

Reference: 550674

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Information Rights Adviser
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Freedom of Information: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information where you asked about illegal broadcasting and misuse of radio in North West England since 2003.

This was received by Ofcom on 14 June and it has been considered under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act).

We have searched for the information you requested, and we hold information in relation to your requests from 2007 and not from before that year. Our response to each of your questions below is based on what we hold.

1) Since 29th Dec 2003, how many illegal broadcasters have been operating on the FM band 87.5-108MHz in the North West of England?

Since January 2007 Ofcom has taken action against 10 unlicensed broadcast stations operating in the North West of England. Of these, 10 were operating on FM band 87.5-108Mhz. There may have been other unlicensed stations operating that Ofcom was not aware of.

2) Following from the above question, how many illegal broadcast stations have been closed down in the North West of England since 29th Dec 2003

Of the 10 stations referred to above, Ofcom believes 9 ceased broadcasting in the same form.

Please note that there may be others. Caution should be exercised in relation to use of the above figures as: (a) they only reflect the unlicensed broadcasters Ofcom believes ceased broadcasting; and (b) unlicensed broadcasters may set up again but under a different identity or form.

3) Since 29th Dec 2003 has the number of illegal broadcasts risen or fallen in the North West of England?

As of 2018 Ofcom is aware of 1 station. This figure is lower than the figure given in response to question 1 and Ofcom therefore considers that the number has fallen.

4) Are there still illegal broadcasts happening now even though internet streaming has become easier to carry out and is popular on Social media such as Facebook. UK wide area

Yes, Ofcom can confirm that there are still unlicensed broadcasters operating notwithstanding the emergence of internet streaming.

5) In the last 5 year have Ofcom closed down any Illegal broadcasts in the North West of England. Including all FM Frequencies.

Ofcom may take a range of enforcement actions against unlicensed broadcasters. Since 2013, Ofcom has taken action against 5 unlicensed broadcasters operating on various FM frequencies in the North West of England.

6) Since the TV digital switchover in the UK, has the number of complaints regarding TV interference been reduced.

The BBC is responsible for handling complaints on interference to domestic television services. Please see <http://www.bbc.co.uk/reception/>.

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,

Julia Snape

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:

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