

Reference: 01791896

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

09 April 2024

## Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about Ben Verwaayen's term extension.

We received this request on 08 March 2024 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the FOI Act").

### Your request

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*Ben Verwaayen's term was to end December 2023 now its September 2024. I can't find any information why this was extended and how this is allowed. Any documents for the discussion to extend Mr Verwaayen's*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ben-verwaayen-reappointed-as-a-board-member-at-ofcom>

<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/about-ofcom/how-ofcom-is-run/ofcom-board>

*Originally ending December 31 2023 now on Ofcom site says runs to September 31 2024  
Again I would like to see the discussion and why this was extended and what procedure was used?*

### Our response

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The Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT), as our sponsor Governmental Department, is responsible for the appointment of Ofcom main Board members and also considers recommendations for reappointments and extensions to existing terms of office. The Chair of the Ofcom Board submits any recommendations for the re-appointment of a main Ofcom Board member for a second term, or for the extension of an existing term, to DSIT.

As can be seen from the letter attached to this response, a request was made by Lord Michael Grade, Chair of the Ofcom Board, on 30 August 2023 to the Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology, to extend Ben Verwaayen's second term as an Ofcom Non-Executive Board member by up to nine months from 1 January 2024.

As set out in the letter, at the time of the request DSIT were recruiting for three Non-Executive Ofcom roles, the Welsh Government were seeking to appoint a representative for Wales to the Ofcom Board, and the Deputy Chair of the Ofcom Board, and Content Board Chair, was to step down in January 2024. As such it was considered that an extension to Ben Verwaayen's term of office would provide cover and stability to the organisation, including chairing Ofcom's People Committee. This stability was key in supporting the smooth transition of Board arrangements and allowing attention to be focussed on oversight of the organisation and steering it strategically, which was particularly important with the

introduction of Ofcom's Online Safety duties. The Secretary of State's approval for the extension was received on 23 October 2023.

I hope this information is helpful. 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

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**Request an internal review**

If you are unhappy with the response you have received to your request for information, or think that your request was refused without a reason valid under the law, you may ask for an internal review. If you do, it will be subject to an independent review within Ofcom. We will either uphold the original decision, or reverse or modify it.

If you would like to ask us to carry out an internal review, you should get in touch within two months of the date of this letter. There is no statutory deadline for us to complete our internal review, and the time it takes will depend on the complexity of the request. But we will try to complete the review within 20 working days (or no more than 40 working days in exceptional cases) and keep you informed of our progress.

Please email the Information Requests team ([information.requests@ofcom.org.uk](mailto:information.requests@ofcom.org.uk)) to request an internal review.

**Taking it further**

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our internal review, then you have the right to [complain to the Information Commissioner's Office](#).