

Reference: 2006622

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

30 June 2025

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about 'D' Notice Telegraph Poles.

We received this request on 4 June 2025 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the FOI Act").

Your request and our response

a) How many telegraph poles are there in the UK?

As set out in our Connected Nations report in 2024 ([Connected Nations UK report 2024](#)) page 25, there are 4.1 million poles in the UK.

b) How many telegraph poles are there in the UK, which have a physical 'D' notice on them, which Openreach has failed to actually record on its own systems?

Ofcom does not hold this information.

c) In view of the health & safety issues pertaining to telegraph poles, how long does Openreach have to replace a telegraph pole?

Ofcom does not set a timescale for pole replacement within its regulations. See response to request (h) for more information on quality of service requirements imposed on BT (Openreach).

d) How many telegraph poles have had a 'D' notice on them for six months?

e) How many telegraph poles have had a 'D' notice on them for 1 year?

f) How many telegraph poles have had a 'D' notice on them for 2 years or more?

Ofcom does not hold this information.

g) As Openreach has a complete monopoly in the provision and maintenance of infrastructure, with no customer focus and no directive by Ofcom to respond to requests and therefore is impeding the provision and distribution of technology to society, what penalty therefore exists on Openreach by Ofcom, for failure to upgrade and replace its estate of telegraph poles, considering the health and safety issues of these to the general public, due to the lack of maintenance?

Telegraph poles are subject to Health and Safety legislation which is not part of Ofcom's remit.

h) How long does Ofcom allow Openreach to effectively fail to deliver a service, which it had agreed was available to be provided on the day of installation and since has not yet been fulfilled?

Ofcom has imposed quality of service regulations on BT in relation to the access network that Openreach runs on its behalf. These quality of service regulations are explained in [Volume 5](#) of our Wholesale Fixed Telecoms Market Review 2021-26 statement.

In brief, BT/Openreach need to have contractual service level commitments for completing the provision of certain connections to its network and relating to compensation for failures to meet these commitments. It also needs to install its copper-based products (like fibre-to-the-cabinet) by the date agreed with its wholesale customers 94% of the time over the course of a year. Ofcom can impose fines for non-compliance of these regulations. The regulations are set out in these legal instruments: [2021 WFTMR Volume 7: Legal instruments](#) – e.g. see Condition 7.2 (page 44 to 53) and Quality of Service Standard 2 on page 238.

We have just consulted on a proposal to make changes to the quality of service regulations: see [Volume 5](#) of our Telecoms Access Review 2026-31.

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](#).