

Reference: 1727455

Information Rights
Information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

21 December 2023

Freedom of Information: Right to know request.

Thank you for your request for information about copies of all email messages with a bbc.co.uk or bbc.com address between 1st November 2006 and 1st January 2009.

We received this request on 30 November 2023 and have considered it under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“the Act”).

Your request and our response

Your request: *‘Please can I request all email messages that have a bbc.co.uk or bbc.com suffix between 1st November 2006 and 1st January 2009. Please include messages from all INBOX, SENT ITEMS, DELETED ITEMS, DRAFTS, as well as any other custom folders that exist.*

For example the format.

firstname.lastname@bbc.co.uk<mailto:firstname.lastname@bbc.co.uk<mailto:firstname.lastname@bbc.co.uk%3cmailto:firstname.lastname@bbc.co.uk>>> or the format department@bbc.co.uk<mailto:department@bbc.co.uk<mailto:department@bbc.co.uk%3cmailto:department@bbc.co.uk>>>

I require no review of each email account. As long as the data includes all emails within the periods initially specified, I have no problem with any extra data being supplied. There is no need to ‘top and tail’ what is presented to me. I am happy to receive all historic emails.

I am happy to receive all emails, not just the BBC emails, should this prove cheaper / quicker to compile. I have no requirement for any sifting or redaction. Should redaction be required, I understand that this process is not included in the allowed budget of £450.’

Please note that Ofcom's email retention policy is that emails in the inbox and sent items are deleted automatically after 5 years, with emails in deleted or junk folders deleted after 30 days. Therefore, emails in the inbox and sent box from 2006 to 2009 may no longer exist unless particular emails were saved elsewhere for example as part of a project file.

While we might have some information from 2006 to 2009 falling in scope of your request, we are unable to provide this information as it is not readily accessible and a considerable amount of time would be required to locate, retrieve, identify and extract the information specified in your request, including confirmation of whether we hold any information in respect of the questions. We would need to search and read through all saved files to determine if the information held was in scope of your request.

Section 12 of the Act provides that we are not obliged to comply with a request for information if we estimate 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 (the "Regulations"), and is, for Ofcom, £450. That sum is intended to cover the estimated costs involved in determining whether Ofcom holds the information requested, 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, which equates to 18 hours of time. We estimate that it would take us more than 18 hours to locate, retrieve, identify and extract the information specified.

You may wish to consider submitting a narrower, more focused request and we would be happy to consider this under the FOI Act. Should you decide to make a further request for information, please note that other exemptions may apply in particular section 44 of the FOI Act which we may rely on to withhold disclosure of information that we have received that relates to a business. For further information on the exemptions under the FOI Act, see the Information Commissioner's Office's website e.g. here: [When can we refuse a request for information? | ICO](#).

I 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

If you are unhappy with the response you have received in relation to your request for information and/or consider that your request was refused without a reason valid under the law you may ask for an internal review. If you ask us for an internal review of our decision, it will be subject to an independent review within Ofcom.

The following outcomes are possible:

- the original decision is upheld; or
- the original decision is reversed or modified.

Timing

If you wish to exercise your right to an internal review **you should contact us within two months of the date of this letter**. There is no statutory deadline for responding to internal reviews and it will depend upon the complexity of the case. However, we aim to conclude all such reviews within 20 working days, and up to 40 working days in exceptional cases. We will keep you informed of the progress of any such review. If you wish to request an internal review, you should contact information.requests@ofcom.org.uk.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Further information about this, and the internal review process can be found on the Information Commissioner's Office [here](#).

Alternatively, the Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow

Cheshire

SK9 5AF