

28 February 2024

## ICO Case Reference IC-288063-Q8F0

### Request for information

Request received 13 February 2024:

*'How many complaints about BT, do the "ICO" receive on an annual basis.*

*Have the "ICO" ever taken action against BT, for failing to comply with their statutory legal obligations.*

*If so, what sanctions were imposed.*

*If no action has ever been taken, then how can you possibly claim, that your organisation is "fit for purpose".'*

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the FOIA). This legislation provides public access to recorded information held by a public authority unless an appropriate exemption applies.

### Our response

We do hold information in scope of your request. As you have not specified a date range, we have considered all years for which we hold data. We receive complaints of different types about businesses; [data protection and personal information](#) complaints, [nuisance calls and messages](#) (NCAMs) complaints, and complaints about [spam emails](#). The numbers of these complaints received by the ICO relating to BT are as follows:

Year	Data protection, complaints received*	NCAM – calls, complaints received*	NCAM – texts, complaints received*	Spam – complaints received**
2018	No info held	1497	6	No info held
2019	No info held	3631	25	No info held
2020	19	1368	13	No info held
2021	85	1545	23	No info held
2022	81	285	10	4
2023	99	239	12	6

\* Our records are deleted in line with our [Retention and Disposal Policy](#) so figures may not reflect the actual number of complaints received.

\*\* Information not recorded before August 2022.

We are unable to state with certainty that the nuisance calls and messages reported to us were from BT. Accuracy of information is dependent on what is submitted by individual consumers, including correctly identifying the company contacting them and whether the contact is legitimate. The contact may in fact be legitimate, or it may not genuinely be from the organisation or business they claim to be from.

We publish information about the [Data protection complaints](#) we receive on our website in our [Complaints and concerns data sets](#). You can filter our datasets by the organisation complained about, and see the outcome of each complaint.

Investigations leading to regulatory action may be triggered by a complaint, a self-reported data breach, or through other sources of intelligence. We publish datasets about our [Civil investigations](#), our [Cyber investigations](#), and our [Investigations under the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003](#) on our website. We also publish information about [Action we've taken](#), including any [Enforcement action](#). Action is taken in line with our [Regulatory Action Policy](#).

In 2018 the ICO issued a fine of £77,000 to BT for sending unsolicited marketing emails. You can read about this here: [bt-plc-mpn-20180618.pdf](#).

## **Section 21**

Because some of the information requested is already reasonably accessible to you, technically it is withheld under section 21 of the FOIA. Section 21 states that we do not need to provide you with a copy of information when you already have access to it. However, we have provided the links above for your convenience.

## **Next steps**

You can ask us to review our response. Please let us know in writing within 40 working days if you want us to carry out a review.

You can read a copy of our full [review procedure](#) on our website.

If we perform a review but you are still dissatisfied, you can [raise a complaint](#) to the ICO as regulator of the FOIA. This complaint will be handled just like a complaint made to the ICO about any other public authority.

## **Your information**

Our [privacy notice](#) explains what we do with the personal data you provide to us, and sets out [your rights](#). Our [Retention and Disposal Policy](#) details how long we keep information.

Yours sincerely

Information Access Team

Strategic Planning and Transformation

Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF

T. 0303 123 1113 [ico.org.uk](http://ico.org.uk) [twitter.com/iconews](https://twitter.com/iconews)

For information about what we do with personal data see our [privacy notice](#)