

Reference: 2103830

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

4 December 2025

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about the Communications Ombudsman.

We received this request on 6 November 2025 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the FOI Act").

Your request and our response

Please provide me with the following information under the Freedom of Information Act: -

- 1. As the responsible body for approving the appointment of the Communications Ombudsman service as part of an Alternative Dispute Resolution scheme, and responsible for ensuring that the Communications Ombudsman meets the necessary standards and is fit for purpose under the Communications Act, would you therefore please provide me with information on the number of complaints and concerns raised with or brought to the notice of Ofcom about the actions of the Ombudsman in respect of matters referred to the Ombudsman in their remit as an Alternative Dispute Resolution Service for the years 2022, 2023, 2024 and to current date in 2025.*
- 2. In respect of the issues brought to your notice would you please provide information on what action was taken by Ofcom in respect of these matters.*

While we do hold information connected to questions 1 and 2, we consider that disclosure of this information is exempt under the FOI Act. In particular, section 44(1)(a) of the FOI Act exempts disclosure of information if its disclosure is prohibited under another enactment. Ofcom is prohibited under section 393 of the Communications Act 2003 ('the Communications Act') from disclosing information about a business (such as the Communications Ombudsman) which we have obtained in the course of exercising a power conferred by the Communications Act among others, unless we have the consent of that business or one of the statutory gateways under section 393(2) of the Communications Act is met, neither of which applies here. Section 44 is an absolute exemption and therefore is not subject to a public interest test.

- 3. In respect of your responsibility for ensuring that the Communications Ombudsman meets the necessary standards and is fit for purpose under the Communications Act in operating an Alternative Dispute Resolution scheme, would you please provide information on exactly how you undertake such assurance.*

The Communications Act places a duty on Ofcom to set General Conditions ('GCs') relating to the handling of complaints made to providers by domestic and small business customers. Under our GCs, communications providers offering services to people, small businesses and not-for-profit organisations must be members of an Ofcom-approved ADR scheme. Ofcom currently approves two ADR schemes: the Communications Ombudsman (CO) and the Communications and Internet Services Adjudication Scheme (CISAS).

We are required by the Act to keep our approvals of these schemes under review. We have recently carried out a review [here](#) under the Act where we reapproved both ADR schemes. As part of our review, we assessed the schemes suitability against the following criteria: accessibility, independence, fairness, efficiency, transparency, effectiveness, accountability, and non-discriminatory. The review [here](#) was concluded July 2025.

We monitor each scheme's performance on an ongoing basis, including against Key Performance Indicators ('KPIs'), which are set and monitored by Ofcom. We publish KPIs [here](#) on a quarterly basis to provide further transparency on the scheme's performance.

We also engage with the schemes on a regular basis. As part of this engagement, we discuss with the schemes any service-related complaints we have received from consumers.

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](#).