**Reference: 02317188**

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

30 October 2026

## Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about Ofcom and UK PAYG SIM activations and churn data. We note this is a follow up to your previous request.

We received this request on 19 October 2026 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the FOI Act").

### Your request & our response

*Given the relevance of mobile numbers and SIM acquisition to fraud prevention, I would be grateful for clarification on two further points:*

*1. Does Ofcom receive any aggregated information from mobile network operators concerning gross prepaid activations, churn or SIM distribution as part of its wider market monitoring activities, even if this is not retained in the form requested?*

Ofcom has identified PAYG SIM acquisition and use as a vector for mobile messaging scams, and responded through our Statement: Combatting mobile messaging scams. From January 2027, we will require mobile operators to set and enforce volume limits for messages sent from PAYG SIMs.

*2. Is Ofcom aware of any relevant work, either within its policy teams or in collaboration with mobile network operators, concerning the potential use of high-volume SIM acquisition, short-lived SIMs or repeated activations as indicators of fraud?*

Ofcom is aware, through our general market monitoring, that in order to prevent PAYG SIMs being used in bulk to receive One Time Passwords and register online accounts, some mobile providers have introduced measures requiring new PAYG SIMs to be topped up before they can receive SMS. For example, Vodafone states publicly that new PAYG customers must top up at least £5 or buy a bundle before they can receive texts - see 'How do Pay as you go bundles work' on this site Pay as you go SIM bundles | Vodafone UK.

*I would also welcome an introduction to the appropriate policy team responsible for mobile market intelligence or telecommunications-related fraud.*

The relevant teams are not consumer facing so we are not able to pass on their contacts directly. However, you are welcome to contact our Consumer Contact Team for assistance.

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 Commission .