

Reference: 01538424

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### Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about why the BBC did not provide coverage of the FIFA World Cup Qatar Opening Ceremony. Your request was received on 21 November 2022 and we have considered it under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

#### Your request

*I was very much looking forward to the OPENING CEREMONY IN QATAR. but surprisingly BBC decided not to broadcast this event!!! (Where is the impartiality of BBC) under the Freedom of information ACT I as a licensee payer of the BBC would like to know where and how was this decision made.*

*Would like to have the copy of minutes from the Governing Board or Wherever this decision was made.*

*I wish to make a formal complaint & would like this to be investigated by OFCOM.*

*BBC had no problem with FiFA in Russia why QATAR?*

#### Our response

Ofcom had no involvement on the editorial decision-making process on the BBC's coverage of the World Cup and we therefore do not hold the information requested.

Ofcom set a range of editorial standards which all broadcasters must follow as set out in the Ofcom Broadcasting Code, which includes rules relating to broadcast content and such matters as due accuracy and impartiality, harm and offence, offensive language, and the protection of under-eighteens.

Other than in exceptional circumstances, Ofcom can only consider complaints about the BBC that have already complained to the BBC first. Complaints should be registered with the BBC via:

- **Their website:** at [www.bbc.co.uk/complaints](http://www.bbc.co.uk/complaints)
- **Phone:** call them on 037 0010 0222 or 037 0010 0212 (textphone)
- **Post:** write to *BBC Complaints, PO Box 1922, Darlington, DL3 0UR*

It is only after the completion of the BBC's complaints process, and having escalated a complaint to the Executive Complaints Unit, that you can ask Ofcom to consider it.

If you are then dissatisfied with the BBC's final response, you can contact us again at that time, and complaints may be registered [here](#). It may be helpful to set your expectations that we consider in principle that the issue you raised about non-coverage of the World Cup Opening Ceremony concerns an editorial matter for the BBC in the first instance rather than a substantive Code issue for Ofcom.

For more information about how Ofcom assesses complaints and conducts investigations about BBC programmes, go to: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/tv-radio-and-on-demand/information-for-industry/guidance/procedures>

If you have any further queries, then please send them to [information.requests@ofcom.org.uk](mailto:information.requests@ofcom.org.uk) quoting the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

Zach Westbrook

If you are unhappy with the response you have received in relation to your request for information and/or consider that your request was refused without a reason valid under the law, you may ask for an internal review. If you ask us for an internal review of our decision, it will be subject to an independent review within Ofcom.

The following outcomes are possible:

- the original decision is upheld; or
- the original decision is reversed or modified.

#### Timing

If you wish to exercise your right to an internal review **you should contact us within two months of the date of this letter**. There is no statutory deadline for responding to internal reviews and it will depend upon the complexity of the case. However, we aim to conclude all such reviews within 20 working days, and up to 40 working days in exceptional cases. We will keep you informed of the progress of any such review. If you wish to request an internal review, you should contact [information.requests@ofcom.org.uk](mailto:information.requests@ofcom.org.uk)

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Further information about this, and the internal review process can be found on the Information Commissioner's Office [here](#). Alternatively, the Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF