

Reference: 02115889

Information Requests  
[information.requests@ofcom.org.uk](mailto:information.requests@ofcom.org.uk)

6 January 2026

Dear,

### Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information concerning internal documents on VPN use by UK internet users.

We received this request on 4 December 2025 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“the FOI Act”).

#### Your request

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*“Could I request a copy of all internal documents, and evidence Ofcom holds that cover the use of VPNs by UK citizens.”*

#### Our response

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In response to the information you have requested, we consider that this is exempt under section 12 of the FOI Act. Section 12 of the FOI Act provides that a public authority is not obliged to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates 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, and is, for Ofcom, £450, which is equivalent to 18-hours. That sum is intended to cover the estimated costs involved in determining whether Ofcom holds the information requested, identifying, 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.

In order to satisfy your request and provide the required information, we would need to review the emails, internal correspondence and any internal documents held by a large number of colleagues across multiple workstreams relevant to your request. We would then need to extract the relevant information and consider whether any exemptions to disclosure apply. This would take us beyond the 18-hour limit of complying with a request. You may wish to consider submitting a narrower request which we would consider under the FOI Act. Should you decide to make a further request for information, please note that other exemptions may apply, including section 36 which relates to free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation or prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs.

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](mailto: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](#).