

Reference: 1548740

Gloria Akinyemi
Information Rights Adviser
Information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

17 January 2023

Freedom of Information: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about cash register competitions and winners.

We received this request on 22 December 2022 and have considered it under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“the Act”).

Your request

You asked: *‘In regard to the planet radio (free radio etc) cash register, how many winners have been from the free online entry as opposed to the paid for text entry? Does going online make it impossible to win? I have noticed online asks for your name whereas texts does not, does this make online entry’s stand out so they can’t be picked potentially?’*

Our response

I have investigated your request and can confirm we do not hold the information requested about the number of winners via different routes.

Regarding your question/concern about the treatment of online entries, Rule 2.13 of the [Broadcasting Code](#) (the “Code”) requires that broadcast competitions are conducted fairly. Our [Guidance to Rules 2.13 - 2.16](#) of the Code, which relate to broadcast competitions and voting, states:

“There are further areas of advice indirectly related to production that broadcasters are reminded are also very important. For example, the handling of competition entries may be unfair if statistical flaws are introduced, for instance by selecting from proportions of entries from different routes (telephone, internet, post etc), or the exclusion of some entries by ‘sampling’ during an entry period. These techniques can easily bring about unfairness unless very close attention – likely to include expert statistical advice – is paid to the way they are used.

Further, it is Ofcom’s view that competitions resolved through the random picking of a winner are generally understood by viewers to operate as simple draws analogous to raffles

and similar 'winner out of a hat' schemes: in other words, that all entries from which a winner will be chosen are entered into the pool. The selection should of course be genuinely random."

Therefore, the exact mechanic of competition entries is a matter for broadcasters, but the expectation is that entries via any route should have an equal opportunity of winning.

I 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,

Gloria Akinyemi

If you are unhappy with the response you have received in relation to your request for information and/or consider that your request was refused without a reason valid under the law you may ask for an internal review. If you ask us for an internal review of our decision, it will be subject to an independent review within Ofcom.

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 responding to 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 information.requests@ofcom.org.uk.

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. Further information about this, and the internal review process can be found on the Information Commissioner's Office [here](#). Alternatively, the Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

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