

Reference: 01270284

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Freedom of Information: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information regarding Ofcom's Amateur Radio Call Sign allocation policy. We received this request on 2 June 2021 and have considered it under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the "Act").

Your question

'Please list the Date when Ofcom changed published policy on re-issuing Amateur radio call signs.

Previously the RA, then Ofcom would only permit a previously issued call sign to be given to another amateur or a club, with written permission from the previous holder or the Previous holders Family. This was Policy for a number of years

Now anyone can apply for a call sign that was previously held or issued, which means we have recent licencees, Holding G3 call signs

When did Policy change, who agreed and why were us Amateurs not consulted on the Change, it is a insult to Silent Keys and almost like Graverobbing that you hear Old call signs on the Air and I urge Ofcom to reconsider Policy.'

Our response

UK amateur radio stations are identified with a unique call sign, which we assign. We ensure that these call signs comply with the UK's international obligations, as set out in Article 19 of the Radio Regulations. These require call signs to be in a certain format, depending on the type of station. They expressly prohibit transmissions that have false or misleading identification. Where we manage station identities, including for amateur radio stations, we do so within those requirements.

We are unaware that Ofcom has ever applied a policy that a radio station call sign may be assigned only with the consent of another party. However, we decided in February 2020 that we would cease making generally available, call signs in a format originally used before WW2. This is set out in the footnote to the table of amateur radio call sign allocations, on the [amateur radio information page of our website](#).

Paragraphs 1.16 to 1.18 of our [online guidance](#) describe our approach to reusing old call signs. If an amateur radio licence is surrendered (including cases where the previous holder has died), the call sign remains unavailable for two years. Thereafter, a subsequent applicant for a licence may expressly request the call sign though that is the only way that an applicant can obtain the call

sign. If an applicant does not request a particular call sign, they will be assigned a previously unissued call sign or one that was last used more than 10 years ago.

I hope this information is helpful. If you have any queries, then please contact information.requests@ofcom.org.uk. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely,

Alexander Mapletoft