BBC Ventures Group Limited

(Registered number 4463546)

Directors' report and company financial statements

Year ended 31 March 2004



Officers and advisers

Directors

J Smith

Company Secretary

Peter Ranyard

Registered office

Broadcasting House 1 Portland Place London W1A 1AA

Auditors

KPMG LLP 8 Salisbury Square London EC4Y 8BB

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Directors' report

The director presents his report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2004.

Principal activities and review of activities

BBC Ventures Group Limited ("the Company") is the holding company for the BBC Ventures group of companies (the "Group") which seek to generate value from the BBC's skills, facilities and assets by exploiting business-to-business opportunities. The Group's main activities are in providing a complete range of equipment, facilities and services for use in programme making, broadcasting, channel management, and other technology services required by the media industry. The Company provides support to the subsidiaries in the Group.

On 4 June 2003, the Company acquired the entire issued share capital (1 £1 ordinary share) of BBC Vecta Limited from BBC Technology Holdings Limited for consideration of £1 of cash, and formally granted BBC Vecta Limited a loan of £1,274,000. On 31 March 2004, the Company subscribed to a further 3,000,000 shares in BBC Vecta Limited in consideration of £3,000,000 of cash. The Company also formally granted a further loan of £2m to BBC Vecta Limited in order to give it a more stable base of funding.

On 27 August 2003, the Company acquired the entire issued share capital of BBC Resources Limited (51,000,001 £1 ordinary shares) from BBC Commercial Holdings Limited in consideration of cash. On the same date, the Company issued 51,000,001 £1 ordinary shares in the capital of the Company (which were issued following an increase in the authorised share capital of the Company from £73,001,001 to £124,000,003) to BBC Commercial Holdings Limited in consideration of cash.

Future Developments

At the end of the financial year it was decided to scale back the activities of the Company.

Subsequent to the year end, on the 28th July 2004, a decision was taken to terminate the operations of BBC Vecta.

Results

The results for the year are shown on page 8. The directors declared and paid a dividend to its shareholder, BBC Commercial Holdings Limited, of £3,500,000 in March 2004.

Directors and directors' interests

The directors who served during the year were as follows:

Name	Date of appointment	Date of resignation
Roger Flynn	21 October 2002	31 March 2004
Pam Masters	25 February 2003	30 April 2004
David Moody	25 February 2003	12 December 2003
Mark Popkiewicz	25 February 2003	30 April 2004
Michael Southgate	25 February 2003	30 April 2004
John Smith	5 April 2004	
Ann Wilson	25 February 2003	23 March 2004

Directors' report (continued)

No director had any interest in the share capital of the Company as at 31 March 2004. No rights to subscribe for shares or debentures of the Company or any other company within the BBC group were granted to any of the directors or their immediate families, or exercised by them, during the financial period.

Payment to creditors

It is the Company's policy to comply with the CBI prompt payment of suppliers, provided that the supplier is complying with the relevant terms and conditions of its contract. The Group monitors compliance against the terms of this code.

Trade creditor days of the Company at 31 March 2004, calculated in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 1985, were 3 days (2003 0 days). This represents the ratio, expressed in days, between the amounts invoiced to the Company in the year by its (non-BBC) suppliers and the amounts due, at the year end, to trade creditors falling due for payment within one year. The Company's standard trade settlement terms are 28 days following the month of invoice.

Employee participation

There is a comprehensive structure of liaison meetings, at all levels, with recognised trade unions. A two way consultative body between the BBC management and employees has been established. Known as the BBC Forum, and introduced in May 1998, it promotes a two way communication and debate between managers and staff. Under this initiative elected individuals put forward the views of BBC staff to management on a regular basis and receive direct feedback on issues which affect the future of both the employees and the Group. The Group's staff are represented on the Forum at both management and employee level.

Equal opportunities

The Group is committed to equal opportunities for all irrespective of race, colour, creed, ethnic or national origin, gender, marital status, sexuality, disability or age.

Recruitment, training and promotion are based on the requirements of the job. Ethnic and gender targets have been set with the aim of ensuring that the Group's workforce reflects the UK population as far as possible and are supported by a number of equal opportunity initiatives.

Training and development

The Group has a comprehensive training plan, which provides for in-house and external training programmes, covering job-specific, skill enhancement development courses.

Disabled persons

Disabled persons are fully and fairly considered for vacancies arising within the Group and are given equal opportunities in relation to training, career development and promotion.

Existing employees who become disabled are retained in employment wherever possible, after the provision of any necessary rehabilitation or training.

Charitable and political donations

The Company does not make political donations. During the year it made no charitable donations (2003 £9,150).

Directors' report (continued)

The environment

The Group does not operate in industries where there is potential for serious industrial pollution. However, it recognises its responsibility to be aware of, and take steps to control and minimise, any damage its business might cause to the environment.

Corporate governance

As a wholly owned subsidiary of the BBC, the Group fully supports the recommendations of the Combined Code. Disclosure of how the BBC complies with the requirements of the Combined Code is given in its annual report and consolidated accounts, which may be obtained from The Secretary, BBC, Media Centre, Media Village, 201 Wood Lane, London, W12 7TQ.

Auditors

KPMG LLP were appointed as auditors by the directors during the year. In accordance with Section 384 of the Companies Act 1985, a resolution is to be proposed at the forthcoming annual general meeting for the re-appointment of KPMG LLP as auditors of the Company.

By order of the Board Peter Ranyard Company Secretary

Date:

31 ADMS 2009

Registered Address
Broadcasting House
1 Portland Place
London
W1A 1AA

Statement of directors' responsibilities

Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial period which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company and of the profit or loss for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 1985. They have general responsibility for taking such steps as are reasonably open to them to safeguard the assets of the Company and to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities.

Independent auditors' report to the members of BBC Ventures Group Limited

We have audited the financial statements on pages 8 to 18.

This report is made solely to the Company's members, as a body, in accordance with section 235 of the Companies Act 1985. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Company and the Company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of directors and auditors

The directors are responsible for preparing the directors' report and, as described on page 6, the financial statements in accordance with applicable United Kingdom law and accounting standards. Our responsibilities, as independent auditors, are established in the United Kingdom by statute, the Auditing Practices Board and our profession's ethical guidance.

We report to you our opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and are properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 1985. We also report to you if, in our opinion, the directors' report is not consistent with the financial statements, if the Company has not kept proper accounting records, if we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit, or if information specified by law regarding directors' remuneration and transactions with the Company is not disclosed.

Basis of audit opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Auditing Standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the directors in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Group's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

Opinion

In our opinion the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company as at 31 March 2004 and of the loss of the Company for the year then ended and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 1985.

KPMG LLP
Chartered Accountants

Registered Auditors
8 Salisbury Square

London

EC4Y 8BB

Date:

Company profit and loss account for the year ended 31 March 2004

	Note		12 months to 31 March 2004 £'000	287 day period to 31 March 2003 £'000
Turnover			2,869	2,317
Gross profit Administrative Expenditure before exceptional provision against			2,869	2,317
loans to subsidiary undertaking		(3,045)		(2,192)
Exceptional provisions for loans in subsidiary undertaking		(3,607)		
Total administrative expenses	•		(6,652)	(2,192)
Operating (loss)/profit and (loss)/profit on ordinary activities before interest and				
taxation	1		(3,783)	125
Income from shares in group undertakings			3,500	_
Other interest receivable and similar income	5		1,916	-
Interest payable and similar charges	5		(1,825)	-
(Loss)/profit on ordinary activities before taxation			(192)	125
Tax on (loss)/profit on ordinary activities	6		20	(38)
Dividends paid			(3,500)	-
Retained (loss)/profit for the financial year	11		(3,672)	87

There is no difference between the results as disclosed above and the results on a historical cost basis.

Other than the results for the year, there were no recognised gains and losses during the year.

The notes on pages 11 to 18 form part of the financial statements.

Balance sheet as at 31 March 2004

	Note	2004 £'000	2003 £'000
Fixed Assets			
Investments	7	127,000	73,000
Current assets			
Current debtors	8	79,711	1,821
		79,711	1,821
Creditors – amounts falling due within one year	9	(86,296)	(1,734)
Net current (liabilities)/assets		(6,585)	87
Total assets less current liabilities		120,415	73,087
Net assets		120,415	73,087
Capital and reserves			
Called up share capital	10	124,000	73,000
Profit and loss account	11	(3,585)	87
Equity shareholder's funds	11	120,415	73,087

The financial statements were approved by John Smith, sole Director of the Company, on 31 August 2004.

John Smith Director

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Reconciliation of movements in shareholder's funds for the year ended 31 March 2004

•	12 months	287 days
	to	to
	March	31 March
	2004	2003
	£'000	£'000
Opening equity shareholder's funds	73,087	-
New ordinary share capital issued	51,000	73,000
Total recognised gains and losses for the year	(3,672)	87
Net increase in equity shareholder's funds	47,328	73,087
Closing equity shareholder's funds	120,415	73,087

Statement of accounting policies

This section explains the Group's principal accounting policies which have been applied consistently throughout the year and which are set out below.

Basis of accounting

The financial statements are presented under the historical cost accounting convention, and in accordance with the Companies Act 1985 and applicable standards in the United Kingdom.

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the going concern basis, in accordance with applicable accounting standards in the United Kingdom, in accordance with the Companies Act 1985, and under the historical cost accounting convention.

The Company is a wholly owned subsidiary of BBC Commercial Holdings Limited, which in turn is a wholly owned subsidiary of the British Broadcasting Corporation, whose accounts are publicly available. It has therefore taken advantage of the exemption available under Section 228 of the Companies Act 1985 not to prepare consolidated accounts, and of the exemption available under FRS 1 not to prepare a cash flow statement. The results disclosed are therefore those of the Company only.

At 31 March 2004, the Company had net current liabilities of £6.585 million (2003 £0.087 million net current assets). The Company has received a letter of support from its parent, BBC Commercial Holdings Limited, which shows intent to provide financial support to the Company in order that it can continue to trade and meet its liabilities as they fall due during the next financial year. The directors have therefore drawn up the accounts on a going concern basis.

Comparatives

The Company was incorporated on 18 June 2002. The comparative period therefore represents the 287 day period from 18 June 2002 to 31 March 2003.

Turnover

Turnover, which excludes value added tax and trade discounts, represents income from management fees levied on the subsidiary companies of BBC Ventures Group Limited.

Pension costs

Employees are members of the BBC's pension schemes. The BBC Group operates both defined benefit and defined contribution schemes for the benefit of employees. The Company has adopted FRS17 Retirement Benefits in full.

Defined benefit schemes

The defined benefit schemes provide benefits based on final pensionable pay. The pension assets of the BBC Main Scheme, to which the majority of employees belong, are held separately from those of the BBC Group.

The Company makes use of the provisions within FRS 17 and accounts for the scheme as if it were a defined contribution scheme. This is because it is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities of the scheme on a reasonable and consistent basis. The expenditure charge for the Company therefore represents the contributions payable in the year. These contributions benefit from the surplus in the scheme and are lower than the regular cost.

Operating leases

Operating lease rentals are written off on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

Investments

Investments are recorded on the balance sheet at cost less provision for any impairment in value.

Notes to the accounts

1 (Loss)/profit on ordinary activities before interest and taxation

The (loss)/profit on ordinary activities before interest and taxation is stated after charging/(crediting):

· / L		~ ~ ·	
		12 months	287 day
	Note	to	period to
		31 March	31 March
		2004	2003
		£'000	£'000
Payments under operating leases:			
 land and buildings 		264	164
- plant and machinery		10	3
Auditors' remuneration:			
- audit		5	-
- other		7	-
BBC Vecta Limited:			
- Provision for loan to subsidiary		3,607	-

2 Staff numbers and costs

2a Persons employed

The average number of persons employed in the period was:

	12 months	287 day
	to	period to
	31 March	31 March
	2004	2003
	Number	Number
Average staff employed	16	12

2b Staff costs

		12 months	287 day
	Note	to	period to
		31 March	31 March
		2004	2003
		£'000	£'000
Salaries and wages		1,211	914
Social security costs		170	85
Pension costs	3	33	23
Redundancy costs		529	-
		1,943	1,022

3 Pensions

Many of the Company's employees are members of the BBC's pension schemes, The BBC Pension Scheme (a defined benefit scheme) and the Group Personal Pension Scheme (a defined contribution scheme).

BBC Pension Scheme

The BBC Group Pension Scheme provides salary related pension benefits on a defined benefit basis from assets held in separate, trustee-administered, funds.

The scheme is subject to independent valuation by a professionally qualified actuary at least every three years, on the basis of which the actuary certifies the rate of employer's contributions. These, together with the specified contributions payable by employees and proceeds from the scheme's assets, are expected to be sufficient to fund the benefits payable under the scheme. The most recent full actuarial valuation of the scheme was prepared as at 1 April 2002 by Watson Wyatt, consulting actuaries, using the projected unit method. At 1 April 2002, the actuarial value of the assets was sufficient to cover 109% of the benefits due to members, after allowing for expected future increases in earnings.

Employer contributions have remained steady for a number of years. However, in order to maintain the financial health of the scheme, it has been agreed with the trustees, that employer and employee contributions will rise to 6.0% by 2005/06 and 2006/07 respectively. The position will be reviewed again in 2005 after a new formal actuarial valuation.

	F	Projection			·	
Contribution rates	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Employer	6.0	6.0	5.5	5.0	4.5	4.5
Employee	6.0	5,5	5.0	4.5	4.5	4.5

The Company, following the provisions within FRS 17, accounts for the scheme as if it were a defined contribution scheme. This is because it is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities of the scheme on a consistent and reasonable basis. The pension cost charged for this scheme therefore represents contributions payable by the Company to the scheme and the costs amounted to £32,821 in the year (2003 £23,000). The 1 April 2002 full actuarial valuation was updated for FRS17 purposes to 31 March 2004 by Watson Wyatt, consulting actuaries. This valuation identified a deficit on the scheme at 31 March 2004 (2003 deficit).

Additional disclosure about the scheme and its financial position under FRS 17 is provided in the BBC Annual Report and Accounts that can be obtained from the BBC Secretary at BBC Governance and Accountability, MC3D5, Media Centre, Media Village, 201 Wood Lane, London, W12 7TQ.

Group Personal Pension Scheme and other schemes

The Group also operates its own defined contribution pension schemes, including those operated in the USA. The assets of the defined contribution scheme are held separately from those of the Group in independently administered funds. The pension cost for this scheme represents the contributions payable during the year by the Company and totalled £42,000 (2003 £40,000).

4 Remuneration of directors

	12 months to 31 March 2004	287 day period to 31 March 2003
	£'000	£,000
Aggregate emoluments	470	197
Payments to former directors	421	_
Retirement benefits accrue to directors under the following schemes:	2004 No of directors	2003 No of directors
Defined benefit schemes		2
Defined contribution scheme	1	1
The remuneration of the highest paid director included:	12 months to 31 March 2004 £'000	287 day period to 31 March 2003 £'000
Emoluments	315	187
TI C		10 0.1

The Company contributed £42,000 (2003 £40,000) to defined contribution schemes on behalf of the highest paid director during the year. The highest paid director has accrued pension benefits of £5,000 (2003 £3,000) per annum as at 31 March 2004 under the BBC's defined benefit scheme.

Roger Flynn resigned on 31 March 2004. His current contract expires on 30 September 2004 when he is due to be paid £301,625 in line with his contractual entitlement, including £241,325 in lieu of notice.

5 Interest

	12 months	287 day
	to 31 March	period to 31 March
	2004	2003
	£'000	£,000
Interest receivable on loan to parent undertaking	131	-
Interest receivable on loans to subsidiary undertakings	1,785	-
Total interest receivable and other similar items	1,916	-
Interest payable on loan from parent undertaking	(1,818)	_
Interest receivable on loans from subsidiary undertakings	(7)	-
Total interest payable and other similar charges	(1,825)	-

6 Taxation

6a Analysis of (credit)/charge for the period

The (credit)/charge for the year, based on a rate of corporation tax of 30% (2003 30%) comprised:

· , 2 ,	•	`	12 months	287 day
		Note	to	period to
			31 March	31 March
			2004	2003
			£'000	£'000
Current tax				
Group Relief (Receipt) / payment			(20)	-
UK corporation tax			-	38
(Credit)/charge for the year		6b	(20)	38

6b Factors affecting the tax (credit)/charge

The effective rate of tax is different from the standard rate as a result of the following:

	Note	12 months to 31 March 2004 £'000	287 day period to 31 March 2003 £'000
(Loss)/profit on ordinary activities before tax		(192)	125
(Loss)/profit on ordinary activities at the standard rate of corporation tax in the UK of 30% (2003 30%)		(57)	38
Effects of:			
Other disallowable expenditure		5	-
Non taxable dividend income		(1,050)	-
Non taxable provision against loan		1,082	-
Current tax (credit)/charge for the year	6a	(20)	38

6c Factors that may affect future tax charges

The Company anticipates that the future tax (credit)/charge will not alter materially.

7 Investments

7a Movements in period

	2004 £°000
Opening balance	73,000
Investments in subsidiary companies	54,000
At 31 March 2004	127,000

On 27 August 2003 the Company acquired 51,000,001 £1 ordinary shares in BBC Resources Limited from BBC Commercial Holdings Limited, in consideration of £51,000,001 in cash.

On 31 March 2004 the Company subscribed for 3,000,000 £1 ordinary shares in BBC Vecta Limited in consideration of £3,000,000 in cash.

7b Subsidiary undertakings

The Company owns 100% of the issued share capital of the following companies which are incorporated in England and Wales:

	Activity
BBC Technology Holdings Limited	(holding company of group providing technology equipment, facilities and services to the media industry)
BBC Broadcast Limited	(provision of broadcast services)
BBC Resources Limited	(provision of equipment, facilities and services for use primarily in programme making and broadcasting)
BBC Vecta Limited	(development of technology equipment, facilities and services for the media industry)

The Group also holds the controlling interest in the following subsidiaries, which unless otherwise stated are incorporated in England and Wales:	Holding of ordinary shares %
Held by Technology Holdings Limited	
BBC Technology Limited	100
BBC Technology Services Limited	100
BBC Technology Supply Limited	100
BBC Technology Holdings LLC (incorporated in the USA)	100
BBC Technology Consultancy LLC (incorporated in the USA)	100

8 Debtors

8a Amounts receivable within one year

	2004 £'000	2003 £'000
Amounts owed by subsidiaries	79,542	1,821
VAT recoverable	149	-
Group Relief	20	-
Total debtors due within one year	79,711	1,821

9 Creditors

Amounts falling due within one year

	2004	2003
	£'000	£'000
Overdraft	52	67
Trade creditors	4	-
Amounts owed to ultimate parent company	23	-
Amounts owed to parent company	83,814	-
Amounts owed to subsidiaries	1,411	1,629
Corporation tax	-	38
Other taxation and social security	36	-
Other creditors	485	-
Accruals and deferred income	471	-
Total	86,296	1,734

10 Share capital

	2004 £'000	2003 £'000
Authorised		
124,000,003 Ordinary shares of £1 each	124,000	73,001
Allotted, called up and full paid		
124,000,003 Ordinary shares of £1	124,000	73,000

On 21 August 2003 the authorised share capital of the Company was increased from 73,001,001 to 124,000,003 ordinary shares of £1 each.

On 27 August 2003 the Company issued 51,000,001 to its immediate parent company, BBC Commercial Holdings Limited, in consideration of £51,000,001 in cash.

11 Reserves

The movements in reserves during the year were as follows:

	Profit and loss		
	Share capital £'000	account £'000	Total £'000
Opening balances	73,000	87	73,087
New ordinary share capital issued	51,000	-	51,000
Profit for financial year		(3,672)	(3,672)
At 31 March 2004	124,000	(3,585)	120,415

12 Operating leases

Operating lease commitments payable in the following year, analysed according to the period in which the lease expires:

•	Land and buildings 2004 £°000	Land and buildings 2003 £'000	Other 2004 £'000	Other 2003 £'000
Group				
Within one year	50	72	4	-
In two to five years	-	_	5	9
After five years	-	-	_	-
	50	72	9	9

13 Related party transactions

The Company has taken advantage of the exemptions available under FRS 8 and does not disclose related party transactions with the BBC and any of its subsidiaries on the grounds that it is a wholly owned subsidiary undertaking of the BBC, whose financial statements are publicly available.

14 Ultimate holding and controlling party

The Company's ultimate parent undertaking and controlling party is the British Broadcasting Corporation which is incorporated in the United Kingdom by Royal Charter. The largest group in which the results of the Company are consolidated is that headed by the BBC. Copies of the financial statements of the BBC may be obtained from the BBC Secretary at BBC Governance and Accountability, MC3D5, Media Centre, Media Village, 201 Wood Lane, London, W12 7QT.

15 Post Balance Sheet Events

A decision was taken on 28th July to terminate the business of BBC Vecta Limited.