

Reference: 01683853

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

26 October 2023

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information concerning backup power duration for mobile phone masts. Your request was received on 28 September 2023 and we have considered it under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the “FOI Act”).

Your request

‘I want to understand how robust the mobile phone network will be in handling 999 calls during a widespread power outage.

I understand that some masts have battery backup, and perhaps even automatic generators. But others appear to have no backup. There seems to be no public data on the overall effect of the current backup provision.

So I would like to see the analysis has Ofcom done to calculate how widely callers would be able to place a 999 call from their home using a mobile phone during a wide-area power cut which saw a failure of mains electricity to all mobile phone masts in an area.

I would particularly like to know what proportion of households Ofcom calculates would still be able to place a 999 call from their mobile phone, at home:

*5 minutes
15 minutes
30 minutes
60 minutes
120 minutes
180 minutes
360 minutes*

into such a wide-area electricity outage.’

Our response

In considering your request we have noted Section 84 of the FOI Act which defines information as “information recorded in any form” and guidance from the ICO which confirms that we are not required to create information for the purposes of complying with a request for information under the FOI Act.

We are unable to provide the information set out within this request as we do not record the information in this way.

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