

**Public Service Mandate
of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) – Overview**

(extracted by the Committee on Review of Public Service Broadcasting)

- ◆ The public service mandate of BBC is set out by a number of provisions in both the Royal Charter, and the Agreement between BBC and the UK government.
- ◆ The Royal Charter establishes the general public service obligation of BBC, namely to provide sound and television broadcasting programmes of information, education and entertainment services (whether by analogue or digital means) as public services. In addition, the Royal Charter requires BBC to remain under constant and effective review from outside, including by public meetings and seminars.
- ◆ The Agreement sets out more detailed public services and content obligations required of BBC. For example -
 - (a) Clause 3 provides that BBC's services shall respect high general standards, particularly regarding their content, quality and editorial integrity, and offering of a wide range of subject matter meeting the needs and interests of audiences.
 - (b) Clause 5 elaborates on the above-mentioned programme standards, providing that BBC should do all it can to ensure that its services -
 - (i) provide properly balanced services consisting of a wide range of subject matter;
 - (ii) serve the tastes and needs of different audiences;
 - (iii) treat controversial subjects with due accuracy and impartiality;
 - (iv) do not contain abusive treatment of religious views;
 - (v) do not include anything which offends against good taste or decency, or encourages/incites crime or leads to disorder; and
 - (vi) are not offensive to public feeling.
- ◆ BBC is also required to draw up a code giving guidance as to how these requirements may be observed in its services and programmes, particularly regarding impartiality in treating controversial subjects.