

Reference: 02192776

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

21 May 2026

## Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for a Royal Mail delivery volume metric definition.

We received this request on 24 April 2026 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

### Your request

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*This request concerns the metric commonly cited in Royal Mail's public communications: "16 Billion items delivered safely and securely every single year".*

*As Royal Mail's statutory regulator, Ofcom receives annual monitoring data from Royal Mail regarding delivery volumes and performance. I would be grateful if you could provide:*

- 1. Any definition or methodology held by Ofcom that explains what Royal Mail counts as a delivered "item" for the purposes of its published delivery volume figures.*
- 2. Any correspondence or documentation held by Ofcom in which Royal Mail has been asked to explain or substantiate this specific claim or comparable delivery volume statistics.*

### Our response

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- 1. Any definition or methodology held by Ofcom that explains what Royal Mail counts as a delivered "item" for the purposes of its published delivery volume figures.*

Ofcom does not require the publication of Royal Mail's total "delivered item" volumes in public communications, nor does it prescribe a definition for such figures when they are used in external statements, including marketing material.

- 2. Any correspondence or documentation held by Ofcom in which Royal Mail has been asked to explain or substantiate this specific claim or comparable delivery volume statistics.*

While Ofcom does not hold any correspondence, records, or other documentation indicating that Royal Mail has been requested or required to explain, evidence, or otherwise substantiate this specific claim, nor any comparable claims made in external or marketing communications, we can provide the following context.

Ofcom publishes aggregate postal volume data (including letters, parcels, and unaddressed mail) based on Royal Mail's reported business. This reported business forms part of Royal Mail's responsibility for the universal service obligation, including the collection and delivery of letters six days a week and parcels five days a week.

In total, the volumes for 2024–25, which include items delivered as well as those sent to overseas operators, were approximately 10 billion for Royal Mail Group. Historically, total volumes were significantly higher, at around 16 billion or more between 2011–12 and 2017–18. For 2017–18 specifically, the reported volume was 15.7 billion.

Further detail is available in Ofcom’s annual [Post Monitoring Report 2024–25 interactive dashboard](#), specifically the “Royal Mail reported business data” page. While these data are not directly equivalent to the claim referenced, aggregating the relevant categories can provide a broad indication of the approximate measure of total items handled within the UK postal network.

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](#).