

Reference: 01849128

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

1 August 2024

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about complaints related to media bias in coverage of the Israel-Hamas conflict.

We received this request on 4 July 2024 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“the FOI Act”).

Your request

“Are you able to provide any further detail on the complaints and if any action was taken? Additionally, do you have a breakdown of when complaints were made, maybe by month?”

Background

By way of background, Ofcom assesses every complaint we receive. Based on an initial assessment of the complaint and the related content, Ofcom will consider whether there may have been a breach of the [Broadcasting Code](#) (the ‘Code’) or other Ofcom codes or licence conditions. In cases where Ofcom considers there may have been a breach, we will launch an investigation. The possible outcomes of an investigation are in breach, resolved or not in breach of our rules.

The volume of complaints received may be a consideration in assessing general audience reactions, but 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 which are of primary concern in Ofcom’s assessment of a programme.

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 decided to investigate, and those which, after careful assessment, Ofcom has decided not to pursue because they did not raise issues warranting investigation.

Please note that in line with our published [procedures](#) Ofcom can normally only consider complaints about BBC programmes where the complainant has already complained to the BBC, and the BBC has reached its final decision.

Our response

Please see the enclosed spreadsheet, which shows complaints that Ofcom has considered related to coverage of the Israel-Hamas conflict between 7 October 2023 and 4 July 2024, logged under the

categories “Due accuracy” or “Due impartiality/bias”. Taking into account the BBC first complaints process, we have shown BBC and non-BBC complaints separately.

This spreadsheet reflects the same complaint data which is published in Ofcom’s Broadcast and On Demand Bulletin on our website. Please note that the Bulletin does not specify the specific subject of a complaint, only the category of the complaint issue with reference to the rules in the Code. Complaints related to bias in news programmes are logged under the categories “Due accuracy” or “Due impartiality/bias”.

We 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

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) 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](#).