

Reference: 01812912

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

24 May 2024

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about 4G and 5G telecommunications equipment on existing transmission towers.

We received this request on 25 April 2024 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the FOI Act') and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 ('the EIR').

Your request

Please could you confirm if there are cases of 4G and 5G telecommunications equipment on existing transmission towers and, if so, how many towers have such equipment on them.

Our response

We do hold information on how many towers have 4G and 5G telecommunications equipment on them. These total 73930 however, please note that operators can and do share infrastructure including mast sites, which we've factored into our count by grouping together those with the same coordinates. In addition, there may be further intricacies in sharing arrangements, so the actual number of individual sites is likely to be less than this. Also, sites can have both 4G and 5G, or just one of them.

By way of background, there is no spectrum in the UK that is dedicated solely for 5G, however there are a range of bands which may be suitable / used for 5G (or other services). Additionally, spectrum previously used for 2G/3G/4G is being converted to 5G use over time.

The 700 MHz, 3.4-3.6 GHz and 3.6-3.8 GHz frequency bands have been awarded by auction. These frequency bands are likely to be used by mobile network operators to deliver a range of services, including 5G mobile. All operators have some 5G deployments within some or all of these bands.

Details of the frequency allocations for mobile operators are published on our website page [Mobile and Wireless Broadband below 5 GHz](#). Following consultation, in 2022 Ofcom varied mobile licences with updated parameters to reflect the latest technologies and to remove technology restrictions within the licences making them technology neutral. This will allow mobile operators to deploy the next generation of mobile technologies, including 5G services and it is likely that some of these bands, and others in higher frequency ranges, will become used for 5G services in due course.

Information about other spectrum and licences is available from Ofcom's [Spectrum Information System \(SIS\)](#), through tools such as the Spectrum Information Portal or the interactive UK spectrum

map. Our advice page [What is 5G?](#) and the Ofcom/UK Government publication [A guide to 5G](#) may help to provide context and further information.

In addition, the Shared Access bands (1800 MHz, 3.8-4.2 GHz, 2390-2400 MHz and 26 GHz) are licensed on a per-base station basis. Some of the uses are likely to be using 5G, but at lower powers than the mobile operators typically use in other bands.

I hope this information is helpful. 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](#).