

Reference: 02257052

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

2 September 2026

Dear,

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information concerning ICNIRP compliance declarations, certificates and records.

We received this request on 7 August 2026 and we have considered your request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 ("the EIR Act").

Your request & our response

This request concerns ICNIRP compliance declarations, certificates and associated records for telecommunications base stations.

Please provide:

1. The current records retention schedule covering:

- ICNIRP declarations;*
- ICNIRP compliance certificates;*
- EMF compliance records;*
- telecommunications planning submissions.*

Ofcom's role is to authorise and manage the use of the radio spectrum in the UK. We issue licences and set conditions for the use of spectrum without a licence. Our licences include an 'EMF condition'; this condition requires licensees to ensure that their use of equipment complies with the internationally agreed EMF levels for the protection of the general public in the [ICNIRP Guidelines](#). Each licensee is responsible for creating and keeping appropriate EMF compliance records, and must keep such records for the period during which they are licensed to use radio equipment. There is no requirement to keep records after the expiry date of the licence. Further details can be found in our [EMF Guidance](#), see in particular section 12.

Ofcom has no responsibility for ICNIRP declarations (also known as ICNIRP certificates) or telecommunications planning submissions. These documents relate to the planning process, and Ofcom has no involvement in this. Planning issues and any related documentation are a matter for local planning authorities. If you have any views or questions about planning applications, you can address those to the [relevant local planning authority](#).

The responsibility for planning policy falls to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government –<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-local-government>. In particular, Section 9 (pages 46 - 47) of above mentioned Ministry's [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (August 2026) outlines the planning criteria for communications infrastructure in England.

There are also [Codes of Practice in England and Wales](#) which explain that MNOs are committed to compliance with internationally agreed levels of electromagnetic field emissions and requires MNOs to sign a declaration (sometimes referred to as an "ICNIRP Certificate") confirming that they have complied with these levels when applying for planning permission for a new site or a change to an existing site.

2. Any document retention policy, destruction policy or disposal schedule relating to those records.

As explained in our response to question 1, licensees are responsible for creating and keeping appropriate EMF compliance records, taking into account section 12 of our EMF guidance.

Licensees, rather than Ofcom, will therefore hold any information on any retention policy, destruction policy or disposal schedule relating to EMF compliance records.

3. Copies of any guidance issued to staff explaining where these records should be stored.

We do not hold this information (see our answer to question 2).

4. Copies of any audits undertaken during the last ten years concerning the retention or management of ICNIRP compliance records.

We do not hold this information (see our answer to question 2).

5. Details of any occasions where ICNIRP declarations or related records have been destroyed, lost, archived or transferred, including the dates and the legal authority relied upon.

We do not hold this information (see our answer to question 2).

6. Copies of any correspondence between your organisation and:

- Ofcom;
- UK Health Security Agency;
- Department for Science, Innovation and Technology;
- local planning authorities; and
- telecommunications operators

concerning responsibility for retaining ICNIRP compliance documentation.

We do not hold this information (see our answer to question 1).

7. If your organisation considers that another authority is responsible for holding these records, please identify that authority and provide any recorded information explaining why.

As explained in our answer to question 1, planning issues and related documentation are a matter for local planning authorities.

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](#).