

Reference: 01579762

Information Requests  
[information.requests@ofcom.org.uk](mailto:information.requests@ofcom.org.uk)

24 March 2023

### Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information concerning Ofcom decisions against broadcasters related to Covid misinformation. Your request was received on 9 March 2023 and we have considered it under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the “FOI Act”).

#### Your request

*“In light of the ever increasing information about the lies that the public were told in the covid and lockdown periods, and the Ofcom decision against Mark Steyn GBNews, please could you list all the ofcom decisions, against each broadcaster on covid misinformation with links.”*

#### Ofcom’s complaint processes

Before responding to your question, we would like to provide some background information on Ofcom’s complaints procedures.

Complaints about Ofcom licensed services are handled in line with our published procedures for handling complaints, investigations and sanctions on TV, radio and video-on-demand services<sup>[1]</sup>.

Ofcom assesses every complaint it receives. Based on an initial assessment of the complaint and a consideration of the related content, Ofcom will consider whether there may have been a breach of the Broadcasting Code (or other Ofcom codes or licence conditions). In cases where Ofcom considers there may have been a breach, it will launch an investigation. The possible outcomes of an investigation are that we judge an issue is in breach, resolved or not in breach of our rules.

Ofcom’s Broadcast and On Demand Bulletin, published every fortnight on our website, includes decisions about the complaints we have considered. The Bulletin covers a range of cases, including those which Ofcom has escalated for full investigation, and those which, after careful assessment, Ofcom has decided not to pursue because they did not raise issues warranting investigation. The Bulletins can be accessed via the following link to our website: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/about-ofcom/latest/bulletins/broadcast-bulletins>

<sup>[1]</sup> See: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/tv-radio-and-on-demand/information-for-industry/guidance/procedures>

## Our response

We have interpreted your request to refer to Ofcom investigations into complaints about misinformation on coronavirus. The following page, setting out Ofcom's guidance on broadcast standards during the coronavirus pandemic, lists all investigation decisions to date: [Broadcast standards during the coronavirus pandemic](#)

If you have any further queries, then please send them to [information.requests@ofcom.org.uk](mailto: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](mailto: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