Rhodri Talfan Davies
Deputy Director-General
BBC

Cristina Nicolotti Squires
Group Director
Broadcasting & Media Group

By email only

19 November 2026

Dear Rhodri,

I am writing regarding inaccuracies in the BBC's reporting of compliance with the local programming requirements in Condition 4.40.6 of the Operating Licence during the 2024/25 financial year.

The issues were initially raised by an individual who challenged the accuracy of the BBC's compliance reporting through the BBC's complaints process. The BBC did not uphold the complaint and continued to rely on the information underpinning its original assessment of compliance. The complainant subsequently referred the matter to us, and our review led to further engagement with the BBC regarding the basis for its compliance reporting.

As explained in the compliance annex to Ofcom's Annual Report on the BBC, through that engagement the BBC identified that six local radio stations did not comply with Condition 4.40.6 during the 2024/25 financial year. Its revised analysis showed that the shortfalls were relatively small, ranging from 0.5% to 2.7% of the relevant quota. It also acknowledged that information previously reported to Ofcom on compliance with that condition was inaccurate.

Accurate records, robust internal assurance processes and reliable compliance information are absolutely fundamental to our effective oversight of compliance with the Operating Licence and other regulatory requirements. It is essential we can have confidence in the information provided by the BBC and in the governance and assurance arrangements that support it.

In this case, inaccurate compliance information formed the basis of both the BBC's assessment of compliance and Ofcom's public reporting. Our review of information subsequently provided by the BBC identified discrepancies and weaknesses in the records and information used to assess and report compliance with Condition 4.40.6, making it difficult for us to establish the full extent of the reporting inaccuracies.

Of particular concern is that despite having access to its own records and information, the BBC did not identify the reporting errors when the complainant initially raised the complaint and continued to support its original assessment of compliance. It was only following our review and sustained engagement with the BBC that those errors were identified and acknowledged. Taken together, these issues raise serious concerns about the effectiveness of the controls, governance and assurance arrangements that supported compliance reporting during the period under review. We would have expected those arrangements to have enabled the BBC to identify and properly investigate those concerns when they were first raised.

We acknowledge the BBC's constructive engagement with our assessment and note the steps it has described to strengthen its reporting, oversight and assurance arrangements. However, given the shortcomings identified, we expect the BBC to explain to us in writing how its improvements are operating in practice and how they provide robust oversight and assurance across its compliance reporting activities. This includes ensuring that compliance assessments are supported by reliable records and effective governance arrangements capable of identifying, investigating and addressing

concerns at an early stage. We will continue to engage with the BBC and monitor the effectiveness of these arrangements.

Given the BBC's unique role in providing local news and information across the UK, and at a time of significant change in how the BBC is delivering for audiences across different platforms and services, it is particularly important that we, and audiences, can have confidence in the BBC's figures.

In light of the role of the original complaint in bringing these issues to light, we also expect the BBC to explain to the complainant the outcome of its review and the actions it is taking in response.

Yours sincerely,



Cristina Nicolotti Squires