

## TV Industry Urged to Act as Study Highlights Human Rights Risks Behind the Scenes

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— Categories: Human Rights



New research has uncovered concerning human rights risks across the television industry, highlighting the overlooked challenges faced by support workers and post-production staff. Commissioned by the TV Industry Human Rights Forum in partnership with the Film and TV Charity, the findings point to systemic issues in working conditions that are often hidden behind the scenes.

One report focuses on freelance support workers, such as translators, drivers, security staff, and local crew, who assist international productions. Many of these workers operate without formal contracts, health insurance, or adequate training. The report notes that, despite playing a vital role in the production process, they are often underpaid and face heightened physical and psychological risks. In some cases, individuals reported exposure to unsafe environments, bullying, or threats, without access to recourse or support.

A second report examines conditions in post-production roles, including editing, sound design, and visual effects. Workers in these areas described long hours, pressure to meet tight deadlines, and exposure to disturbing content with little or no warning. Some respondents characterised their working environments as “barely legal,” citing poor ventilation, lack of mental health support, and unpredictable schedules that interfere with family life. The cumulative impact of these practices, the report suggests, is burnout, financial instability, and declining diversity in the workforce.

What links both sets of findings is a wider concern: that unrealistic production timelines and cost pressures are driving poor working conditions across the industry. The researchers argue that commissioners and broadcasters often underestimate the human cost of delivering high-quality content quickly and on budget. As a result, responsibility is pushed down the supply chain, leaving freelancers and smaller contractors to absorb the risk.

The Film and TV Charity has called for a stronger commitment to ethical standards, including clearer employment practices and better mental health support. The reports recommend that broadcasters conduct

human rights due diligence throughout their production pipelines and invest in safer, fairer working environments.

As the television industry continues to evolve, the findings highlight the importance of recognising the labour behind the screen and the need to ensure that creative output is not achieved at the expense of worker wellbeing.