

# Executive Summary

In 2008 70 broadcasting companies, 17 radio and 53 television submitted a self-evaluation report. This is the third year of the co-regulatory system, and the process has now been substantially refined. It is now in a fully online format. 11 companies received validation visits, conducted by independent consultants with BTRSR support, with 63 companies now having been visited over the three-year period. Recommendations for improvement and practical advice given by BTRSR to broadcasters have included the Good Practice Partnership Scheme.

Probably reflecting the very tough economic climate, a decline was seen this year in the number of companies visited who had a dedicated training budget. While the sample size is small and no firm conclusions are possible, this is in line with anecdotal evidence from broadcasters and from the research covering wider sectors of British industry by the CIPD in their 2009 Learning and Development Survey. BTRSR intends to monitor this in coming years to see if this has any impact on performance and the breadth and quality of training and development provision.

BTRSR's analysis of the self-evaluation returns shows a small but significant upward trend overall. Standards of training and development continue to be high, with an increasing number of broadcasters operating at Medium or High levels of provision. However, it is still proving challenging to make a significant step-change to move companies operating at Base level to Medium and so ensure that training is delivered effectively across the industry. Analysis of individual strands within the self-evaluation suggests that Evaluation (Strand 7) is still the most challenging for both TV and radio broadcasters. There is also some concern around induction of staff, with validation visits suggesting that too many companies are only offering basic induction to staff, and showing some weakness in the induction of existing staff in new roles, or for staff returners ( e.g. from maternity leave).

Although an improving trend, performance and appraisal systems are areas where some broadcasters still struggle. In some cases, this is attributed to the lack of appropriate IT systems, especially in smaller companies. BTRSR is proposing third-party partnerships to assist here. The provision of on-job training is surprisingly one of the poorer performing strands. This may be an indicator of a lack of a learning culture in some organisations, or it may be that ad hoc provision is not always being included. In the current economic climate, where budgets are being cut and external courses may be less affordable, it is particularly necessary to address this issue.

Above all, however, the broadcast industry needs to consider how to improve the development and measurement of evaluation systems of the impact of training and development. This is the weakest area for both TV and radio companies and is still the only strand where None and Base provision is greater than Medium or High.

BTRSR is pleased to report that overall the number of low-performing TV companies has dropped from 14% to 4% of companies, and with radio the figure is also down, from 13% to 6%. There is also some indication that the dominance of three major players in radio is having a beneficial effect, in that the rigorous systems of the parent company seem to be improving the capabilities of all the radio companies under their umbrella.