

Reference: 01842735

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

22 July 2024

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about Complaints Scams and Scandals – BBC.

We received this request on 24 June 2024 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“the FOI Act”).

Your request

“can you please advice how many complaints have been received by the BBC documentary shown on 16th June 2024. It was called scams and scandals, Britain's hero plumber exposed.”

Background

By way of background, Ofcom assesses every complaint it receives. Based on an initial assessment of the complaint and a consideration of the related content, Ofcom will consider whether there may have been a breach of the Broadcasting Code (or other Ofcom codes or licence conditions). In cases where Ofcom considers there may have been a breach, it will launch an investigation. The possible outcomes of an investigation are that we judge an issue is in breach, resolved or not in breach of our rules.

The volume of complaints received may be a consideration in assessing general audience reactions, but it is not determinative as to whether Ofcom will proceed to investigate any given case. Rather, it is the particular issues which have been raised by the complainant(s) which are of primary concern in Ofcom’s assessment of a programme.

[Ofcom’s Broadcast and On Demand Bulletin](#) (the ‘Bulletin’), published every fortnight on our website, includes decisions about the complaints we have considered. The Bulletin covers a range of cases, including those which Ofcom has escalated for full investigation, and those which, after careful assessment, Ofcom has decided not to pursue because they did not raise issues warranting investigation. The Bulletin can be accessed on our website.

Our response

While we may hold information within the scope of your request, we consider that this information is exempt from disclosure under section 44 of the FOI Act. Section 44 exempts the disclosure of information which is prohibited by another enactment. We are prohibited under section 393 of the Communications Act 2003 from disclosing information which relates to a business, in this case the BBC, which we have obtained in exercise of our powers, unless we have the consent of that business or one of the statutory gateways for disclosure under section 393(2) of the Act is met, neither of which applies here. Section 44 is an absolute exemption and does not require a public internet test.

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

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](#).