

Reference: 01916588

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

13 November 2024

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about numbers of telephone boxes and calls.

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

Your request

Please could you provide me with any figures you hold which show

(a) the number of working telephone boxes there are, and

(b) the number of calls made annually from telephone boxes.

Our response

We have interpreted your request to mean BT (outside Hull) and KCOM (in the Hull area only), which have universal service obligations.

The number of public telephone boxes in operation (and information on closures) is published by BT here: [Service level - BT Payphones](#). KCOM’s reports are published here: [payphone reporting](#). BT and KCOM must publish this information every 12 months.

We do not hold information on other companies’ public telephone boxes.

We do hold some information about call volumes which was obtained for the purpose of our 2021/22 [review of the telephony universal service obligation](#).

However, we cannot disclose this information as it is exempt from disclosure under section 44 of the FOI Act. This exemption provides that information is to be withheld if its disclosure is prohibited under other legislation – in this case section 393(1) of the Communications Act 2003 (the Act). Section 393(1) of the Act prevents us from disclosing information about a particular business (or businesses), in this case BT and KCOM, which we have obtained in the course of exercising a power conferred by, among other legislation, the Act, unless we have the consent of that business or one of the statutory gateways under section 393(2) of the Act is met, neither of which apply here. Section 44 is an absolute exemption and does not require a public interest test.

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](#).