



## **BBC GROUP MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT**

FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

This statement is made pursuant to section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015. It constitutes the BBC Group's sixth statement setting out the work undertaken during the financial year ended 31 March 2021 to further identify, prevent and address modern slavery across the organisation and its supply chains.

### **1. ORGANISATION**

The BBC is one of the largest public service broadcasting organisations in the world, established by Royal Charter and publicly funded from licence fee revenue paid by UK households. The BBC uses the income from the licence fee to provide television, radio and online services. The BBC Group comprises the public arm of the BBC, as well as BBC commercial subsidiaries which operate in the UK and internationally – most notably, BBC Studios, BBC Studioworks and BBC Global News Limited.

We are committed to ensuring everyone who works for and with us is treated fairly, is able to work safely and has their human rights protected and respected. During 2020/21<sup>1</sup> there were approximately 22,000 people working for us around the world and thousands more across our global supply chains. Our supply chains are complex, extensive and cover a wide range of products, goods not for resale, and services. We have a responsibility to prevent modern slavery from occurring in any form across our organisation and within our supply chains; we are committed to ensuring our organisational practices and risk-management approach support and facilitate this.

### **2. APPROACH TO TACKLING MODERN SLAVERY**

We have a targeted approach to identifying and tackling ethical issues, including modern slavery, in our organisation and supply chain. During 2020/21 the impact of the global pandemic has been felt both within our organisation and across our supply chain. Whilst this has undoubtedly presented challenges we have ensured that our fundamental approach has remained robust.

**In line with our multi-year programme we have structured governance and management arrangements at all levels which are focused on the issue of modern slavery.**

- Our work to tackle modern slavery is overseen by our quarterly Ethical Trade Working Group, consisting of stakeholders from key business areas, including those who manage the associated risks on a day to day basis. It drives our multi-year programme and facilitates collaboration and good practice sharing across the organisation.
- The Ethical Trade Working Group is supported by subject matter experts within the business, and external specialists where beneficial.
- The BBC Board receives an annual update on our activities in relation to tackling modern slavery.
- We continued to collaborate with other media companies through participation in the TV Industry Human Rights Forum, and with other large organisations through networks focused on tackling modern slavery, such as the Ethical Trading Initiative and the Greater Manchester Modern Slavery Business Network.

**We continued to promote policies which highlight our ethical requirements with our people and suppliers.**

- Policies and guidelines across the BBC Group set out our expectations of our people, stakeholders and suppliers. These policies are issued at the point of engagement with the individual or supplier, are accessible in directories on our website, and are reviewed periodically.

- Our Ethical Policy sets out our expectations of our suppliers. It is aligned with the Ethical Trading Initiative Base Code, and incorporates key International Labour Organisation Conventions and Recommendations, including clauses covering forced labour. This is referenced in our standard Supplier Terms of Trade.
- During 2020/21 we monitored that our Ethical Policy is included in contracts that had been entered into with BBC suppliers to help ensure consistency as well as actively discussing our continuing expectation with already existing suppliers.
- We continued to publicise our Code of Conduct to all staff which sets out our expectations of ethical conduct, fair, respectful treatment for our people, and also highlights how our employees and others engaged on BBC business may raise concerns.

**Our approach remained risk-based, targeted where people are most at risk.**

- We conducted our annual risk assessment to help identify where greater ethical risk exists to help target our activity. We considered where workers are more likely to be at risk of ethical issues, including modern slavery, based on the type of product or service being provided, their geographic location and any known previous issues. For our suppliers, we also considered their relationship with us in terms of scale and type. These factors affect our ability to influence and impact change.
- During 2020/21 we commissioned work to assess the robustness of our risk assessment process. This identified some areas for improvement around formalisation of governance arrangements and increasing the granularity of risk factors, although, overall, found the process to be sufficient for the exposure attracted by the BBC and the current level of maturity for the organisation. These findings will help us to further evolve and enhance our procedures to ensure our work remains focused on the areas of greatest risk.
- From this risk assessment, we identified our risk is greater in our supply chain categories of merchandise and licenced goods, events, construction, catering, security, temporary resources and production supply. Our due diligence measures described below focused on these areas.

**Our due diligence processes continued to identify and monitor issues, and work towards their resolution.**

- We continued to incorporate a standard set of ethical trade questions into all tender processes. Where there is an increased risk, further specific questions, are included to evaluate potential suppliers' ethical trade processes and controls.
- We engaged a risk-based selection of both new and existing suppliers on ethical trade and modern slavery issues. The results of this have been used to enhance our own processes, and those of our suppliers.
- BBC Studios continued their ethical trading programme which focuses on the risks in their licensing and branded product business. More detail can be found in the BBC Studios 2020/21 Modern Slavery Statement.

**We employed measures to monitor the on-going effectiveness of our programme.**

- These measures have been used to monitor compliance with our policies which include a zero tolerance of modern slavery. They include ensuring contracts reference our Ethical Policy, ensuring relevant tenders include questions on ethical trade and monitoring the engagement of key suppliers.
- During 2020/21 we have begun to develop further measures to provide greater oversight of the effectiveness of our programme, including monitoring the geographical spread of our supply chain. These will be used over the coming years to drive our work and help us understand where to focus our attention.

### **We have raised further awareness across key internal and external stakeholders.**

- We engaged directly with key teams and suppliers to help raise their awareness and understanding of the risks associated with modern slavery and the expectation the BBC has in managing these.
- Training on ethical trade and fair trading remained part of our awareness-raising approach and are mandatory for individuals directly engaging in related activity. Briefings are provided to teams, as necessary, to further embed understanding of the risks and response to any potential human rights issues.
- Our whistleblowing policy includes human rights issues, such as modern slavery. This policy continued to be publicised as available for our staff, freelancers and contractors to use if they become concerned. There were no issues relating to modern slavery raised via whistleblowing over the last year.

### **3. FUTURE PLANS AND PRIORITIES**

We appreciate the significance of our role in helping to identify, prevent and help eradicate modern slavery. We are committed to continuously improving and evolving our practices in relation to operating a responsible organisation, sourcing products and services ethically, and helping to raise standards across the industry.

In line with our multi-year programme, during the next year we will:

- Continue to manage our activity via our Working Group, and will collaborate with key partners and peers to continually enhance our approach;
- Take a risk based approach and revisit our ethical risk assessment annually;
- Review our approach in light of changes arising from Covid-19 and in preparation for changes as a result of HM Government review into transparency in supply chains.
- Widen the ethical trade training offered across the Group to promote awareness and understanding.
- Enhance measures used to monitor the effectiveness of our ethical trade programme.

This Statement was approved by the Board of Directors on 6 June 2021.



**Tim Davie**  
**Director-General**  
**(on behalf of the BBC Board)**

**BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION**

**6 June 2021**

#### **Footnotes**

<sup>1</sup> The year 2020/21 refers to the reporting year 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

#### **Further information**

- Previous BBC Group Modern Slavery Statements  
<http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc/reports/pdf/bbcmsa2020.pdf>  
<http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc/reports/pdf/bbcmsa2019.pdf>  
<http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc/reports/pdf/bbcmsa2018.pdf>  
<http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc/reports/pdf/bbcmsa2017.pdf>  
<http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc/reports/pdf/bbcmsa2016.pdf>
- BBC Studios Modern Slavery Statement (<https://www.bbcstudios.com/modern-slavery-statement/>)

- BBC Group's businesses and operations (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc/>)
- BBC Group's supply chains (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/supplying/>)
- BBC Group Code of Ethical Policy ([http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/supplying/pdf/BBC\\_Ethical\\_Policy.pdf](http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/supplying/pdf/BBC_Ethical_Policy.pdf))
- The Ethical Trading Initiative Base Code (<https://ethicaltrade.org/eti-base-code>)
- BBC Group Terms of Trade (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/supplying/workingwithus/terms-of-trade/>)
- BBC Group policies (<https://www.bbc.com/aboutthebbc/reports/policies/>)