

Reference: 01791903

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 complaints for news broadcasters 2019-2024.

We received this request on 12 March 2024 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“the FOI Act”).

### Background

---

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

Complaints about content standards are handled under Ofcom’s Procedures for investigating breaches of content standards for television and radio<sup>1</sup>.

Ofcom’s Broadcast and On Demand Bulletin (the ‘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 Bulletin can be accessed on our website.

In addition, Ofcom’s Annual Reports include statistics on broadcasting complaints, cases and sanctions for the period 1 April in one year to 31 March the following year, including total investigations recording breaches of the Broadcasting Code (or other Ofcom codes). You can find the full [Annual Reports](#) on our website.

### Your request

---

*“Information surrounding the ten news broadcasters (both TV and radio) about which Ofcom received the largest number of complaints annually between 2019-2024.*

*In addition to the above, I am writing to request information on the number of complaints received by Ofcom about GB News annually between 2019-2024.*

*The format I would like this data to be presented in is exhibited by the attached Excel file. This file includes sample data in red font, to be replaced by Ofcom data.*

*As is shown by the attached file, I would like the data to be segregated by year, with broadcasters listed according to the number of complaints made about them each year (largest to smallest).*

Notes:

---

*\* Please provide the most recent data available between 2019-2024. If the time/cost of providing the most recent data available between 2019-2024 exceeds the threshold below which the Ofcom is under a legal obligation to respond, please provide recent data spanning fewer years (e.g., 2022-2024) if the time/cost needed to do so is below that threshold.\**

## **Our response**

---

We have added complaints data to the spreadsheet you provided.

For administrative reasons, complaints received by Ofcom are assigned to a case. A case may comprise a single complaint or a number, where they relate to the same programme or issue. We have therefore provided information in the table to distinguish between the number of complaints received by Ofcom and the number of cases which they generated.

Please note that the data reflects that GB News has only been on air since 13 June 2021, that Talk TV launched on 25 April 2022, and that RT had its licence revoked and ceased broadcast on 18 March 2022. In addition, although the volume of complaints received may be a consideration in assessing general audience reactions, it is not determinative as to whether Ofcom will proceed to investigate any given case. Rather, it is the particular issues which have been raised by the complainant(s) which are of primary concern in Ofcom's assessment of a programme.

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**

---

### **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](#).