

Committees of Enquiry

Sykes Committee

Broadcasting Committee: report

Appointed: 24th April 1923

Reported: 25th August 1923

Cost: £320

Members:

Sir Frederick Sykes MP

Major the Hon JJ Astor MP

FJ Brown

Sir Henry Bunbury

Viscount Burnham

WH Eccles

Sir Henry Norman MP

JCW Reith

Field-Marshal Sir William Robertson

Charles Trevelyan MP

Discussed: British Broadcasting Company funding by licence and its monopoly on broadcasting

Recommended:

- licence fee funding
- no advertising
- broadcasting transfer from private to public

Outcome: The Company continued its monopoly and funding by licence. Eventually it became a public corporation

Crawford Committee

Report of the Broadcasting Committee, 1925

Appointed: 20th July 1925

Reported: 2nd March 1926

Cost: £106 7s 1d

Members:

Earl of Crawford

Lord Blanesburgh

Capt Ian Fraser MP

Rt Hon William Graham MP

Sir Wililam Henry Hadow

Rt Hon Ian MacPherson MP

Lord Rayleigh

Sir Thomas Royden

Dame Merial Talbot

Rudyard Kipling (resigned)

Discussed: broadcasting organisation and its effect on viewers

Recommended:

- broadcasting run by a public service corporation
- no direct parliamentary control
- licence fee funding for ten years
- educational programmes.

Outcome: The establishment of the British Broadcasting Corporation by Royal Charter.

Selsdon Television Committee

Report of the Television Committee

Appointed: 14th May 1934

Reported: 14th January 1935

Cost: £965

Members:

Lord Selsdon

Sir John Cadman

Col AS Angwin

Noel Ashbridge

OF Brown

Vice-Admiral Sir Charles Carpendale

FW Phillips

Discussed: television broadcasting and whether to use the Baird or the Marconi systems

Recommended:

- television broadcasting should be established within the public sector
- a London station should be set up using both systems until one proved better

Outcomes: The BBC's first Television Broadcasts from Alexandra Palace (eventually broadcasting with the Marconi system).

Ullswater Committee

Report of the Broadcasting Committee, 1935

Appointed: 17th April 1935

Reported: 31st December 1935

Cost: £564 10s

Members:

Viscount Ullswater

Major the Hon JJ Astor MP

Major the Rt Hon CR Atlee MP

E Clement Davies

Lord Elton

Sir William McLintock

Marchioness of Reading

Lord Selsdon

H Graham White MP

Discussed: broadcasting, including overseas, funding and the nature of programming

Recommended:

- regional broadcasting decentralisation and expansion
- Government control during national emergencies
- freedom to report anti-Government views
- no funding by advertising
- increase in Licence Fee
- news programmes' impartiality
- more Schools broadcasting
- 2 more Governors

Outcome: further expansion of the BBC and programmes

Hankey Television Committee

Television

Appointed: September 1943

Reported: 29th December 1944

Members:

Lord Hankey

Sir Stanley Angwin

Sir Noel Ashbridge

Sir Raymond Birchall

Professor JD Cockcroft

RJP Harvey

RW Foot (until March 1944)

WH Haley (from April 1944)

Discussed: television services after the War

Recommended:

- BBC monopoly of television services
- television in the regions
- high-definition television on 405 lines
- television receiver standards
- more co-ordinated research & development
- television's financial independence

Outcomes: The post-war BBC Television service, a monopoly until 1956; expansion of BBC Research and Development, established post-war at Kingswood Warren

Beveridge Committee

Report of the Broadcasting Committee 1949

Appointed: 21st June 1949

Reported: 15th December 1950

Cost: £15,415

Members:

Lord Beveridge

AL Binns

Earl of Elgin

Lady Megan Lloyd George MP

Selwyn Lloyd MP

WF Oakeshott

J Reeves MP

Mary Stocks

IAR Stedeford (from 27th September 1949)

J Crawford (from 23rd February 1950)

Dr Stephen Taylor (from 20th March 1950)

Sir William Coates (resigned)

James Bowman (resigned)

EAJ Davies (resigned)

Discussed: BBC monopoly and funding

Recommended:

- BBC continuing as sole broadcaster
- Charter renewal and Licence Fee funding but under review
- regional devolution
- broadcasting of minority views
- more political broadcasting
- trade union recognition

Minority Report: Selwyn Lloyd recommended the end of the broadcasting monopoly

Outcome: When the Conservatives won the election in 1950, Selwyn Lloyd's recommendations were consolidated into a White Paper and ITV was set up.

Pilkington Committee

Report of the Committee on Broadcasting

Appointed: 13th July 1960

Reported: 1st June 1962

Cost: £45,450

Members:

Sir Harry Pilkington

H Collison

Elwyn Davies

Joyce Grenfell

Richard Hoggart

EP Hudson

JS Shields

RL Smith-Rose

Elizabeth Whitley

WA Wright

Professor FH Newark (from March 1961)

J Megaw (resigned 5th January 1961)

Peter Hall (resigned 27th January 1961)

Sir Jock Campbell (resigned 2nd February 1961)

Discussed: organisation of whole broadcasting industry and programmes

Recommended:

- renewal of BBC Charter and Licence Fee funding
- extended radio hours
- adult education broadcasting
- second television channel
- colour television on 625 lines
- local broadcasting
- better commercial television regulation

The report criticised commercial television for triviality and endorsed the view "Those who say they give the public what it wants begin by underestimating public taste, and end by debauching it".

Outcome included: Open University, BBC local radio, BBC 2, colour television licence

Annan Committee

Report of the Committee on the future of broadcasting

Appointed: 10th April 1974

Reported: 24th February 1977

Cost: £315,000

Members:

Lord Annan

Peter Goldman

Professor Hilde Himmelweit

Tom Jackson

Antony Jay

Marghanita Laski

Hilda M Lawrence

A Dewi Lewis

Sir James Mackay

The Hon Mrs Charles Morrison

Dipak Nandy

John G Parkes

John Pollock

Professor Geoffrey Sims

Phillip Whitehead MP

Sir Marcus Worsley

Discussed: whole broadcasting industry, including new technologies and their funding, the role and funding of the BBC and IBA, programme standards

Recommended:

- BBC funding by Licence Fee
- fourth, independent television channel
- long-term restructure and diversification of broadcasting
- establishment of Broadcasting Complaints Commission
- privatisation of local radio
- independence from direct political control
- increase in independent production

Outcomes: increased licence fee, Channel 4 (eventually – Labour Government indecision meant that this was not implemented until 1980 under the Conservatives)

Hunt Committee

Report of the Inquiry into Cable Expansion and Broadcasting Policy

Appointed: 6th April 1982

Reported: 28th September 1982

Members:

Lord Hunt of Tamworth

Sir Maurice Hodgson

Professor James Ring

Discussed: The organisation and future of cable broadcasting

Recommended:

- a cable regulatory authority
- cable providers able to make programmes
- BBC and ITV programmes carried free

Outcome: expansion of cable broadcasting, eventually overtaken by satellite broadcasting

Peacock Committee

Report of the Committee on Financing the BBC

Appointed: 27th March 1985

Reported: 29th May 1986

Members:

Professor Alan Peacock

Samuel Brittan

Judith Chalmers

Jeremy Hardie

Professor Alastair Hetherington

Lord Quinton

Sir Peter Reynolds

Discussed: BBC funding (taxation, sponsorship, advertising or licence fee) and efficiency, cable and satellite broadcasting

Recommended:

- licence fee continues, indexed to the RPI
- Radio 1 and 2 privatisation
- more broadcasting hours
- independent production quotas
- ITV companies franchise auctions
- removal of cable and satellite broadcasting restrictions

Outcomes included: Charter renewal and licence fee (although increase was less than the BBC had hoped), BBC staff cuts and efficiency drives, night-time broadcasting, independent production sector growth, deregulation of ITV, satellite broadcasting

Davies Committee [independent review panel]

The Future Funding of the BBC

Appointed: 14th October 1998

Reported: 28th July 1999

Members:

Gavyn Davies

Helen Black

Alan Budd

Ruth Evans

James Gordon

David Lipsey

Tony Newton

Julia Neuberger

Paul Heron

Eleanor Street

Ian Windle

Tanya Stocks

Heather Rabbatts (resigned February 1999)

Discussed: Funding of the BBC until Charter Review in 2005-6.

Recommended:

- licence fee frozen after 2001
- licence fee sole income for domestic services
- new money from efficiency savings
- digital services funded by a Licence Fee supplement
- sale of part of BBC Worldwide and Resources Ltd.

Outcome: digital Licence Fee plans (opposed by James Gordon) were dropped because of Government opposition – instead funding was incorporated into the main Licence Fee.