

BBC 'breached guidelines 1,500 times' over Israel-Hamas war

From the [Telegraph](#)

The BBC breached its own editorial guidelines more than 1,500 times during the height of the Israel-Hamas war, a damning report has found.



The report revealed a [“deeply worrying pattern of bias” against Israel](#), according to its authors who analysed four months of the BBC’s output across television, radio, online news, podcasts and social media.

The research, led by British lawyer Trevor Asserson, also found that Israel was associated with genocide more than 14 times more than Hamas in the corporation’s coverage of the

conflict.

On Saturday, [Danny Cohen, a former BBC executive](#), warned that there was now an “institutional crisis” at the national broadcaster and called for an independent inquiry into its coverage of the Israel-Hamas war.

Two leading Jewish groups, the Campaign Against Antisemitism and the National Jewish Assembly, added their voices to calls for an independent review, while Lord Austin, a former Labour minister, accused the BBC of “high-handed arrogance” for continually dismissing questions over its impartiality.

The Asserson report analysed the BBC’s coverage during a four-month period beginning Oct 7, 2023 – the day Hamas carried out a brutal massacre in southern Israel, killing around 1,200 people and taking another 251 into Gaza as hostages. A team of around 20 lawyers and 20 data scientists contributed to the research, which used artificial intelligence to analyse nine million words of BBC output.

It also found that the BBC repeatedly downplayed Hamas terrorism while presenting Israel as a militaristic and aggressive nation.

It claimed that some journalists used by the BBC in its coverage of the Israel-Gaza conflict have previously shown sympathy for Hamas and even celebrated its acts of terror.

The report claims that a number of BBC reporters have shown extreme hostility to Israel, including BBC Arabic contributor Mayssaa Abdul Khalek, who is said to have called for “death to Israel” and defended a journalist who tweeted: “Sir Hitler, rise, there are a few people that need to be burned.”

It also accuses Marie-Jose Al Azzi, a Lebanese reporter, of being anti-Israel after she reportedly described the country as a “terrorist apartheid state” in a post that was subsequently deleted.

Jeremy Bowen, the BBC's international editor, is accused of excusing Hamas's terrorist activities and comparing Israel to Putin's Russia, while Lyse Doucet, the BBC's chief international correspondent, is also cited for allegedly "downplaying" the October 7 attacks on Israel.

The report singles out [the BBC's Arabic channel](#), saying that it is one of the most biased of all global media outlets in its treatment of the Israel-Hamas conflict. It identifies 11 cases where it claims the BBC Arabic's coverage of the war has featured reporters [who have previously made public statements in support of terrorism](#) and specifically Hamas, without viewers being informed of this.

The report's authors noted that during the time period examined by researchers, Israel was accused of committing war crimes by South Africa in the International Court of Justice.

In the aftermath of the October 7 massacre, the BBC was widely condemned [for failing to call Hamas "terrorists"](#). In late October, the BBC said it would describe Hamas "where possible" as a "proscribed terrorist organisation". However, the report identified Hamas being described as a "proscribed", "designated" or "recognised" terrorist organisation just 409 out of 12,459 times (3.2 per cent) over the four-month period.

The BBC said [it would "carefully consider" the report](#), which has been submitted to Tim Davie, its director general, and Samir Shah, its chairman, as well as all its board members. A spokesman for the corporation added that it had "serious questions" about the report's methodology.

There is a lot to read, none of it good as one would expect; the rest of [it is here](#)