

Reference: 01816902

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

24 May 2024

## Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your follow-up request for information concerning Ofcom, BBC, TikTok and communications sign-offs.

We received this request on 25 April 2024 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the FOI Act").

### Your request & our response

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- 1. Please provide all information between Ofcom and the BBC in relation to TikTok (from this case and any others, and general communications between BBC/Ofcom relating to TikTok).*
- 2. What percentage of communications between the BBC and Ofcom are signed off with a name and/or a department and/or job description? I shall say for a one month period, last month as an example (if you can include the "sign offs" to the public in this FOI please do so so there can be an accurate comparison. If you sign off as only department this would be achievable I feel under you FOI limitations. If not I can make separate FOIs in this regard.). If you are signing off as named employees with the BBC and you are signing off as "Information Requests", or other department within Ofcom, to the public that shows an institutional bias towards the media that you are meant to regulate, and discrimination against the people bringing complaints against the media for breaches in THEIR behaviour. It is the media that you are meant to regulate. On our behalf.*

Under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act ('the FOI Act'), Ofcom is not obliged to comply with a request for information if we estimate that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the 'appropriate limit'. The appropriate limit is set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 ('the Regulations'), and is, for Ofcom, £450. The Regulations provide that costs are to be estimate at a rate of £25 per person per hour, which equates to 18 hours of time. That sum is intended to cover the estimated costs involved in determining whether Ofcom holds the information requested, identifying, locating, retrieving and extracting the information from any document containing it.

Ofcom estimates that it would take at least 18 hours to search for and retrieve the information relating to these questions, due to the number of different email accounts and documents on our data management system we would have to search through. As such the cost of complying with your request will exceed the appropriate limit. We have therefore been unable to fulfil your request under Section 12 of the FOI Act.

Please note that regarding question 2 it is worth noting that in terms of the Standards and Audience Protection group, that correspondence to our licensees is ordinarily with a team email signature, and that we also use that approach with members of the public. This policy, in addition to protecting individuals at Ofcom, is also to avoid any accusation of favouritism if addressing stakeholders in different terms.

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](#).