

Reference: 640862

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### **Freedom of Information: Right to know request**

Thank you for your request for information which was received on 26 November 2018. We are dealing with it under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the Act").

*"I would like to request an information regarding all of the breaches of RT and RT Europe since 2012 to now (recent update).*

*As it is listed on Ofcom website, Ofcom has recorded 15 breaches against TV Novosti services since it acquired the first of its three licences in 2012. Also, there are 7 new ongoing investigations against this TV outlets. Though, the data is not complete. For example, "Date of broadcast: 2011 and 2012, Nature of issue: Due impartiality/due accuracy, Outcome: Breach". Could you please specify:*

- *the particular date of publication (broadcast);*
- *the name of the programme (ex. Sputnik);*
- *the nature of the subject discussed (what was the programme about? (Ukraine? NATO? EU? Syria?))*
- *what thoughts were/are considered as partial (quote if possible)?*
- *what was considered as inaccurate?*
- *what was the outcome/the penalties (a particular amount of money) paid (for 15 closed investigations)?*

*I would like to get this data for closed investigations and also for ongoing (the same questions except penalties paid, as it is obvious that they are not paid yet because those investigations are not finished).*

*Could you also clarify this claim?*

*(source: [https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0012/113043/rt-investigations.pdf](https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0012/113043/rt-investigations.pdf))*

*"There has been a total of 15 breaches over the period since 4 May 2012, which compared to other broadcasters of this type is not an unusually high number."*

*If comparing RT and RT Europe's breaches with breaches of other media outlets not by the number of such accidents, but by severity, was it unusual or not? If considering the harm of propaganda/deliberate misinformation?"*

Complaints about broadcast standards are carefully assessed under the Broadcasting Code, which sets strict standards for programme content which broadcasters must follow. If we consider that these rules may have been broken, we work swiftly to investigate. Should we conclude our rules have been breached, and we consider a breach to be serious, repeated, reckless and/or deliberate, we have the power to impose sanctions on broadcasters. You can find decisions about complaints we have received in Ofcom's Broadcast and On Demand Bulletin, published every fortnight on our website here: <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/enforcement/broadcast-bulletins>.

Turning to your request, from 1 January 2012 to the present, we have completed 16 investigations relating to RT/RT Europe. Please refer to the below table for the programme details and a hyperlink to the relevant Broadcast/ Broadcast and On Demand Bulletin where the information you have requested is published. As published in our [update](#) document, we have twice given directions to the services (a form of sanction). We have not imposed any financial penalties.

Programme	Channel	Transmission date	Bulletin number and publication date
News	Russia Today	21 August 2012	<a href="#">Bulletin 213- 10/09/12</a>
News	Russia Today	12 July 2012	<a href="#">Bulletin 217- 05/11/12</a>
Advertising minutage	RT	2 October to 7 December 2012	<a href="#">Bulletin 225- 04/03/13</a>
Advertising minutage	RT	14 to 28 December 2012	<a href="#">Bulletin 228- 22/04/13</a>
News	RT	5 August 2013	<a href="#">Bulletin 241- 04/11/13</a>
Syrian Diary	RT	17 March 2013	<a href="#">Bulletin 244- 16/12/13</a>
Joystick Warriors	RT	3 and 4 March 2014	<a href="#">Bulletin 253- 06/05/14</a>
News	RT	22 May 2014	<a href="#">Bulletin 261- 08/09/14</a>
News	RT	1-6 March 2014	<a href="#">Bulletin 266 - 10/11/14</a>
The Truthseeker	RT (Europe)	13 July 2014	<a href="#">Bulletin 288- 21/09/15</a>
The Truthseeker	RT	23 March 2014	<a href="#">Bulletin 288 - 21/09/15</a>
The Truthseeker	RT	23 March 2014	<a href="#">Bulletin 288 - 21/09/15</a>
Ukraine's Refugees	RT	18 to 20 July 2014	<a href="#">Bulletin 288- 21/09/15</a>
Going Underground	RT	5 and 23 March 2016	<a href="#">Bulletin 308- 04/07/16</a>
Crosstalk	RT	11 July 2016	<a href="#">Bulletin 319- 19/12/16</a>
The Alex Salmond Show	RT	16 November 2017	<a href="#">Bulletin 358- 16/07/18</a>

Ofcom has launched investigations into the following programmes on RT, as reported in issues 352 and 354 of Ofcom's Broadcast and On Demand Bulletin:

Programme	Service	Transmission date	Bulletin number
Crosstalk	RT	13 April 2018	<a href="#">Bulletin 352</a>
Crosstalk	RT	16 April 2018	<a href="#">Bulletin 352</a>
News	RT	18 March 2018	<a href="#">Bulletin 352</a>
News	RT	30 March 2018	<a href="#">Bulletin 352</a>
Sputnik	RT	17 March 2018	<a href="#">Bulletin 352</a>
Sputnik	RT	7 April 2018	<a href="#">Bulletin 352</a>
Worlds Apart	RT	1 April 2018	<a href="#">Bulletin 352</a>
Crosstalk	RT	20 April 2018	<a href="#">Bulletin 354</a>

Programme	Service	Transmission date	Bulletin number
News	RT	26 April 2018	<a href="#">Bulletin 354</a>
News	RT	4 May 2018	<a href="#">Bulletin 354</a>

These investigations are still in progress and once concluded Ofcom's decisions will be published in the Bulletin.

Ofcom is unable to disclose further details of the open investigations beyond that provided above, and as listed in the Bulletins. [Section 44 of the Act](#) exempts organisations from releasing information under the Act if another Act of Parliament prohibits its disclosure. [Section 393 of the Communications Act 2003](#) prohibits Ofcom from releasing information we have obtained in carrying out our functions that relates to a particular business, unless we have the consent of that business or releasing that information helps Ofcom to carry out its functions, neither of which apply here. Section 44 of the Act is an absolute exemption and does not require a public interest test. Other exemptions may also apply.

Your last question is a request for additional reasoning and opinion and as such is not a request for information under the Act. Our full reasoning was set out in our update document that you referred to.

We hope this information is of assistance. If you have any queries, then please contact [information.requests@ofcom.org.uk](mailto:information.requests@ofcom.org.uk). Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely,

**Catriona Lawrence**

If you are unhappy with the response or level of service you have received in relation to your request from Ofcom, you may ask for an internal review. If you ask us for an internal review of our decision, it will be treated as a formal complaint and will be subject to an independent review within Ofcom. We will acknowledge the complaint and inform you of the date by which you might expect to be told the outcome.

The following outcomes are possible:

- the original decision is upheld; or
- the original decision is reversed or modified.

#### Timing

If you wish to exercise your right to an internal review **you should contact us within two months of the date of this letter**. There is no statutory deadline for undertaking internal reviews and it will depend upon the complexity of the case. However, we aim to conclude all such reviews within 20 working days, and up to 40 working days in exceptional cases. We will keep you informed of the progress of any such review. If you wish to request an internal review, you should contact:

Corporation Secretary  
Ofcom  
Riverside House  
2a Southwark Bridge Road  
London SE1 9HA

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF