

Reference: 01727144

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

11 December 2023

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information concerning the Communications Ombudsman. This request was received on 30 November 2023 and we have considered it under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the “FOI Act”).

Your request & our response

“1. How many complaints have been made to the Communications Ombudsman about the mobile network provider Three UK in the past 2 years, and what proportion of your total investigations do they constitute?”

2. What is the total number of complaints made to the Communications Ombudsman in the past 2 years and how many of them have been in favour of the complainants?”

3. How many of the Communications Ombudsman decisions have not been accepted by the complainants?”

While we do collect some information from the Communications Ombudsman as part of Ofcom’s regular engagement with them, we do not hold data at the level of detail that would answer these questions. You may wish to contact the Communications Ombudsman directly to obtain this data.

You may find it useful to note that the Communications Ombudsman does regularly publish complaints data. As reported on their website, they share a range of figures in their [annual report](#), including the total number of disputes that they resolve and a breakdown by sector. Quarterly reports which include data on broadband, landline and mobile case outcomes can also be viewed on their website. The latest quarterly report is accessible [here](#).

“4. Would the government-approved regulatory authority Ofcom consider strengthening their policy of regulation or, alternatively, abolishing the ineffective and futile Communications Ombudsman scheme?”

Ofcom currently approves two Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) schemes under the Communications Act 2003: the Communications Ombudsman ('CO') and the Communications and Internet Services Adjudication Scheme ('CISAS'). We are required to keep our approvals of these schemes under review.

The [last review of these ADR schemes](#) under the Communications Act was published on 27 November 2017. This review found that both Schemes met the approval criteria set by the Communications Act 2003.

We also approve CISAS and CO under the Alternative Dispute Resolution for Consumer Disputes Regulations 2015 ('ADR Regulations') and are required to review our approvals under these regulations every two years. The requirements we consider under the ADR regulations are similar to the approval criteria under the Communications Act. We last reapproved both schemes in February 2022 under the ADR Regulations, following an internal review based on information the schemes are required to provide us with every two years.

As of 29 November 2023, Ofcom has launched a [call for inputs](#) for a new review of ADR schemes under the Communications Act in the telecoms sector, which people can directly respond to.

Please also see the [Consultation document](#) for this. As stated, Ofcom is planning to publish an update on our work in this area by Autumn 2024.

I hope that this information is helpful. 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

Information Requests

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