

Reference: 01534698

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6 December 2022

Freedom of Information: Right to know request

I refer to your email dated 17 November 2022 and our email of the same date in relation to Ofcom's mobile and broadband checker and the addresses held in that system. We have considered this under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the "FOI Act").

Your request

(A) What address data base does Ofcom rely upon to populate its search engine for its online "checker" tool?

(B) Who has editorial rights to that address data base?

(C) Why do neither [property name] nor [property name] appear in the list of properties revealed when the postcode [postcode] is entered in the public view Ofcom website "checker" tool?

(D) If your records show that both or either of [property name] and [property name] were listed on the Ofcom website "checker" tool when did they last appear and why have they been removed?

(E) What system is in place to (a) update the Ofcom website "checker" tool and (b) make public/hidden from view specific addresses?

(F) I would like to know where there are any Transportable Earth Station Operators operating linked to [postcode]?

Our response

Questions A to E

By way of background, the [Connected Nations methodology Annex](#) provides a detailed description of how we derive address information that underpins our analysis, reports and products including our online checker. The steps that are taken to form the premises base upon which our analysis relies are set out in Figure 1. The Annex also sets out the frequency at which this underlying address information is updated.

Ofcom uses the Ordnance Survey AddressBase® Premium product to provide the base property dataset used to assess broadband coverage for residential and commercial premises. This contains details of over 40 million ‘features’ that also includes ‘non-postable’ address elements such as ponds. To remove these unnecessary features, we process this data as set out in the Annex to derive the underlying premises base for our analysis.¹ Importantly, the processing removes data that is not applicable for the purposes of understanding broadband availability. A previous [Methodology Annex in 2019](#) provided more information on this aspect of data processing, giving examples of the types of property attributes that are included and excluded as part of the filtering process and explaining why the processing ensures our analysis is as accurate as possible.

With regard to the properties you referred to, we have looked at our current data files and can confirm that the two properties are included in the 40 million records of the AddressBase database. They are recorded as ‘child’ records of the neighbouring property [property name]. The classification code in the database for [property name] is ‘RD02’ which represents a detached residential dwelling. For details on these classifications please see the [overview for the AddressBase family of products](#).

As a result of this classification, the two records you highlight are excluded from our analysis because ‘child’ records for standard residential properties would not normally represent features that are relevant in our assessment of broadband coverage in the UK (such as a home office). For the buildings to be included, the classifications associated with [property name] and/or the properties currently designated as ‘children’ would need to be altered. These classifications are assigned by the local authority, not Ofcom. We would therefore advise contacting [Ordnance Survey](#) or your local authority to make any changes as we do not have editing rights to this.

We are unable to provide information on when [property name] and [property name] last appeared on Ofcom’s website checker tool and why these addresses may have been removed because this requires an investigation that would take a significant amount of time to see if previous processing algorithms using earlier AddressBase data would have produced a different outcome.

Question F

Since 1 November 2017, Ofcom has authorised one Transportable Earth Station to make transmissions in the vicinity of [postcode].

Details of this Transportable Earth Station authorisation are as follows:

- Licensee: ITV WALES & WEST LIMITED

¹ [Connected Nations 2019: Annex A: Methodology](#)

- Transmission date: 15 Oct 2021 – 14 Nov 2021
- Location (UK NGR): ST 29009 26671
- Approx frequency range: 29.705 – 29.759 GHz

I hope this information is helpful. If you have any queries, then please contact information.requests@ofcom.org.uk. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely,

Temiloluwa Dawodu

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. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

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