

Reference: 1109775

Giuseppe Sollazzo  
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Jerin John  
Information Rights Adviser  
[Information.requests@ofcom.org.uk](mailto:Information.requests@ofcom.org.uk)

1 March 2021

Dear Mr Sollazzo,

### Freedom of Information: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about Ofcom's broadband checker data.

We received this request on 1 February 2021 and have considered it under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the FOI Act").

### Your request

You asked for the following information:

*your broadband checker website located at <https://checker.ofcom.org.uk/broadband-coverage> provides address-level information about broadband availability and speeds.*

*Upon entering a postcode, the user can choose a specific address, and the best available Internet broadband connection speed for that address - regardless of ISP - is provided.*

*I would like to request:*

- 1) when the checker has been last updated, i.e. what is the timeliness of the current data*
- 2) if the data underlying the checker is update with regularity, and what is the frequency of update*
- 3) which providers feed data into the checker, and how frequently*
- 4) access to the address-level data (not the aggregate data you provide on the website) in bulk, by whatever means you suggest (a file download, an API, etc)*

### Our response

We hold some of the information in scope of your request, please see below our response to each item:

- 1) The broadband checker was updated in January 2021, using September 2020 coverage data provided to Ofcom in response to information requests issued to communications providers in connection with the preparation and publication of our Connected Nations infrastructure reports.
- 2) We update the broadband checker every four months, in line with the publication of our Connected Nations Update reports. To view our Connected Nations reports, please visit our website: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/multi-sector-research/infrastructure-research>.
- 3) A list of fixed network providers that provided the coverage data included in the most recent update to the Broadband Checker is in Annex A: Methodology of our Connected Nations 2020 report, found in page 16 onwards:  
[https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0019/209440/connected-nations-2020-methodology.pdf](https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0019/209440/connected-nations-2020-methodology.pdf).
- 4) We are unable to provide the address-level data in bulk as we consider this information is prohibited from disclosure under section 44 of the FOI Act. Section 44 exempts the disclosure of information which is prohibited by another enactment. In this case the other enactment is section 393(1) of the Communications Act 2003, which prohibits the disclosure of information which relates to a business and has been obtained in the exercise of Ofcom's functions, including those relating to the preparation and publication of infrastructure reports, unless Ofcom has the consent of the business or one of the statutory gateways to disclosure is engaged, neither of which is engaged here. Section 44 is an absolute exemption under the FOI Act and does not require a public interest test.

We do have an API that allows access to Connected Nations address-level broadband and mobile data (available per address, not in bulk), subject to certain restrictions on the extent to which data can be accessed and the purpose(s) of use. Information about our broadband and mobile coverage checker and the API is available on our [website](#). Users will have to sign up on our API [portal](#) to access the fixed broadband and mobile data, and must accept the associated terms and conditions of use on application.

We have made much of the information which underpins our Connected Nations infrastructure reports available to download on our [website](#); this includes fixed broadband coverage by postcode.

I hope this information is helpful. If you have any further queries, then please send them to [information.requests@ofcom.org.uk](mailto:information.requests@ofcom.org.uk) quoting the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely,

Jerin John

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](mailto: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. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

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