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Our ref: co/tb/v/bbc-dg-foreign-bodies

Mark Thompson
Director-General, BBC
White City, 201 Wood lane
London W12 7TS

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Dear Mark

Many thanks for your letter of February 7th and my apologies for the delay in responding.

I am very glad to hear that the BBC as a whole does not regard engineering as less valuable in the UK than it is in China or India.

Given that, why did the presenter of 'Foreign Bodies' say it was? What steps have been taken to ensure the presenter/script writer recognises his/her mistake? What measures have been put in place to ensure such a mistake is not repeated and to correct the damaging impression given?

More generally is the BBC happy with its representation of the importance and diversity of engineering in the UK?

I am a constant listener to Radio 4 and find that engineering is often poorly or inaccurately portrayed, or compared negatively with what the BBC calls more creative professions such as, interestingly, the media. I am sure that this is unintentional.

Yours sincerely

Chi Onwurah
Labour MP for Newcastle upon Tyne Central
Shadow Minister for Innovation and Science