contacts by email. The questions were contained in an online survey, accessed via a link, included as part of the email.

Licensees would have received a reminder email to complete the survey, if it was still outstanding. The deadline for completion for television licensees was 15 March 2021. For radio licensees the deadline for completion is today 22 March 2021.

If you fail to submit the requested information by the deadline, or contact us before the deadline to explain why you are unable to do so, we may investigate your compliance with the relevant licence conditions and a breach of your licence may be recorded.

Stage two information request

If you identified at stage one as meeting the relevant thresholds², or you informed us last year that you have **over 50 employees**, you will receive the stage two information request in April.

¹ Issue number 420.

² Have more than 20 employees and licensed to broadcast for more than 31 days per year.

Last year, in recognition of the unprecedented circumstances regarding the Covid-19 crisis having raised specific issues for all our stakeholders, we changed the threshold and required only those with over 100 employees to complete a reduced stage two questionnaire. This year we are returning to a threshold of 20 employees or more and will also request outstanding data from last year.

This means that if you have over 20 employees and are licensed to broadcast for more than 31 days per year, but were not asked to fill in the stage two questionnaire last year, then this year you will receive two identical questionnaires: one for the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 and a second for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. If you completed a reduced questionnaire last year you will be asked to complete the outstanding questions for that period plus the full questionnaire for the latest period 20/21.

The stage two information request will consist of a detailed questionnaire asking about your workforce and a reduced number of questions asking about your equal opportunities arrangements, which will need to be completed and returned to Ofcom. You will have 8 weeks to complete the survey.

Accessing stage two questionnaires

This year there will be a slight change in how some licensees receive their questionnaires. Those licensees who took part in completing the reduced questionnaire last year (for the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020) will receive their partially completed questionnaire back for completion, along with a blank questionnaire to complete for the latest period (1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021). Both of these questionnaires will be sent via our secure MFT, as last year's questionnaire will contain confidential data.

For those licensees who did not complete a questionnaire last year, but have over 20 employees and are licensed to broadcast for more than 31 per year, both blank questionnaires will be sent via email. New licensees, who meet the threshold, will only be required to complete a questionnaire for the latest period (1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021) and that will be sent via email.

If you are required to complete the stage two information request then your licence contact will be sent the information request by email with instructions on how to access the questionnaires.

How will the information be used?

We will use the information to produce our next diversity and equal opportunities in broadcasting report, which we plan to publish in Autumn 2021.

Any broadcasters who have questions related to this note please contact diversityinbroadcasting@ofcom.org.uk

Finally, we would like to remind you that it is your responsibility to ensure that your contact details held by Ofcom are accurate and up-to-date. Therefore, if this isn't the case, we ask that you email Broadcast.Licensing@ofcom.org.uk with your correct contact details.