

Reference: 01817869

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

30 May 2024

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about television access services and British Sign Language Broadcasting Trust (BSLBT) contributions.

We received this request on 7 May 2024 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the FOI Act").

Your request and our response

"I am writing to ask some questions that I have after reading a range of Ofcom reports. While reading the document named "Television and On-Demand Programme Services: Access Services Report for the First Six Months of 2022", I came across an explanation of BSLBT contribution, that is, "BSLBT Contribution indicates that the broadcaster contributed to the British Sign Language Broadcasting Trust (BSLBT), which commissions sign-presented programming and is broadcast on the channels Film4 and Together". However, this explanation is not sufficient for me to understand what BSLBT contribution means for TV news programme. In specific, I want to inquire whether BSLBT contribution serves as an alternative approach for evaluating the signing services provided by television news programmes. Are there any specific requirements associated with evaluating the BSLBT contribution that Sky news programme has to meet?"

Here is the link to the report on access services that I have read:

<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/multi-sector-research/accessibility-research/access-services-report-h1-2022>

Our [Code on television access services](#) sets out the signing requirements for broadcasters. As noted in paragraphs 5.5-5.11 of the Code, broadcasters may propose alternative arrangements, which are listed in Annex 2 of the Code, such as the making of annual financial contributions, including to the BSLBT. Our [2014 statement on Changes to signing arrangements for relevant domestic TV channels](#) gives some further background on the regulatory arrangements in relation to signed programming and the role of BSLBT. It may also be helpful to refer to the following document, [Television Channels required to provide access services in 2024](#), which sets out the current minimum signed programming or financial contributions to be made towards alternative signing arrangements (including to the BSLBT) for channels with a smaller audience (see paragraph 1.8). This financial contribution is updated annually to take account of inflation.

"Additionally, may I ask if you have statistical data on access services provided by specific TV news programmes, such as BBC News at Ten and Sky News at Ten?"

We do not hold information regarding statistical data on access services provided by specific TV news programmes. We only hold information regarding access services provided on each broadcasting service.

I 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](#).