

Managed Programme Risk List

The Managed Programmes Risk List is designed to capture all unusually high editorial, legal and reputational risks. It identifies recorded programmes and reports to be transmitted in the coming months which have potential risks, together with those whose production may be sensitive during the whole of the production process, up to transmission. Live programmes are handled separately, as risks can't be perfectly described in advance. There is an Editorial Policy Guidance Note giving advice on how to guard against and mitigate risks in live programmes.

The Managed Programmes Risk List contains programmes produced for all BBC Divisions. It does not include risky returning series, unless a particular edition is identified as having unusual risks. Some individual divisions construct their own lists, with only those programmes which involve risk at the highest corporate level being transferred to the MRPL.

How it works:

The list is a live and 'rolling' document which is discussed at the monthly meetings of the BBC-wide Editorial Standards Board. Content producers, commissioning executives and divisional directors are, as appropriate, responsible for identifying programmes that should be added to the MRPL. They pass on this information to their divisional head of Editorial Standards. Following local discussion, sometimes at divisional board level, entries are forwarded to the office of the Director of Editorial Policy, who is responsible for collating it centrally, and bringing it to the Editorial Standards Board for discussion. It is also tabled at the BBC Direction Group. Following each ESB meeting, it is sent back to the divisions for further discussion at the Divisional/Group Board and appropriate monitoring action taken.

Once a programme is put on the MRPL, it will stay on the list throughout its production. Following transmission, it will be removed from the list.

Programmes included on the Managed Risk Programme List

A programme may be put on the MRPL if it includes a variety of risks, including:

- Defamation risks
- Privacy and Consent issues – e.g. programmes involving undercover investigations or secret recording, and other exposure of wrongdoing.
- Impartiality Risks – e.g. politically sensitive programmes.
- Fairness & Portrayal – e.g. Semi-fictionalised dramas representing the lives of real people
- Safety Risks – e.g. Observational documentaries following police
- Harm & Offence Risks – e.g. Observational documentaries in hospitals to be broadcast pre-watershed, programmes dealing with extremes of sexual behaviour.
- Religious sensitivities –
- Cultural/Race sensitivities – e.g. programmes produced for 'White Season' or season on specific countries or regions.
- Risks to Families – e.g. documentaries about disasters, massacres, victims of crimes etc
- Risks involving child welfare – e.g. documentaries involving dysfunctional families
- Product prominence issues – e.g. Use of branded goods in cookery programmes