

Reference: 01517487

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Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information concerning battery backups that telecom networks have. Your request was received on 12 October 2022 and we have considered it under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('FOI Act').

Your request & our response

Given the increased chance of powercuts this winter, what level of battery backup are networks obliged to have?

Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) are currently not subject to any specific obligations related to battery backup or other power resilience capability at mobile base station sites or in their core networks, although our Guidance does require them to cater for the normal type of power failure where appropriate. However they are subject to General Conditions in relation to access to emergency calls, specifically General Condition A3 "Availability of services and access to emergency services". You can find further information about the General Conditions [here](#) and our guidance [here](#).

What % cell sites will stay alive for >3hrs no power to ensure emergency calls can be made? Are backhaul links on backup too?

Whilst we do hold this information, we cannot disclose this information as it is exempt from disclosure under section 44 of the FOI Act. This exemption provides that information is to be withheld if its disclosure is prohibited by or under any enactment – in this instance the Communications Act 2003 ('the Communications Act'). Section 393(1) of the Communications Act prevents us from disclosing information about a particular business, or businesses, which we have obtained in the course of exercising a power conferred by, among other legislation, the Communications Act, unless we have the consent of that business or one of the statutory gateways under section 393(2) of the Communications Act is met, neither of which apply here. Section 44 is an absolute exemption and therefore is not subject to a public interest test.

We also consider that other exemptions under the FOI Act may be applicable here.

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