

Reference: 01797195

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

11 April 2024

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about who checks 5G mast ICNIRP compliance certificates.

We received this request on 20 March 2024 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“the FOI Act”).

Your request

Please can you let me know who checks the 5G masts ICNIRP compliance self certificates to make sure that they ensure safety from radiation harm for the general public and are legitimate?

Our response

Ofcom has no involvement in the planning process for physical structures such as masts, buildings etc. that may host radio equipment, or in the enforcement of planning law. This includes the assessment of ICNIRP Certificates, which are provided as part of planning applications. This is a matter for local planning authorities that administer the planning laws locally and issue permission to build through the normal planning process. If you have any views or questions about planning applications for any specific site, you can address those to the [relevant local planning authority](#).

The responsibility for planning policy falls to the [DLUHC \(Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities\)](#).

Ofcom is however keenly interested in the matter of EMF compliance. This is why, in 2021, following public consultation, Ofcom decided to include a [new condition](#) in spectrum licences, requiring licensees to ensure that their use of equipment (operating above a certain power) complies with the internationally agreed EMF levels in Guidelines issued by the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) for the protection of the general public. The licence condition also requires licensees to keep records showing how they have ensured compliance with the ICNIRP Guidelines.

Ofcom carries out compliance checks of licensed radio equipment as part of its ongoing spectrum assurance work programme, including checks of EMF compliance records. We also carry out unannounced tests of EMF levels around radio transmitters, including mobile phone masts, and can take [enforcement action](#) against spectrum licensees if they produce EMF at levels above those set out in the ICNIRP Guidelines. All [measurements](#) to date over many years have shown that EMF levels are well within the internationally agreed levels in the ICNIRP Guidelines (and typically at less than 1% of these levels).

If you have any further queries, then please send them to information.requests@ofcom.org.uk – quoting the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely,

Information Requests

Request an internal review

If you are unhappy with the response you have received to your request for information, or think that your request was refused without a reason valid under the law, you may ask for an internal review. If you do, it will be subject to an independent review within Ofcom. We will either uphold the original decision, or reverse or modify it.

If you would like to ask us to carry out an internal review, you should get in touch within two months of the date of this letter. There is no statutory deadline for us to complete our internal review, and the time it takes will depend on the complexity of the request. But we will try to complete the review within 20 working days (or no more than 40 working days in exceptional cases) and keep you informed of our progress.

Please email the Information Requests team (information.requests@ofcom.org.uk) to request an internal review.

Taking it further

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our internal review, then you have the right to [complain to the Information Commissioner's Office](#).