

SCHEDULE
Direction under section 106(3) of the Communications Act 2003 applying the electronic communications code

Background

1. The Applicant has applied to Ofcom for a direction applying the Code to the Applicant.
2. The date on which Ofcom received a completed application that meets the statutory requirements with respect to the content of an application for a direction applying the Code and the manner in which such an application is to be made was 21 January 2020.
3. By virtue of regulation 3 of the Electronic Communications and Wireless Telegraphy Regulations 2011 (SI 2011 No. 1210), except in cases of expropriation, Ofcom must make its decision within 6 months of receiving the completed application.
4. Prior to giving a decision under section 106(3) of the Act to apply the Code to the Applicant, Ofcom must publish a notification of its proposal to give the direction and consider any representations about that proposal that are made to Ofcom within the period specified in the notification.
5. On 17 February 2020, Ofcom published, in accordance with section 107(6) of the Act, a notification of its proposal to give a direction applying the Code to the Applicant for the reasons set out in the consultation document accompanying that notification. That notification invited representations to Ofcom by no later than 5pm on 17 March 2020.
6. Ofcom received two representations objecting to the proposal. The first respondent was concerned about the potential health issues arising from 5G mobile networks, and about the Code rights relating to the installation of electronic communications apparatus and infrastructure on land. The other respondent was concerned that the Applicant would not be able to meet potential liabilities arising as a consequence of the application of the Code in its case.
7. Having considered the first objection to the proposal, it was Ofcom's view that the raised issues concern Government policy relating to the rollout of advanced communications networks and the technology they employ. In particular, the Government's assessment of the safety of non-ionising radiation and its policy concerning the Code rights which facilitate the rollout of those networks. Ofcom has no power to alter these policies or the statutory framework that sets out the Code. It is therefore unable to include consideration of the issues raised by the respondent as part of its assessment of the application. In relation to the second objection, the Applicant has provided information which demonstrates that it understands its obligation to provide funds for liabilities and confirmation by a director of the company that it will ensure that sufficient funds for liabilities are in place when this becomes necessary.
8. For the reasons set out in the explanatory statement accompanying Ofcom's consultation, Ofcom has had regard, in particular, to each of the matters set out in section 107(4) of the Act. Furthermore, Ofcom has considered and acted in accordance with its general duties in section 3 of the Act and the six Community requirements in section 4 of the Act.

Decision

7. Ofcom hereby directs, in accordance with section 106 of the Act, as follows—

- (a) the Code shall apply to the Applicant for the purposes of the provision by the Applicant of an electronic communications network; and:
- (b) that application of the Code shall have effect throughout England and Wales.

8. This Direction shall take effect on the day it is published.

Interpretation

9. In this Direction—

- (a) “**Act**” means the Communications Act 2003;
- (b) “**Applicant**” means Net Support UK Limited, whose registered company number is 03625793;
- (c) “**Code**” means the electronic communications code set out in Schedule 3A to the Communications Act 2003;
- (d) “**Ofcom**” means the Office of Communications.

10. For the purpose of interpreting this Direction—

- (a) headings and titles shall be disregarded;
- (b) the Interpretation Act 1978 shall apply as if this Notification were an Act of Parliament.

Signed



Brian Potterill

Competition Policy Director

A person duly authorised in accordance with paragraph 18 of the Schedule to the Office of Communications Act 2002

1 May 2020