

Reference: 01618385

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

8 June 2023

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about the status of amateur radio call signs on a given date. Your request was received on 11 May 2023 and we have considered it under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Your request

Please provide dataset/datasets from which it is possible to determine a call sign's status on a given date.

Please include data / descriptions (as appropriate) which indicate the reason a call sign's availability/status has changed.

Our response

We do not hold this information. This is because, when we update our online list of call signs, which show the status of the call signs at that time, we do not keep the old list but, rather, replace/overwrite it with the new data. We do not note if or why a call sign has changed.

We have occasionally published call sign lists in response to Freedom of Information requests. These may be found via this [webpage](#), where you will need to click a year and then "Spectrum". The annexes to the corresponding FOI responses will give the listing as it stood, on the date that the data was extracted.

Here is an example:

<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/file/0021/232581/Annex-1-Amateur-radio-call-signs-issued-last-12-months-G5-prefix.xlsx>

Regarding our policies, the availability of call signs, either individually or collectively, can be affected by the policies that we apply.

For example, if a licence were surrendered, we would not normally re-issue the associated call sign for two years. After that period, the call sign would once more be available for assignment. If the call sign were then assigned, having been requested by an applicant, it would again become

unavailable. Its status would change to reflect each change. We do not hold a single list charting the change of status of individual call signs.

Occasionally, a policy will change, either making certain call signs available or withdrawing them. For example, in 2018, we made pre-WW2 call signs (with a 'G2' prefix or with a suffix of only two letters) available. However, in 2020, we again made them unavailable for new assignment, in response to representations from radio amateurs.

In 2018, we made call signs with the prefix 'M7' available for Foundation-level licences. Previously, these call signs had not been available.

We also withhold call signs that we judge may cause offence.

I hope 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