

Reference: 02065271

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

16 September 2025

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about the complaints process for commercial analogue radio stations.

We received this request on 18 August 2025 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Your request & Our response

I seek to understand Ofcom's processes when assessing complaints about analogue commercial radio stations.

- 1. Please can Ofcom supply a copy of the agreed procedure which is followed by its staff from the point of a complaint being submitted through to a decision being made?*

You can find the requested information in Ofcom's published [Procedures for investigating breaches of content standards for television and radio](#). These procedures apply to the handling of content standards complaints received about all licensed television and radio services, not just analogue commercial radio stations. Where a complaint relates to the conditions of any broadcast licence, we follow the [General procedures for investigating breaches of broadcast licences](#).

- 2. How many people are involved in this process and are all decisions signed off by a second officer / manager?*

Ofcom's initial assessment of complaints is managed by the Content Standards & Enforcement Team. This team sits within the Broadcasting and Media Group and comprises of members at various levels of seniority ranging from Standards Executives to Senior Management. The team as a whole carries out a range of programmatic enforcement and policy work, including assessing complaints in accordance with our published procedures.

The number of people involved in a case will depend on the specific circumstances of that case and will therefore vary on a case-by-case basis. However, we have provided some further information regarding our process below, which sets out the minimum number of people involved in an investigation case.

As set out in Ofcom's procedures, if Ofcom decides to investigate a complaint, it will seek representations from the broadcaster. A Preliminary View is prepared (and provided to a panel of Ofcom's Content Board members for their advisory opinion where we are considering a breach of content standards). The decision on Ofcom's Preliminary View will be taken by a senior member of Ofcom's Executive with appropriate Board-delegated authority. The Preliminary View is then provided to the broadcaster for their representations. Once Ofcom has received and considered the

broadcaster's representations on its Preliminary View, it will reach a final decision. For content standards cases, the draft decision is provided to a panel of Ofcom's Content Board members (who have not been involved in the investigation) for their advisory opinion before a final decision is taken. The final decision will be taken by a senior member of Ofcom's Executive with appropriate Board-delegated authority, who will not have been involved in the investigation and/or the preparation of the Preliminary View.

3. *Where Ofcom decides not to pursue a complaint what routes are available to the complainant to receive an explanation of how this decision was made?*
4. *When a complaint is logged the complainant receives an email from the system. Are any processes in place to ensure cases are subsequently updated in a timely manner and the complainant informed?*

We will respond to your final two questions together.

As set out in the procedures, all complaints are important to Ofcom as they help us to understand whether a broadcaster may be failing to comply with the applicable provisions of the Code (or other Code to which the Procedures apply) in a particular case. While Ofcom will log and acknowledge every complaint that it receives, it will not normally correspond any further with individual complainants and there is no process for complainants to get an explanation of the reasons for not pursuing a complaint.

For complaints about licence conditions, we provide a concise response to the complainant when we close an assessment to inform them that we have either not pursued their complaint and/or that we will be launching an investigation into the broadcaster's compliance with its relevant requirements. We will not usually provide any further details about our assessment to the complainant, nor will we enter into any correspondence with the complainant about the outcome. We will not usually respond to any further contact from the complainant unless they provide further evidence that a broadcaster has not complied with a relevant requirement.

Ofcom aims to complete an initial assessment of all complaints within 15 working days. You can see our performance against this target for standards complaints through the 'Broadcasting complaints, cases and sanctions' tab (under 'Ofcom KPIs') on [this webpage](#). All our decisions are published in Ofcom's [Broadcast and On Demand Bulletin](#).

We 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,

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](#).