

Reference: 1822547

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

17 June 2024

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about correspondence regarding the regulation of GB News.

We received this request on 17 May 2024 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the FOI Act").

Your request

I wish to request copies (redacted where appropriate) of written correspondence to and from CEO Dame Melanie Dawes pertaining to the regulation of GB News Limited for the past 12 months from receiving this request.

I wish to request copies (redacted where appropriate) of written correspondence to and from Group Director of Broadcast Cristina Nicolotti Squires pertaining to the regulation of GB News Limited for the past 12 months from receiving this request.

I wish to request copies (redacted where appropriate) of written correspondence to and from Group Director General Counsel Martin Ballantyne pertaining to the regulation of GB News Limited for the past 12 months from receiving this request.

Correspondence could be emails, meeting notes and presentations - both internally and with the broadcaster in question.

Our response

While we hold information falling within the scope of your request, we are unable to comply with it. We have carefully considered all the points in your request, noting it includes written correspondence (emails/letters), meeting notes and presentations both internally and externally relating to the regulation of GB News with the Chief Executive, Group Director of the Broadcasting and Media Group and General Counsel of Ofcom for the past 12 months. We note that the Group Director of the Broadcasting and Media Group, Cristina Nicolotti Squires, joined Ofcom in January 2024 so it has only been possible for us to consider this element of your request since that date.

Given the amount of time needed to locate, retrieve, identify and extract the requested information, we consider that Section 12 of the FOI Act applies. Section 12 provides that we are not obliged to comply with a request for information if we estimate that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the "appropriate limit". The appropriate limit is set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 ("the Regulations"), and is, for Ofcom, £450. That sum is intended to cover the estimated costs involved in determining whether Ofcom holds the information requested, locating, retrieving and extracting the information from any

document containing it. The Regulations provide that costs are to be estimated at a rate of £25 per person per hour, which equates to 18 hours of time. We estimate that it would take us more than 18 hours to locate, retrieve, identify and extract all the information that falls within the descriptions provided in your request.

You may wish to consider submitting a narrower, more focused request, and we would be happy to consider this under the FOI Act.

Should you decide to make a further request, please note that other exemptions may apply to this information including Section 44 (disclosure is prohibited under other legislation – in this case section 393(1) of the Communications Act 2003), Section 42 (information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings) and Section 40 (personal information) of the FOI Act.

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,

Information Requests

Request an internal review

If you are unhappy with the response you have received to your request for information, or think that your request was refused without a reason valid under the law, you may ask for an internal review. If you do, it will be subject to an independent review within Ofcom. We will either uphold the original decision, or reverse or modify it.

If you would like to ask us to carry out an internal review, you should get in touch within two months of the date of this letter. There is no statutory deadline for us to complete our internal review, and the time it takes will depend on the complexity of the request. But we will try to complete the review within 20 working days (or no more than 40 working days in exceptional cases) and keep you informed of our progress.

Please email the Information Requests team (information.requests@ofcom.org.uk) to request an internal review.

Taking it further

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our internal review, then you have the right to [complain to the Information Commissioner's Office](#).