

Reference: 01803486

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

30 April 2024

## Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about postal services to Syria.

We received this request on 02 April 2024 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“the FOI Act”).

### Your request

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- 1. Why has the Royal Mail been denying me, and thousands like me, the right to send letters, books and scientific journals to Syria for the last twelve years?*
- 2. Did you instruct the Royal Mail to suspend postal services to Syria? And if so, why?*
- 3. If you did not instruct the Royal Mail to suspend postal services to Syria, what measures have you taken against the Royal Mail, or any other postal services provider, for the failure to provide the service?*
- 4. Now that the situation in Syria is quiet, is it not time to resume postal services if the reason for suspending them had been, the troubles, as the Royal Mail alleges?*
- 5. Considering that international postal service takes place between capitals why would an internal conflict in one state lead to interruption of the service from other capitals?*
- 6. Is it not a breach of law to deny people in the UK their protected right of correspondence under Article 8 of the European Convention of Human Rights?*

### Our response

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We can confirm that Ofcom does not hold information about Royal Mail’s provision, or suspension, of postal services to Syria.

Please note that we do not consider questions 1, 4, 5, and 6 above amount to a valid request for information under the FOI Act. We are not required to provide advice, explanations or opinions.

In response to questions 2 and 3 above, Ofcom did not direct, nor have any role in, Royal Mail’s decision to suspend postal services to Syria, nor has Ofcom taken any measures against the Royal Mail or any other postal services provided in relation to the suspension of mail services to Syria for the reasons set out above.

You may find it helpful to know that Ofcom is the UK postal regulator and has a duty under the Postal Services Act (PSA 2011)<sup>1</sup> to carry out its functions in a way that it considers will secure the provision of a universal postal service<sup>2</sup>, having regard to its financial sustainability and efficiency.<sup>3</sup> The minimum universal service requirements are set by Parliament and require the universal service provider, Royal Mail, to provide certain postal services at affordable, uniform prices throughout the UK.<sup>4</sup>

Royal Mail has responsibilities for certain international mail services under treaties agreed by the UK Government, through the UK's membership to the Universal Postal Union (UPU).<sup>5</sup> The only information Ofcom holds about the operations of international mail services relates to inbound UK mail services arriving from European Union Member States.

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](#).

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<sup>1</sup> [Postal Services Act 2011 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#) is legislation that established the current universal postal service and the legal framework, including Ofcom's regulation of postal services.

<sup>2</sup> Section 29(1) of the Postal Services Act 2011.

<sup>3</sup> Section 29(3) of the Postal Services Act 2011.

<sup>4</sup> Section 31 of the Postal Services Act 2011.

<sup>5</sup> [Universal Postal Union \(upu.int\)](#)