

Ofcom ref: 00545029

Information Requests
Email: information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

18 June 2018

Ref: 005450293 Freedom of Information: Right to Know Request

Thank you for your request for information on complaints by participants in television and radio programmes. Your request was received on 23 May 2018 and we are dealing with it under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the Act").

You requested the following information:

Please can you tell me how many complaints Ofcom received by participants on programmes who felt they had their privacy violated or were treated unfairly? It would be good if the data made a distinction between the type of complaint, if possible. Can you please give me this figure for 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017?

In addition, I would appreciate it if you could break down the totals for each year as follows:

Complaints by participants on non-BBC radio shows

Complaints by participants on BBC radio shows

Complaints by participants on non-BBC TV shows

Complaints by participants on BBC TV shows

For your information, complaints about broadcast standards are carefully assessed under Ofcom's 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 broken, 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>.

There is a bespoke section of the Bulletin for reporting Ofcom's consideration of complaints related to matters of fairness and privacy from participants or those directly affected by programmes, see page 18 of Bulletin Issue 355 [here](#), for example. These cases are summarised in the contents page of each Bulletin, including information to identify whether the complaint relates to television or radio, and BBC or non-BBC.

In addition Ofcom's annual reports, available [here](#), provide overall statistics on programme complaints received across the year. There is a bespoke section for fairness and privacy complaints in the annual reports, see page 29 of the most recent report [here](#) for example.

Turning to your specific request, under Section 21 of the Act, we are not required to provide information in response to a request if it is already reasonably accessible to you. We consider the information you requested is available from Ofcom's published bulletins and annual reports as explained above.

We hope this information is of assistance. 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,

Information Requests

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 exception cases. We will keep you informed of the progress of any such review. If you wish to request an internal review, you should contact:

Steve Gettings
The Secretary to the Corporation
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