# Ofcom imposes £150,000 fine on The Word Network for airing misleading health claims



A financial penalty of £150,000 has been levied against the religious channel The Word Network for airing programmes featuring claims related to a product known as "miracle spring water," which was alleged to cure serious health conditions like lung cancer and diabetes, as well as provide unexpected financial benefits. The definitive ruling came from ofcom, the UK's communications regulator, following a thorough investigation into the controversial programme, *Peter Popoff Ministries*.

The Ofcom investigation focused on two specific episodes of the show, hosted by American evangelist Peter Popoff and his wife, Liz Popoff. During these broadcasts, viewers were urged to order the ministry's miracle spring water, with the couple making repeated assertions about its supposed life-changing effects. Testimonials from various members of the congregation purportedly supported the evangelist's claims about the product’s miraculous abilities.

In one instance, a guest on the show revealed that after using the miracle spring water, she received substantial financial support, claiming a reward of $64,000, alongside other testimonials that described improvements in health conditions, business opportunities, and even relief from debts, including student loans. The evangelist repeatedly reinforced these claims, remarking, “Did you hear that? You mean God took care … after you used the miracle spring water?”

The operator of The Word Network, Word Network Operating Company Inc, initially responded to Ofcom's findings by asserting that its audience primarily consists of viewers in the United States and that it had a "limited understanding" of the regulator's concerns, attributing these to differences in culture or market norms. Subsequently, the channel's parent company stated it would modify its contractual arrangements regarding Peter Popoff Ministries to prevent any future broadcasts of the programme in the UK.

Ofcom’s ruling detailed that it considered the health and financial claims made during these programmes to have significant potential for causing harm. The regulatory body explicitly noted that the breaches of the broadcasting code were severe, with the licensee failing to take adequate steps to ensure compliance. While Ofcom concluded that the breaches did not constitute a reckless or deliberate action by the licensee, it expressed concern regarding the implications of such claims on audiences who might be susceptible.

Additionally, the regulator imposed a directive preventing the re-airing of the particular episodes in question and mandated that a statement regarding the findings be broadcast by the licensee at a date determined by Ofcom. The regulator underscored its commitment to protecting the public from harmful material, particularly within programming aimed at religious audiences.

Statements made by the Word Network suggested that they had previously broadcast Peter Popoff's programmes without incident, leading them to question Ofcom's actions. They suggested a perceived inconsistency in the enforcement of broadcasting regulations, referencing how content involving nudity and pornography seemed to be treated differently compared to religious broadcasts.

In similar contexts, Ofcom has imposed financial penalties on other broadcasters, including a £25,000 fine for religious satellite channel Loveworld earlier in 2023. The Word Network, along with Peter Popoff, has since been approached for further comment on this matter.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/tv-radio-and-on-demand/broadcast-standards/ofcom-fines-the-word-network-150000-for-breaking-broadcasting-rules/> - This URL supports the claim that Ofcom fined The Word Network £150,000 for airing programmes with potentially harmful claims about 'Miracle Spring Water' and its health benefits.
2. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ofcom-american-peter-god-ukraine-b2712891.html> - This article corroborates the details of Ofcom's investigation into Peter Popoff Ministries and the claims made about 'Miracle Spring Water' curing serious health conditions.
3. <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/tv-radio-and-on-demand/broadcast-standards/ofcom-fines-gb-news/> - Although not directly related to The Word Network, this URL provides context on Ofcom's enforcement actions against other broadcasters for violating broadcasting rules.
4. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ofcom-american-peter-god-ukraine-b2712891.html> - This article also mentions Ofcom's previous actions against other religious channels, such as Loveworld, which received a £25,000 fine.
5. <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/tv-radio-and-on-demand/broadcast-standards/ofcom-fines-the-word-network-150000-for-breaking-broadcasting-rules/> - This URL further explains Ofcom's directive to prevent the re-airing of the specific episodes and the requirement for The Word Network to broadcast a statement of findings.
6. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ofcom-american-peter-god-ukraine-b2712891.html> - This article details The Word Network's response to Ofcom's findings, including their claims of cultural differences and perceived inconsistencies in regulation enforcement.
7. <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2025/mar/11/miracle-spring-water-ofcom-fine-peter-popoff-word-network> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
8. <https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/uk-news/ofcom-fines-religious-channel-150k-31174703> - Please view link - unable to able to access data