

Reference: 02256303

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

3 September 2026

Dear,

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information concerning broadcast complaint assessment and Bulletin publication records.

We received this request on 5 August 2026 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the FOI Act").

Your request

"I request the following recorded information held by Ofcom:

For each Ofcom case concerning:

- a. The Saturday Five, GB News, 20 June 2026;*
- b. Alex Armstrong Tonight, GB News, 5 July 2026; and*
- c. Patrick Christys Tonight, GB News, 9 July 2026:*

- i. the date the case was created or first entered initial assessment;*
- ii. whether the initial assessment has been recorded as completed and, if so, the date of completion;*
- iii. whether complaints about that broadcast have been grouped into a single case or cases; and*
- iv. the number of complaints allocated to the relevant case(s) as at the date this request is processed.*

I am not requesting Ofcom's substantive legal analysis, preliminary view or legally privileged material.

Any recorded document, email, minute, decision or internal notice which identifies:

- a. that the Broadcast and On Demand Bulletin otherwise expected following the 20 July 2026 edition would not be published on 3 August 2026;*
- b. the reason for postponement/non-publication; and*
- c. the revised intended publication date.*

Any current policy, guidance, standard operating procedure or other document used by Broadcast Standards staff concerning:

- a. the consideration of repeated or similar alleged Broadcasting Code breaches by the same licensee during initial assessment;*
- b. "ongoing harm" when applying the initial-assessment procedure; and*

c. when related complaints or broadcasts should be considered cumulatively or as a pattern.

Any current policy, guidance or Equality Impact Assessment concerning application of Ofcom's Public Sector Equality Duty to broadcast-standards enforcement or complaint assessment, insofar as it concerns sexual orientation and/or gender reassignment.

If any information is withheld, please identify the exemption relied upon and, where applicable, provide the public-interest reasoning. If parts of a document are exempt, please provide the remainder by redaction rather than withholding the document in full."

Our response

By way of background, complaints about broadcast standards are carefully assessed under Ofcom's [Broadcasting Code](#) ("the Code") which sets standards for programme content that all Ofcom licensees must follow. Individual complaints received by Ofcom are assigned to cases, and a case is opened when Ofcom is assessing a specific programme or issue and each case may consist of one or more complaints. In line with our published complaints [procedures](#), we review every complaint we receive to consider whether it raises potentially substantive issues under the Code which warrant investigation by Ofcom. If we consider that these standards may have been breached, we will investigate.

Complaints for each of these three programmes were grouped under a single case per programme as below:

The Saturday Five, 20 June: Case created on 23 June, 3,461 complaints

Alex Armstrong Tonight, 5 July: Case created 6 July, 12,315 complaints.

Patrick Christys Tonight, 9 July: Case created 10 July, 2,909 complaints.

The outcome of these cases was reported in Ofcom Bulletin issue 551 on 10 August 2026, which we consider to be the relevant date in terms of recording the assessment outcome.

Complaints about *Patrick Christys Tonight* were published in the table for cases assessed and not pursued. The variance in figures for complaints about that programme shown above and the 2,581 referenced in Bulletin 551 reflect that we continued to receive complaints beyond the reporting period of that bulletin, which were captured in the next bulletin of 24 August 2026.

Ofcom has launched an investigation into *Alex Armstrong Tonight* and *The Saturday Five*, which appeared in the Investigations List of Bulletin issue 551. The outcome of those investigations will be published in the Bulletin once concluded.

There was no Bulletin published two weeks after the bulletin of 20 July 2026 as that followed our planned publication schedule over holiday periods around Christmas, Easter and Summer, when bulletins appear with a three-week gap. We confirm the Bulletin, issue 551, was published in line with that planned publication schedule for the summer period on 10 August 2026.

Regarding your question about Ofcom's application of the public sector equality duty to broadcast-standards enforcement or complaint assessment, please see Ofcom's [Impact Assessment Guidance](#) in relation to how we assess the impact of proposals on specific groups of persons. In particular, paragraph 3.19, explains that we will generally carry out equality impact assessments in relation to new or amended policies and processes but not when conducting investigations. As set out in the

guidance, this is because what is being enforced will have been put in place as a consequence of an impact assessment and/or primary or secondary legislation. Similarly, the guidance explains that, as a general rule, we will not carry out an equality impact assessment when publishing guidance relating to how we will undertake investigations as such guidance will generally just flesh out procedural matters relating to how we will fulfil obligations created by legislation. Ofcom's procedures relating to assessment of complaints and enforcement of broadcasting standards can be found here: [Procedures for investigating breaches of content standards for television and radio](#), and [Procedures for the consideration of statutory sanctions in breaches of Broadcasting Act licences](#).

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](#).