

Reference: 01538420

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8 December 2022

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information concerning how to get back an "unassigned" O2 number. Your request was received on 25 November 2022, and we have considered it under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Your request

I have been using this number [REDACTED] and unfortunately my operator (o2) told me that the number was unassigned and is not possible to get back to me. Can you look on your side how I can get this number back? What are my options?

Our response

A phone network's contract terms require a Pay As You Go customer to carry out a chargeable activity (e.g. a phone call, text, top-up) at least once during a specific timescale. Service providers can suspend and recycle numbers if they have not been used within a specified timeframe, which varies per operator.

Ofcom requires providers to have a recycling programme in place, to ensure efficient and effective use of numbering, but the timescales for how long a number remains in a recycling pool, is a commercial decision and is not dictated by Ofcom.

It may be possible to reactivate a number during the period of suspension, but you would need to check this with the service provider. The timescale for when numbers are put back into the pool for re-allocation varies per operator but could be anywhere from 3 months up to a year, which would apply to both Pay As you Go and monthly contract customers. You would therefore need to contact O2 to find out if you are able to regain your number once it becomes available for re-allocation.

I hope this clarifies your enquiry. If you have any further queries, then please send them to 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

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