

Our ref: FOI 24/027

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your request of 7 January 2024, under the Freedom of Information Act. In relation to an article in the Daily Telegraph on 9 November 2023, you requested:

Please detail what actions the MHRA has taken to identify and discipline the senior official that made such a call and what press censorship policies are now in place within the MHRA.

We understand this relates to an online article [published on 8 November 2023 at 5pm](#) that includes the following excerpt:

“In March 2021, The Telegraph was one of the first newspapers to imply a causal link between the jab and blood clots after Norwegian scientists suggested a possible mechanism.

“On the day we published the story we received a threatening phone call from a senior official at the MHRA warning that The Telegraph would be banned from future briefings and press notices if we did not soften the news.”

The first paragraph of the article’s excerpt provides a link to its story published on 17 March 2021: [‘Link between cerebral blood clots and AstraZeneca vaccine ‘not implausible’, says German regulator’](#).

Having reviewed our records for this date, and to the best of our knowledge, we have no evidence that any phone call of this nature took place.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date you receive this response and addressed to: info@mhra.gov.uk

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you were to remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the internal review, you would have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Please bear in mind that the Information Commissioner will not normally review our handling of your request unless you have first contacted us to conduct an internal review. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

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

Or online via: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/foi-and-eir-complaints/foi-and-eir-complaints/>

Yours sincerely

MHRA Customer Experience Centre

Communications and engagement team

Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency

10 South Colonnade, Canary Wharf, London E14 4PU