

OFCOM COMPLAINT - Jacob Rees-Mogg's State Of The Nation on GB News - 20 May 2024

Programme details

Programme title: Jacob Rees-Mogg's State Of The Nation

Date of broadcast: 20 May 2024

Time of broadcast (24 hour clock): 20:00

Channel / station*: GB News

Your complaint

Subject:

GB News's State Of The Nation breached Ofcom rules 5.1, 5.7 & 7.9 by misrepresenting and disregarding key elements of Ofcom's 'People's Forum' decision, as well as alleging wrongdoing and incompetence in a way that is unfair to the media regulator.

Description

On 20 May 2024, Jacob Rees-Mogg responded to Ofcom's decision on the 'People's Forum' with PM Sunak, via a segment called 'GB News under attack' where he labelled the decision 'quite sinister'. In a misrepresentation of the decision, Rees-Mogg told viewers that GB News was found in breach for 'allowing the British people to ask questions of the Prime Minister'. He stated that 'Ofcom seemingly only wants apparatchiks to ask the questions' and applies rules 'erratically, unfairly and actually it just wanted a more left-wing program'.

Rees-Mogg invites two guests onto his programme who ostensibly support his position – one guest said: 'like most attacks on free speech, [this decision] undermines the intelligence of the general public.' Rees-Mogg said 'it's about time these antiquated and nonsense regulations were removed for privately funded broadcasters'.

Ofcom rule 5.1 states that 'news must be reported with due accuracy and...impartiality'. Rule 5.7 says that 'views and facts must not be misrepresented'. GB News broke these rules by misrepresenting the facts about Ofcom's decision, including the claim that 'the broadcast regulator has found GB News to be in breach of the broadcasting code for the crime of allowing the British people to ask questions of the Prime Minister'. This was an inaccurate representation of the basis on which GB News was found to be in breach.

Ofcom rule 7.9 states that 'broadcasters should take reasonable care to satisfy themselves that material facts have not been presented, disregarded or omitted in a way that is unfair to an...organization'. GB News broke rule 7.9 in alleging wrongdoing and incompetence without reasonable care for the way that material facts were disregarded in a manner that is unfair to Ofcom.