

Guidelines for the Production of Party Broadcasts

These Guidelines are designed to cover compliance issues and the political 'rules' to be observed by all parties. While parties are responsible for the content of the broadcasts, they are required to observe the following guidelines, which have been agreed between the broadcasters and will be applied equally to all parties.

They are designed to reconcile the editorial standards of the broadcasters and their audiences' expectations with the freedom of political parties to convey their political messages, and to ensure that these are met on all outlets.

- All broadcasts must observe the law - for example, on copyright, libel, contempt, obscenity, incitement to racial hatred or violence.
- All broadcasts must comply with the OFCOM (ITC) Programme Code, and the provisions of the BBC Producers' Guidelines, and the Radio Authority Codes of Practice that relate to taste and decency (Chapters 5, 6 & 7 of the BBC Producers' Guidelines, Section 1 of the Radio Authority code of practice) and fairness and privacy (Chapters 3, 4 & 9 of the BBC Producers' Guidelines, Section 2 of Radio Authority code of practice), having regard to the political context of the broadcast.
- Subject to the matters set out above, accuracy is the responsibility of the parties making the broadcasts.
- The party responsible for the broadcast will indemnify the broadcaster for all legal or regulatory actions resulting from the contents of the election broadcast.
- Impartiality is achieved over the series of PARTY BROADCASTS as a whole. There is, of course, no obligation on the parties to achieve impartiality within each broadcast.
- An extract of recordings of the parliamentary proceedings of Parliament at Westminster, the National Assembly of Wales, the Scottish Parliament and the Northern Ireland Assembly may be used only if it features a speech by a member of the party making the broadcast, and the member's consent has been obtained. The use of material featuring exchanges between the parties should not be included. Wide shots of the chambers of the National Assembly of Wales, Scottish Parliament and Northern Ireland Assembly are allowed, but wide shots of Westminster are not.
- Extracts from party conference speeches of the party allocated the broadcast may be used and can be bought in the normal way from the broadcasters.

- Archive or news clips of members of any other political party should not be included. This applies to both visual and audio material alike. Undistorted stills are allowed.
- Candidates taking part in a Party Broadcast must not make any references to their own constituencies.
- No member of the public should be featured prominently in a broadcast in a manner that appears to support either a party and/or a political policy without that person's consent.
- Shots which include broadcasters in vision or in voice are not permissible.
- The use of actors in a broadcast must be made clear to the audience if there is any possibility that the audience could be confused or misled by their appearance. The same applies to reconstructions.
- No revenue-generating telephone numbers are to be used in a broadcast. Appeals for members of the audience to contact the party at the end of the broadcast by telephone, e-mail etc are allowed but direct appeals for funds as in, "Have your credit cards handy", are not.
- PARTY BROADCASTs which closely mimic the format of established programmes on any channel, particularly news programmes, run the risk of misleading the audience and therefore they must be clearly labelled throughout.
- Straight news footage featuring a party's own leader and politicians may be purchased from broadcasters in the usual way but clips which identify the programme in which they featured, on screen logos, theme music or the voice or face of a presenter/reporter will not be allowed. Nor will footage featuring politicians from other parties.

Technical Standards in Programme Making

Basic Guidelines for Producers of Party Election Broadcasts (PPBs).

The style and content of the PEB are, of course, solely the concern of the Political Party for whom it produced but some basic guidelines and conventions should be observed.

- 1) Name Supers should be so positioned so as not to obscure the mouth of the person speaking.
- 2) Information Graphics should be clearly legible and within "Domestic Cut Off" so that the viewer at home can read all the text.
- 3) The move towards the "widescreen" format should be considered when preparing graphics. Advice can be obtained from BBC News Graphic Design Dept.
- 4) Consideration of the use by the viewer of "teletext" subtitling should be taken when framing shots and designing graphics.
- 5) The use of music should be so balanced that people with hearing difficulties can clearly hear the spoken word.

*PARTY ELECTION BROADCASTS must conform to the same technical standards as all BBC Broadcasts (Radio and Television) and the specifications listed below must be met at all times. To avoid any confusion which could be caused by issuing a simplified version for Political Parties to follow we have attached a comprehensive guide to acceptance parameters for Radio and TV production.

N.B. These are the same instructions we give to all independent providers.

Television

1. General Requirements

1. 1 Video

(a) The video signal shall be free of excessive black crushing and highlight compression. Transient response shall be such that ringing, smear and echoes are not noticeable. Moire and other patterning shall not be visible. Hum, crosstalk and other spurious signals should not be apparent.

(b) Colour rendition, especially skin tones, shall be natural unless artistic considerations require otherwise.

(c) The timings, amplitudes and bandwidths of video material supplied to BBC Television shall not violate the relevant CCIR System specification.

(d) The use of any video equipment, e.g. digital effects devices must not introduce unintentional changes to luminance and chrominance levels nor cause perceptible timing shifts on entry or exit from the digital effect.

1.2 Audio

(a) The audio shall be free of spurious signals such as noise, hum and crosstalk. Sibilance and distortion, wow and flutter shall not be apparent. The audio shall not show dynamic and frequency response artifacts as a result of the action of noise reduction or low bit rate coding systems.

(b) Dynamic range shall not be excessive. It shall be suitable for the whole range of domestic listening.

(c) Audio shall be in synchronisation with the vision such that the audio should not lead the vision more than 1 field or lag by more than 1 frame.

(d) Programmes for transmission with stereo sound, whether recorded on video tape or for live transmission, must carry sound in A-B (left-right) form; M-S is not acceptable for complete programmes.

1.3 Line-up Signals

Programme video and audio signals must be accurately related to their associated line-up signals.

2 Origination Format

2.1 Outline:

The original recordings and subsequent post-production of the programme shall be carried out using broadcast quality equipment and systems. Only full bandwidth direct composite and component systems are acceptable. Colour under systems are not acceptable except where expressly approved.

2.2 Transmission Tape Formats

The tape supplied shall be either the final edited master or a dub made directly from it. The post production process must ensure that the final edited tape is of the lowest possible generation.

Programmes should be delivered on **Digi-Beta tape**. If the tapes are delivered on D3 or BETACAM SP copying will be necessary with the consequent delay and generation loss.

Tapes shall be of the highest professional quality and of a type appropriate to the format used.

Tapes shall be protected by suitable packaging:

Digi-Beta tapes shall be delivered in the manufacturer's standard tape box, the maximum duration of an individual cassette shall be 90 minutes, programmes of less than 90 minutes shall be on one tape.

2.3 Recording Specifications

Care shall be taken with the alignment of videotape equipment to ensure interchange compatibility. Particular attention is required with respect to:

- (a) Tape tensions and guide positions
- (b) Video record optimisation levels
- (c) Control track continuity and phasing
- (d) Colour frame pulse positioning
- (e) Audio levels and equalisation

To ensure correct replay on air, programme tapes shall contain appropriate sound and vision line up test signals at the head of the tape.

2.4 Audio Channels & Track Designations

Tapes delivered for transmission shall have transmission sound, and only transmission sound, on the following tracks:

Digi-Beta

(i) Mono recordings:

Track 1 shall carry the complete mono audio

Track 2 shall be identical to track 1

(ii) Stereo recordings:

Track 1 shall carry the left channel

Track 2 shall carry the right channel

The Fm tracks 3 and 4 should also carry the two stereo channels wherever possible.

In the above cases:

- (a) The two tracks shall be recorded in the correct phase relationship throughout. The reference tones recorded at the start of the tape shall also display this relationship.

The reference tones shall include a period of 10kHz tone.

- (b) On transmission, a mono signal will be derived by additively combining tracks 1 and 2 and then reducing the sum by 3dB (BBC standard). If the recording standard assumed mono = $(A + B) - 6\text{dB}$ then this must be clearly stated on the tape boxes and all other labels and paperwork. In order to prevent distortion on the mono sound, stereo peaks shall be balanced such that the mono derived signal never exceeds +8dB with regard to zero level. See: line-up signals

All tracks shall be recorded such that peaks do not exceed +8dB with regard to zero level.

Tracks not designated for transmission sound may carry additional audio if required but shall not carry additional material for transmission. The cue track shall not be used to supply material, without agreement. However, it may be used for information purposes.

Use of Dolby processing shall be clearly indicated and suitable line-up signals recorded.

2.5 Time Code

Tapes shall carry timecode conforming to the relevant 625 EBU specification on the designated track. In particular it must be correctly 4 field phased to the video (8 field if possible), continuous and increasing throughout the length of the clock and programme. It shall not cross the 23.59.59.24/00.00.00.00 discontinuity.

Where Vertical Interval Timecode is provided it shall be on lines 19 and 21, 332 and 334 and carry identical information to the longitudinal track.

2.6 Line Up Signals and Identification Leaders

At the beginning of each tape line up signals and identification leaders are required.

These line up signals shall comprise:-

1. Vision:

At least two minutes of first generation EBU colour Bars (otherwise known as 100/0/75/0 bars.) The start of each programme shall be preceded by an ident clock. The clock must show the Programme Title, subtitle with episode number where appropriate, and in all cases the BBC programme number including the latest version suffix.

2. Sound:

(a) Single Track Mono

At least two minutes of step tone recorded at zero level, with clearly identifiable components at about 100Hz, 900Hz and above 10kHz. This line up shall accompany the above colour bars and be present on each track carrying programme sound.

Clock

Tone at approximately 1kHz and at zero level shall be present between the 20 second and 10 second idents of the clock.

(b) Stereo and Dual Mono

Two minutes of step tone as above must be recorded on Audio Track 1 (Left or A leg) and Audio Track 2 (Right or B leg) from a common source so that the phase is identical on both tracks, to allow replay phase and azimuth checks.

Clock

For programmes with mono sound on one track only, a 1KHz (approximately) tone at zero level (PPM 4) shall be present on that track between the 20 second and 10 second idents on the clock.

For programmes with Stereo and Dual Mono sound recorded to the BBC convention (mono = $(A + B) - 3\text{dB}$) then the tone between the 20 second and 10 second idents on the clock should be recorded at a level of -3dB with respect to zero level (PPM 3.25) on both legs and must be coherent.

For programmes with Stereo or Dual Mono sound recorded to the alternative convention (mono = $(A + B) - 6\text{dB}$) then the tones should be recorded at zero level (PPM 4) and must be coherent.

It is vital that recording reports indicate which convention is being followed.

N.B. Clock Tones:

For Stereo (and Dual Mono) indication, the BBC uses a special GLITS tone which uniquely identifies left, right, phase and pairings of stereo tracks during the clock 20 second to 10 second area. GLITS tone is always recorded at a level of -3dB with respect to zero level (PPM 3.25). For this purpose EBU stereo tone is a suitable alternative, but if either EBU or steady tones are recorded at other than zero level then large, clear notes must be made on recording reports.

In all cases the accompanying recording report form shall state clearly whether the main sound is in mono or stereo.

If noise reduction is present this shall be clearly stated on the tape and recording report.