

Reference: 02127132

Information Requests  
[information.requests@ofcom.org.uk](mailto:information.requests@ofcom.org.uk)

16 February 2026

Dear,

### Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information concerning ICNIRP compliance distances.

We received this request on 7 January 2026 and we have considered your request under Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. We have since heard from you and you refined your request under point 1.1.

#### Your request & our response

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##### *1. Active Telecoms Masts (2G, 3G, 4G and 5G):*

*1.1. How many active telecoms masts (streetworks monopoles, lattice head towers, roof top masts etc.) are there in the UK currently? If possible, please break down by spectrum licence holder (e.g. EE, Vodafone etc.)*

There were 83,425 reported sites across the four main mobile network operators (MNOs) in the UK (Three, Vodafone, VMO2 and BTEE) as of July 2025. Please note that these deployments do not necessarily equate to the total number of unique physical sites across UK. This is because multiple MNOs may be offering coverage from the same site. As such, the reported site count reflects the aggregate number of deployments across all MNOs, rather than distinct physical site infrastructure.

You have confirmed that you are happy to just receive the total number of active masts and do not require the breakdown by spectrum licence holder.

*1.2. What percentage of these active masts are single operator? What percentage are multiple operator?*

We do not hold the requested information.

##### *2. ICNIRP Compliance:*

*2.1. For what percentage of these active masts does OFCOM hold a copy of the site-specific ICNIRP certificate?*

Under planning rules, mobile operators are required to sign a declaration (sometimes referred to as an "ICNIRP Certificate") confirming that they have complied with the ICNIRP limits (on EMF exposure for the protection of the general public) when applying for planning permission. Ofcom has no role in assessing ICNIRP Certificates provided as part of a planning application. Therefore, we do not request or keep copies of ICNIRP certificates.

*2.2. For what percentage of these active masts does OFCOM hold details of the site-specific compliance distance (as defined in the EMF condition of an MNO spectrum licence, i.e. for a mast running at maximum allowable power levels)?*

Ofcom carries out proactive, unannounced measurements of EMF levels near to mobile base stations to ensure they are complying with the levels in the ICNIRP Guidelines. These measurements are published on our website. All measurements taken to date have shown EMF levels that are well within the internationally agreed levels in the ICNIRP Guidelines.

While these measurements are separate to our compliance checks, we note that, if these measurements were to indicate a potential breach of the ICNIRP general public limits, this would lead to Ofcom undertaking more detailed compliance measurements. However, we have not identified any potential breaches to date.

We also receive complaints from members of the public about potential issues with EMF exposure from mobile phones masts. We review each complaint and apply our technical judgment in deciding whether there is any reason to investigate further. In most cases our review indicates there is no basis to investigate further. In a small number of cases we have required MNOs to provide their compliance records for us to review. To date we have made nine such requests. In all such cases reviewed to date, we have not identified any breach of the EMF licence condition.

*3. ICNIRP Compliance Distance Breaches:*

*3.1. How many masts have been investigated for potential compliance distance breaches in the last 5 years? I am asking specifically about situations where a member of the public could enter the public exclusion zone as defined by the compliance distance. For clarity I am not referring to any ICNIRP breaches based on EMF measurements taken, at a point in time, at locations generally accessible by the public outside of the compliance distance/public exclusion zone.*

See our response to question 2.2 above.

*3.2. What were the top 3 means by which OFCOM became aware of these potential breaches (e.g. from the public, from the MNOs, from OFCOM measurements, from a Local Planning Authority, from a Public Health department etc.)?*

See our response to question 2.2 above; as explained there, all nine EMF compliance record checks carried out to date were in response to complaints from members of the public.

*3.3. Of those masts investigated, how many were found to have a confirmed compliance distance breach (i.e. where it was established that a member of the public could enter the public exclusion zone as defined by the compliance distance)?*

None.

*3.4. What percentage of those confirmed compliance distance breaches were for roof top masts and what percentage were for ground-based masts?*

N/A (see response to question 3.3)

*3.5. For those masts found to have a compliance distance breach, what enforcement action did OFCOM take?*

N/A (see response to question 3.3)

*4. Please describe the process that OFCOM relies on for ICNIRP compliance regulation for Telecoms masts that aims to ensure there can be no compliance distance breaches, by the public, for either a proposed mast or an in-situ mast (e.g. where there is redevelopment of an existing mast and/or its surroundings).*

Our approach to managing EMF compliance and enforcement is set out in our [Guidance on EMF Compliance and Enforcement](#).

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](mailto: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](#).