



**Patricia Ferguson MP**

Chair

Scottish Affairs Committee

House of Commons

Palace of Westminster

London, SW1A 0AA

4 November 2025

Dear Ms Ferguson

Thank you for forwarding additional questions from Mr Doogan following the STV evidence session at the Scottish Affairs Committee last week.

As we confirmed to the committee, television audience research is conducted on behalf of broadcasters by BARB who compile overnight ratings for the previous day's viewing. BARB maintains a nationwide panel of households from whom viewing data is collected that is representative of the wider population. In Scotland there are around 500 participating BARB households. Although the complete dataset is available to STV internally, due to the sample size, the only Scottish viewing figures published are for the combined STV Central and STV North areas. Since Mr Doogan's questions relate to the performance of STV North only, we are unable to provide any figures for viewing in that region alone.

I can confirm that, across both STV licences, the audience for **STV News at 6** on Monday 27th October was 309,000 people, a 28% share of total TV viewing in Scotland at that time. This was the third highest performance by share of any Channel 3 licence area after UTV (Northern Ireland) with 197,000 and 46% share and ITV Border (north England and south Scotland) with 47,000 and 38% share. Please note that the STV audience of 309,000 is fairly typical for STV News and represents 7% of the potential audience. We can't comment further on media reports citing 40% audience penetration in the STV North region alone, which is not borne out by BARB published data.

I trust this is useful and please come back to me if you have any further questions.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rufus Radcliffe'.

**Rufus Radcliffe**

**CEO**



**Scottish Affairs  
Committee**

**Rufus Radcliffe**  
**CEO**  
**STV**  
**By email only**

**STV North viewing figures**

5 November 2025

Dear Rufus,

Thank you for your letter, dated 4 November, in response to my letter following up on our evidence session last week.

In your letter, you mention that a complete dataset of viewing figures for STV North is available internally, but is not published due to sample size limitations. Notwithstanding these limitations, I would be grateful if those figures could be shared with the Committee (with appropriate caveats), as requested by members of the Committee during the hearing. This data would be instructive for our understanding of STV North's position.

Yours sincerely,

**Patricia Ferguson MP**  
Chair, Scottish Affairs Committee



**Patricia Ferguson MP**

Chair

Scottish Affairs Committee

House of Commons

Palace of Westminster

London, SW1A 0AA

6 November 2025

Dear Ms Ferguson

Thank you for your letter of 5th November and I am happy to address your further questions regarding STV's use of BARB data.

Where I referred to BARB's "complete dataset" in my letter of 4th November, that should not be interpreted as "a complete dataset of viewing figures for STV North" as you state in your correspondence. As we have previously advised, viewing figures for STV North are not published separately.

Published BARB data tends to be used to reflect viewing by all adults (aged 16+) or individuals (age 4+). In addition to these typically quoted groups, STV is able to interrogate sub demographics to look at different ages, gender etc, however we are only able to rely on figures relating to our combined licence areas. STV is not able to share any unpublished data which is not supported by BARB.

One further point I would add is that STV's proposals for regional news are based on the wider, clearly evidenced trends in TV viewing, news consumption and advertising revenues which apply to the entire Channel 3 network. Against this pressing and challenging landscape, it is vital that we develop an affordable and sustainable future model for STV News.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rufus Radcliffe'.

**Rufus Radcliffe**

**CEO**