

Notice of proposals to make the Wireless Telegraphy (Licence Charges) (Amendment) Regulations 2027

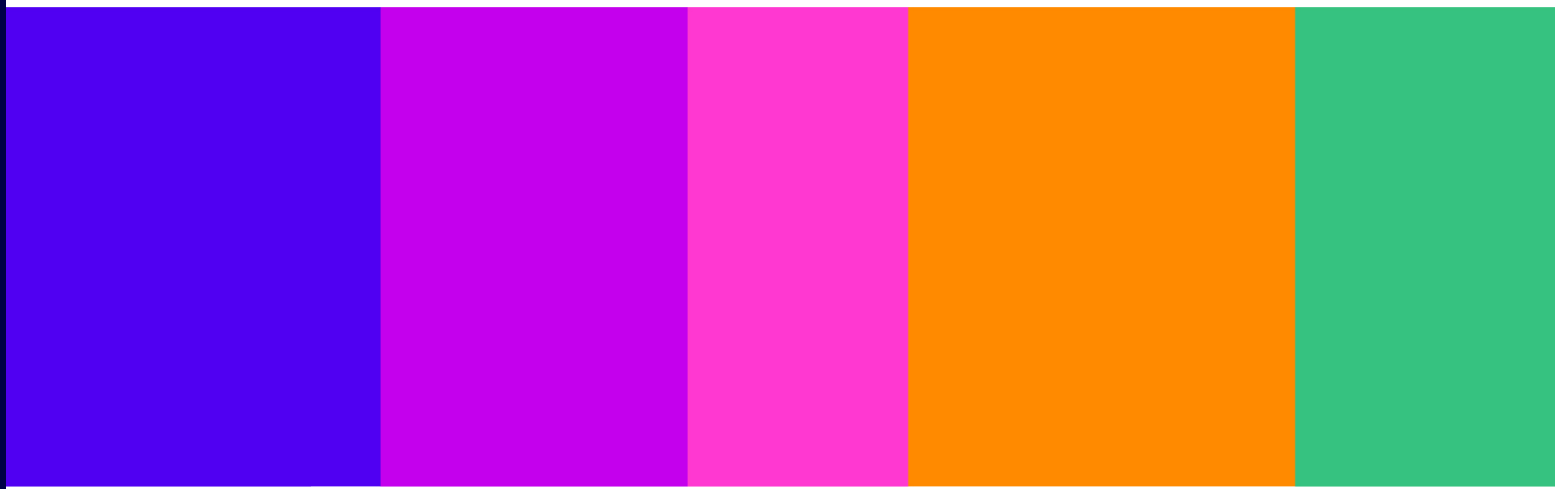
Consultation on regulations to update the fees for Wireless Telegraphy Act licences

Consultation

Published 30 October 2026

Closing date for responses: 4 December 2026

For more information on this publication, please visit [ofcom.org.uk](https://www.ofcom.org.uk)



Contents

Section

1. Overview.....	3
2. Notice	5
3. Proposed changes	7
4. Consultation on changes to staged payments	11
5. General Effect of the Proposed Regulations	14

Annex

A1. Draft Proposed Regulations	17
A2. Impact assessments	18
A3. Responding to this consultation.....	24
A4. Ofcom’s consultation principles.....	26
A5. Consultation coversheet	27
A6. Consultation questions.....	28

1. Overview

- 1.1 This document consults and seeks representations on draft regulations, the Wireless Telegraphy (Licence Charges) (Amendment) Regulations 2027 (the “Proposed Regulations”) that, if implemented, would amend the Wireless Telegraphy (Licence Charges) Regulations 2020 (the “2020 Regulations”). The Proposed Regulations set out the changes that we propose to make to licence charges (fees) for some classes of Wireless Telegraphy Act 2006 (the “WT Act”) licences.
- 1.2 When setting spectrum management fees, we must act in accordance with the provisions of the WT Act. The WT Act gives Ofcom powers to set licence fees at a level necessary to recover our costs, or above this level where we consider it is appropriate to do so in light, in particular, of our statutory duties.
- 1.3 The Proposed Regulations will implement a number of changes on which we have previously consulted and published our decision. In addition, we are also consulting on making further changes to the 2020 Regulations.
- 1.4 A brief outline of what we are proposing is set out below:

What we are proposing – in brief

We are proposing to implement previous policy decisions taken by Ofcom relating to spectrum licence fees by make new regulations (Proposed Regulations). These would amend the existing 2020 Regulations in relation to the following areas:

Implement our [decision](#) to replace the current approach to charging for Satellite (Earth Station – Non-Geostationary) (NGSO) licences and align it with the Satellite (Permanent Earth Station) (PES)¹ licence. This will replace the current flat cost-based fee with administered incentive pricing (AIP). It will also amend aspects of the Satellite PES fee formula used for GSO gateways, which are already charged on an AIP basis, to ensure a consistent approach across similar services.

Reflect our [decision](#) to introduce two new licence products in the 1900 MHz band (1900-1920 MHz) which was spectrum that had not been used since its award in 2000.

Specifically, this proposed statutory instrument would introduce charges for the following:

- Spectrum Access (Future Rail Mobile Communication System) 1900-1910 MHz licence class; and
- Spectrum Access (Emergency Services Network) Gateways 1910-1915 MHz licence class.

We are also proposing to make some administrative amendments to the 2020 Regulations in the following areas:

- Adjust the frequency band listed in the 2020 Regulations that applies to the **Spectrum Access 32 GHz** licence. This is to align the [decision](#) taken by Ofcom to allocate some of this unused spectrum for Fixed Links use.
- Remove from the 2020 Regulations the **Coastal Station Radio (Training School)** and **5.8 GHz Fixed Wireless Access (FWA)** licence product as we made a [decision](#) to exempt from the need to hold a licence.

¹ Used for Geostationary Orbit satellites (GSO)

We are also consulting on making some administrative amendments to the 2020 Regulations in relation to how we manage **staged payments** to provide more flexibility for licensees. Specifically, we propose to lower the eligibility threshold so that invoices² over £75,000 qualify for payment by instalments and to make this the default payment method once the threshold is met. We also propose to increase the number of monthly instalments from 10 to 12 months. This would align the payment schedule with our approach to licence fee payments for other licensed products across Ofcom and spread payments more evenly. In accordance with the requirements of section 122(4) and (5) of the WT Act this document gives notice of our intention to make the Proposed Regulations.

- 1.5 The Proposed Regulations would implement several changes where Ofcom has previously made a policy decision as well as some new proposals. The focus of this consultation is therefore whether the Proposed Regulations correctly reflect Ofcom's policy decisions as well as any other comments that stakeholders might have in addition to the on the Proposed Regulations.
- 1.6 Comments on the Proposed Regulations are invited by 5pm on **Friday 4 December 2026**. Subject to consideration of responses, we intend to bring the final regulations into force within a reasonable period after the publication of our final statement. The Proposed Regulations are included in this document at Annex 1.

² The policy applies to certain licence types and that if the invoice generated is greater than £75,000. To be eligible all licences must be the same type, have the same payment date and included on the same payment request.

2. Notice

Introduction

- 2.1 This document gives formal notice under section 122 of the WT Act of our proposal to make the Wireless Telegraphy (Licence Charges) (Amendment) Regulations 2027 (the “Proposed Regulations”). It also sets out the general effect of the Proposed Regulations. In addition, it consults on making administrative amendments to the 2020 Regulations relating to staged payments. A copy of the Proposed Regulations is in Annex 1 of this document.
- 2.2 Before making any regulations, we are required by section 122(4) of the Wireless Telegraphy Act 2006 (the “WT Act”) to give notice of our proposal to do so. Under section 122(5), the notice must state that Ofcom proposes to make the regulations in question, set out their general effect, specify an address from which a copy of the proposed regulations or order may be obtained, and specify a time before which any representations with respect to the proposal must be made to Ofcom. That time must be at least 30 days beginning with the day after that on which the notice is given or published.
- 2.3 Ofcom is responsible for authorising civil use of the radio spectrum and achieves this by granting wireless telegraphy licences under the WT Act and by making regulations exempting users of particular equipment from the requirement to hold such a licence. Under section 12 of the WT Act we must prescribe in regulations the sums payable in respect of wireless telegraphy licences other than those awarded by auction.
- 2.4 The power under section 12 of the WT Act enables us to recover the cost of administering and managing WT Act licences. However, section 13 of the WT Act permits us to recover sums greater than those we incur in performing our spectrum management functions. This is termed Administered Incentive Pricing (AIP) and refers to prices for annual licence fees which are set above administrative costs to reflect a range of spectrum management objectives, in particular to provide incentives for licensees to use their spectrum more efficiently. This contributes to discharging our duties under section 3 of the WT Act which require us to efficiently manage the radio spectrum.
- 2.5 Unless stated in the following sections, all existing licence charges will remain the same. This consultation invites comments on whether the Proposed Regulations give effect to a range of policy decisions previously consulted upon. It is also inviting comments on further changes that we are proposing to make to the Wireless Telegraphy (Licence Charges) Regulations 2020.
- 2.6 Hard copies of this Notice and the Proposed Regulations can be obtained from:
- Space Spectrum & Authorisation Management
Ofcom
Riverside House
2A Southwark Bridge Road
London
SE1 9HA
Email: Regulations@ofcom.org.uk

Document structure

- 2.7 The remainder of the document is structured as follows:
- Section 3 explains the proposals to be implemented by the Proposed Regulations;
 - Section 4 sets out the consultation on proposals relating to spectrum licence payment schedules and their permitted staged payments threshold, including how we propose to implement these through the Proposed Regulations;
 - Section 5 sets out the general effects of the Proposed Regulations;
 - Annex 1 contains a copy of the draft proposed Regulations;
 - Annex 2 contains our impact assessment;
 - Annexes 3 to 6 provide information on our approach to consultations; and
 - Annex 7 contains the consultation question.

Next steps

- 2.8 Following the publication of this consultation document, stakeholders are invited to provide their feedback on the drafting of the Proposed Regulations. Those who wish to do so have until 5pm on **Friday 4 December 2026** to make representations. After taking any responses into account, we expect to release a statement on this consultation in February 2027, and to bring the regulations into force as soon as is practical.

3. Proposed changes

- 3.1 This section outlines our proposals to make the Proposed Regulations in relation to the following:
- a) Satellite (Earth Station – Non-Geostationary) (NGSO) and Satellite (Permanent Earth Station) gateway licences;
 - b) Emergency Service Network (ESN) Gateway 1910-1915 MHz licences;
 - c) Future Rail Mobile Communication Systems (FRMCS) 1900-1910 MHz licences;
 - d) Unassigned spectrum - Shared Access 32 GHz licence (32.445-32.571 GHz paired with 33.257-33.383 GHz);
 - e) Coastal Station Radio (CSR) (Training Schools); and
 - f) 5.8 GHz (5725-5950 MHz) Fixed Wireless Access (FWA).

Satellite (Earth Station – Non-Geostationary) and Satellite (Permanent Earth Station) licences

- 3.2 In July 2025 we published a [consultation](#) which set out a package of proposals to update our approach to satellite Gateway fees.
- 3.3 The July 2025 consultation followed a review of our fee regime for satellite gateways, which was last reviewed in 2006/07. Since that time there has been significant growth in demand for spectrum from the satellite sector driven by the emergence of new ‘Non-Geostationary’ (NGSO) satellites with the ability to deliver high data rates and low latency services.
- 3.4 This increase in demand means that the spectrum used by Gateways is becoming a scarce resource. In scenarios of excess demand or scarcity, Administered Incentive Pricing (AIP) is an established mechanism used in many spectrum licences to reflect the opportunity cost of using spectrum and thereby ensure its optimal use. This in turn promotes economic efficiency and helps support economic growth.
- 3.5 Under our existing fee regime, we already apply AIP to licences for Geostationary (GSO) Gateways under our Satellite (Permanent Earth Station) licence. Our July 2025 consultation set out proposals for applying AIP to NGSO Gateways covered under the Satellite (Earth Station – Non-Geostationary) licence, in place of the current cost-based licence fee of £500. In addition, we consulted on updating how we calculate GSO Gateway fees to incorporate relevant elements of our NGSO proposals. We also proposed setting fees for additional higher frequency bands that we planned to make available for satellite Gateway use.
- 3.6 In March 2026 we published our [statement](#) which set out our decision to proceed with all of the proposals, specifically:
- a) to apply AIP to NGSO Gateways by making the NGSO Gateway licence subject to an updated version of our existing GSO satellite fee formula;
 - b) to apply the updated formula to GSO Gateway licences; and

- c) to introduce new fee bands 6 and 7, which would apply to any future authorisations in Q/V and E bands for GSO and NGSO Gateways, as well as the existing temporary authorisations for three NGSO gateways to use E-band.³⁴

3.7 Figure 1 below illustrates the updated fee formula that will apply to both NGSO and GSO Gateways under our Satellite (Permanent Earth Station) and Satellite (Earth Station – Non-Geostationary) licences.

Figure 1: Updated fee formula to reflect the new approach to fees

$$AS = \sum_{bands} \left[28 \times BF_{band} \times NGSO_{factor} \times \sqrt{\sum_{10 \text{ highest value paths}_{band}} (P_{path} \times BW_{path})} \right]$$

3.8 The Proposed Regulations set out in Annex 1 are intended to implement our decision, as set out in the March 2026 statement.

Authorisation of 1900–1920 MHz band

3.9 In March 2025 we published a [consultation](#) which set out proposals for authorising two new uses in the 1900-1920 MHz band. These were:

- Future Rail Mobile Communication System (FRMCS); and
- Emergency Service Network (ESN) Gateways.

Spectrum Access (Future Rail Mobile Communication System) 1900–1910 MHz (FRMCS)

3.10 For the 1900-1910 MHz band, we proposed that optimal use would be for the latest 5G mobile technology for rail networks, the FRMCS. These frequencies are already harmonised across Europe for FRMCS which means that the UK rail industry will benefit from standardised equipment. We also noted that FRMCS would support greater digitalisation of the UK's railways by replacing existing 2G technology and enabling trains, signalling and workers to be better connected than before, helping to improve the running of the rail network.

3.11 Our October 2025 [statement](#) confirmed our decision to authorise the FRMCS 1900-1910 MHz licence and set the level of fees that should be applied as set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Total annual fees payable for FRMCS:

³ See Statement: [Temporary NGSO Gateway access to E band](#)

⁴ We published our decision to authorise Q/V band for satellite gateways in low density areas and in high density areas in [March 2026](#) and [October 2026](#) respectively.

Licence area	FRMCS total annual licence fee for 10 MHz in 1900-1910 MHz
Great Britain	£1,458,000
Northern Ireland	£42,000
FRMCS deployments of up to 100 miles of route	£14,580

- 3.12 When setting fees for FRMCS we set a fee for the whole of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. We also introduced fees for smaller rail operators. These are calculated by the length of their routes and will mean they will scale, based on the overall length of the rail route, i.e. a fee of £14,580 for 10 MHz per every 100 miles of route (rounded up to the nearest 100 miles) covered by the licence.
- 3.13 Due to the potential costs of the licences in some cases being over the stage payment threshold limit, we propose to also allow licensee to make payments for the licence fee via staged payments, subject to the payment thresholds being met. Therefore, we will need to amend the 2020 Regulations to permit this.
- 3.14 To enable these changes the Proposed Regulations set out in Annex 1 are intended to implement our decision, as set out in the October 2025 statement.

Spectrum Access (Emergency Services Network Gateways 1910–1915 MHz (ESN))

- 3.15 For the 1910-1915 MHz band, we proposed that the optimal use would be for providing extended coverage for the Emergency Services Network (ESN), through the use of repeater “gateways” installed on emergency vehicles such as ambulances. These would enable emergency services to communicate in hard to connect locations such as underground car parks or the most remote rural areas.
- 3.16 Our October 2025 [statement](#) confirmed our decision to authorise the ESN 1910-1915 MHz licence and set the level of fees that should be applied as set out in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Total annual fees payable for ESN Gateways

Licence area	ESN gateway total annual licence fee for 5 MHz in 1910-1915 MHz
Great Britain	£364,500

- 3.17 For the same reason we set out for the FMRCs licence, we are proposing to allow the payment of the licence via staged payments, subject to the payment thresholds being met. Therefore, we will need to amend the 2020 Regulations to permit this.
- 3.18 The Proposed Regulations set out in Annex 1 are intended to implement our decision, as set out in the October 2025 statement.

Spectrum Access 32 GHz band

- 3.19 In April 2024 a national 2 x 126 MHz block of spectrum in the Spectrum Access 32 GHz band (32.445-32.571 GHz paired with 33.257-33.383 GHz spectrum) was returned to Ofcom.
- 3.20 In August 2024 we [consulted](#) on, among other things, proposals for making the returned spectrum (32.445-32.571 GHz paired with 33.257-33.383 GHz) available for Fixed Links on an Ofcom-assigned basis. In February 2025 we published a [statement](#) confirming our decision to proceed to make the spectrum available as proposed.
- 3.21 Our decision means that the frequency bands 32.445-32.571 GHz paired with 33.257-33.383 GHz are no longer available to be allocated as part of the Shared Access 32 GHz licences. We are therefore proposing to amend the 2020 Regulations to reflect the updated frequencies that remain within the Shared Access 32 GHz frequencies (31.815-32.445 GHz and 32.627-33.257 GHz), along with the associated fee.
- 3.22 Fees for Ofcom-assigned Point-to-Point Fixed Link licences in the 32.445-32.571 GHz paired with 33.257-33.383 GHz ranges are already set out in the fee formula contained in Schedule 3 of the 2020 Regulations therefore no further amendments are required.
- 3.23 The Proposed Regulations set out in Annex 1 are intended to implement our decision, as set out in the February 2025 [statement](#).

Removal of licence classes due to licence exemptions

- 3.24 In January 2025 we published a [consultation](#) which set out proposals to align the UK's licence exemptions⁵ on the use of certain wireless telegraphy equipment with those in the other countries and to exempt further equipment as part of a wider review of our authorisation framework. In this context we proposed to exempt the following licences:
- a) Coastal Station Radio (CSR) (Training Schools) – which carry an associated one-off fee of £20; and
 - b) 5.8 GHz (5725-5950 MHz) Fixed Wireless Access (FWA) – which carry an associated annual fee of £1 for each terminal, subject to a minimum fee of £50 for up to 49 terminals.
- 3.25 In October 2025 we confirmed our [decision](#) and along with other changes removed the need for these two uses to hold a licence.
- 3.26 As licence exemptions allow operators to use equipment for CSR and 5.8 GHz FWA without requiring a licence (provided they comply with the technical conditions that apply) we are proposing to amend to the 2020 Regulations to remove these licence products and the associated fees.
- 3.27 The Proposed Regulations set out in Annex 1 are intended to implement our October 2025 decision.

⁵ Licence exemption allows certain devices or activities to operate without requiring a WT Act licence.

4. Consultation on changes to staged payments

Background

- 4.1 In addition to the decisions we have taken in section 3 to implement changes to the 2020 Regulations, we are also consulting on some further administrative changes to the 2020 Regulations related to staged payments.
- 4.2 Under Section 6 of the Communications Act 2003 (the “2003 Act”), Ofcom is required to keep the carrying out of its functions (including those under the WT Act) under review with a view to securing that regulation by Ofcom does not involve:
 - a) the imposition of burdens which are unnecessary; or
 - b) the maintenance of burdens which have become unnecessary.
- 4.3 The proposed changes below result from Ofcom’s review to improve our authorisation frameworks, including reviewing our approach to fees, as referenced in [Ofcom’s Plan of Work](#).

Proposed changes

- 4.4 We are proposing to:
 - a) Reduce the payment threshold from which licensees become eligible to make staged payments for WT Act licence invoices from more than £100,000 to more than £75,000;
 - b) Automatically default to monthly instalments as the payment method for licensees in qualifying licence classes where the invoice value is more than £75,000, while allowing payment in a single lump sum on request; and
 - c) Amend the timing of the spectrum licence staged payment schedule from 10 to 12 monthly instalments.

Reducing payment threshold to over £75,000 and enabling automatic staged payments

- 4.5 Staged payments allow licensees who qualify, to pay the prescribed licence fee in equal instalments on specified dates until the licence fee has been paid in full.
- 4.6 Spectrum licence staged payments are currently available where a qualifying licence invoice has a value more than £100,000. This limits access to staged payments arrangements for licence holders whose licence fees fall below this level. Staged payments are also only allowed if the licensee informs Ofcom in advance that they wish to pay by instalments.
- 4.7 We are proposing to reduce the threshold to more than £75,000 and to make payment by instalments the default payment method, provided the invoice value due meets the threshold amount. This would mean that licensees in qualifying licence classes would become eligible to make payments in instalments if their invoice is for more than £75,000. Licensees wishing to pay the full invoice amount in a single lump sum would be required to notify Ofcom of their intention to do so.

- 4.8 We note that in other areas that Ofcom charges fees,⁶ the threshold in most cases is more than £75,000. Our proposed changes would align the WT Act fees with this limit, ensuring consistency in the treatment of different charges across Ofcom.
- 4.9 Below we set out the benefits of reducing the payment threshold and for making payment in instalments the default payment method for licensees in qualifying licence classes provided the threshold is met, for stakeholders and for Ofcom.

Benefits to stakeholders:

- Extends access to staged payments arrangements for a broader range of licence holders;
- Automatic access to staged payments would reduce some of the administrative burden on licensees of having to request this payment method on each occasion; and
- Provides greater flexibility to stakeholders in how they manage higher-value licence payment obligations.

Benefits to Ofcom:

- Applying staged payments automatically would reduce the administrative burden on Ofcom of setting up individual arrangements each time a licensee requested them; and
- Greater consistency and transparency in the administration of licence fees staged payments.

Increase staged payments from 10 to 12 monthly instalments

- 4.10 Under the current arrangements, licensees who meet the criteria set out in the 2020 Regulations and opt to pay their licence fees in instalments, do so over a 10-month period from the prescribed licence payment date. We are proposing to change this to a 12-month period.
- 4.11 The proposed change from a 10-month to a 12-month payment schedule would enable licensees to pay smaller instalments over a longer period..
- 4.12 We consider that the proposed change would align spectrum licence payments with Annual Licence Fee (ALF) payments which can be made in 12 monthly instalments.⁷ This is also consistent with our approach for fee payments to Ofcom in other areas.
- 4.13 Below we set out the benefits of the proposed changes to staged payments for both stakeholders and Ofcom.

Benefits to stakeholders:

- Greater flexibility in managing financial and operational commitments, including licensing obligations; and
- Reduce the monthly cost of licence fees through spreading payments over a longer period.

Benefits to Ofcom:

- Greater consistency across Ofcom for fee collection for both spectrum licence fees and charges that Ofcom makes to stakeholders;
- More streamlined billing and collection processes; and
- Improved efficiency through reduced manual processing.

⁶ See section 4.4 [Ofcom Tariff Tables 2026/27](#).

⁷ See [Decision to amend the trading regulations](#) (paras 1.2 and 2.3).

Conclusion

- 4.14 In our view, updating the 2020 Regulations by lowering the payment threshold to more than £75,000, making payment by instalments the default payment method and increasing the number of instalments to 12 (one per month) would provide practical support to a wider range of licence holders to manage their licensing obligations. It would also reflect a more consistent approach with other fees charged by Ofcom and give licensees the necessary certainty they need to manage their financial and operational commitments.
- 4.15 Subject to stakeholder responses, we would seek to implement these additional changes to the 2020 regulations, via the Proposed Regulations. We have therefore included provisions in the Proposed Regulations which would be introduced if we were to proceed with making these changes.

Question 1: Do you agree with our proposal to reduce the licence invoice eligibility threshold for staged payments from more than £100,000 to more than £75,000. Please give reasons for your views.

Question 2: Do you agree with our proposal to automatically default to payment by instalments for licensees in the qualifying licence classes where the invoice value exceeds the proposed threshold of more than £75,000? Please give reasons for your views.

Question 3: Do you agree with our proposal to amend the timing of the spectrum licence staged payments from 10 to 12 monthly instalments? Please give reasons for your views.

5. General Effect of the Proposed Regulations

- 5.1 In this section, we set out the general effects of the Proposed Regulations, as required by section 122(5)(b) of the WT Act.

The legislative framework

- 5.2 Section 8(1) of the WT Act confers on Ofcom a power to grant a wireless telegraphy licence in respect of a “wireless telegraphy station” or “wireless telegraphy apparatus”. It is unlawful and an offence to install or use wireless telegraphy apparatus without holding a licence granted by Ofcom, unless the use of such equipment is exempted.
- 5.3 Ofcom’s statutory powers and duties in relation to spectrum management are set out primarily in the 2003 Act and the WT Act. Amongst our functions are the making available of frequencies for use for particular purposes and the granting of rights of use of spectrum through wireless telegraphy licences and licence exemptions.
- 5.4 Our principal duties under the 2003 Act, when carrying out our functions and exercising our powers, are to further the interests of citizens and consumers, where appropriate by promoting competition. In doing so, we are also required (among other things) to secure the optimal use of spectrum and the availability throughout the United Kingdom of a wide range of electronic communications services. We interpret “optimal use” to mean that the spectrum is used in a way that maximises the value that citizens and consumers derive from it, including the wider social value of spectrum use, and taking into account the specific consumer and citizen interests, including the interests of particular groups within society.
- 5.5 We must also have regard to: (i) the desirability of promoting competition in relevant markets; (ii) the desirability of encouraging investment and innovation in relevant markets; (iii) the different needs and interests, so far as the use of the electro-magnetic spectrum for wireless telegraphy is concerned, of all persons who may wish to make use of it; and (iv) the different interests of persons in the different parts of the United Kingdom, of the different ethnic communities within the United Kingdom and of persons living in rural and in urban areas.
- 5.6 Additionally, in carrying out our spectrum functions we have a duty under section 3 of the WT Act to have regard in particular to: (i) the extent to which the spectrum is available for use, or further use, for wireless telegraphy; (ii) the demand for use of that spectrum for wireless telegraphy; and (iii) the demand that is likely to arise in future for such use.
- 5.7 We also have a duty to have regard to the desirability of promoting: (i) the efficient management and use of the spectrum for wireless telegraphy; (ii) the economic and other benefits that may arise from the use of wireless telegraphy; (iii) the development of innovative services; and (iv) competition in the provision of electronic communications services.
- 5.8 Under section 12 of the WT Act, Ofcom may prescribe in regulations the sums payable in respect of wireless telegraphy licences other than those awarded by auction. This power enables us to recover the cost of administering and managing WT Act licences.

- 5.9 Section 13 of the WT Act permits us to recover sums greater than those we incur in performing our spectrum management functions (this is termed ‘Administrative Incentive Pricing’ and abbreviated to ‘AIP’), to reflect a range of spectrum management objectives.
- 5.10 Ofcom’s fee setting and charging powers allow us to provide incentives for licensees to use their spectrum more efficiently. This goes to discharging our duties under section 3 of the WT Act.

Extent and application

- 5.11 The Proposed Regulations would apply in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man, subject to their agreement.

General effect

- 5.12 The overall general effect of the Proposed Regulations would be to implement Ofcom’s previous decisions relating to wireless telegraphy licence charges and, subject to the outcome of this consultation, its proposals for staged payments.
- 5.13 Regulation 1 would provide for the citation of the Proposed Regulations and the date when the Proposed Regulations would come into force.
- 5.14 Regulation 2 would provide for the 2020 Regulations to be amended in accordance with the provisions of the Proposed Regulations.
- 5.15 Regulation 3 would extend eligibility for payment in instalments to the Spectrum Access (Future Rail Mobile Communication System) 1900-1910 MHz and Spectrum Access (Emergency Services Network) Gateways 1910-1915 MHz licence classes, reduce the eligibility threshold for payment in instalments to over £75,000 and provide for payment by twelve monthly instalments as the default payment method for eligible licensees.
- 5.16 Regulation 4 would amend the frequency ranges that applies to Spectrum Access 32 GHz licence. This reflects Ofcom’s decision to make the frequencies 32.445-32.571 GHz paired with 33.257-33.383 GHz available for Fixed Link assignments.
- 5.17 Regulation 5 would remove the Fixed Wireless Access (5.8 GHz) and the Coastal Station Radio (Training School) licence classes from the 2020 Regulations as these licences are no longer issued. It also introduces charges for the Spectrum Access (Future Rail Mobile Communication System) 1900-1910 MHz and Spectrum Access (Emergency Services Network) Gateways 1910-1915 MHz licence classes. Finally, it would revise the charging approach applicable to Satellite (Earth Station—Non-Geostationary) licences.
- 5.18 Regulation 6 would update the charging formula and the associated band factors applicable to the charges for the Satellite (Permanent Earth Station) licences and Satellite (Earth Station—Non-Geostationary) licences.

Entry into force of the Proposed Regulations

- 5.19 The final regulations will be made after Ofcom has concluded its notification process, taking into consideration any representations received. We intend to bring the Proposed Regulations into force within a reasonable period after the publication of our final statement in early 2027.

Comments and representations

5.20 We are inviting comments on whether the Proposed Regulations correctly implement the policy decisions as summarised above.

5.21 We are also seeking comments on our proposed changes relating to stage payments.

Question 1: Do you have any comments on our drafting of the Proposed Regulations? Please give reasons supported by evidence for your views.

Question 2: Do you agree with our proposal to reduce the licence invoice eligibility threshold for staged payments from more than £100,000 to more than £75,000. Please give reasons for your views.

Question 3: Do you agree with our proposal to automatically default to payment by instalments for licensees in the qualifying licence classes where the invoice value exceeds the proposed threshold of more than £75,000? Please give reasons for your views.

Question 4: Do you agree with our proposal to amend the timing of the spectrum licence staged payments from 10 to 12 monthly instalments? Please give reasons for your views.

Question 5: Do you have any comments relating to any other matter in this Notice?

5.22 Subject to our consideration of responses, we intend to bring the Proposed Regulations into force within a reasonable period after making them.

5.23 A draft of the Proposed Regulations is set out in Annex 1.

5.24 Comments on the Proposed Regulations are invited by **5pm on Friday 4 December 2026**.

A1. Draft Proposed Regulations

- A1.1 A draft copy of the Regulations is published as a separate document alongside this document [here](#).

A2. Impact assessments

Impact assessment

- A2.1 Section 7 of the Communications Act 2003 requires us to carry out and publish an assessment of the likely impact of implementing a proposal which would be likely to have a significant impact on businesses or the general public, or when there is a major change in Ofcom's activities.
- A2.2 More generally, impact assessments form part of good policy making and we therefore expect to carry them out in relation to a large majority of our proposals. We use impact assessments to help us understand and assess the potential impact of our policy decisions before we make them. They also help us explain the policy decisions we have decided to take and why we consider those decisions best fulfil our applicable duties and objectives in the least intrusive way. Our [Impact Assessment Guidance](#) sets out our general approach to how we assess and present the impact of our proposed decisions.
- A2.3 In preparing this document, we have considered the citizen and consumer interests relating to wireless telegraphy fee charges. We have also considered the impact on service providers, manufacturers and users of devices and applications and we believe the benefits that we have identified will promote economic growth. We have taken into account our statutory duties, including our statutory duties in section 3 and section 6 of the WT Act.

Proposal purpose and intended effect

- A2.4 This Notice sets out proposals to make the Proposed Regulations which would amend the 2020 Regulations. The Proposed Regulations would remove and amend the fees in relation to certain existing licence products and introduce new licence products and their associated fees.
- A2.5 In the following documents we have set out our decisions, following consultation, on the policies behind the updated and new fees that the Proposed Regulations would implement (full impact assessments have been undertaken where relevant and appropriate):
- a) Our March 2026 [statement](#) which set out our decision to change how we will charge for spectrum used by satellite Gateways (both GSO and NGSO) from early 2027 onwards
 - b) Our January 2026 [statement](#) which set out our decision to authorise use of the 1900-1920 MHz band by two new licence products:
 - i) FRMCS 1900-1910 MHz licences; and
 - ii) ESN Gateway 1910-1915 MHz licences. This follows Ofcom's decision to authorise use of the 1900-1920 MHz.
 - c) Our February 2025 [statement](#) following the return of the Spectrum Access 32 GHz (32.445-32.571 GHz paired with 33.257-33.383 GHz) licence previously held in these frequencies.⁸
 - d) Our October 2025 [statement](#) which set out our decision to make a range of wireless telegraphy equipment licence exempt, including phasing out the existing licences for:
 - i) Coastal Station Radio (CSR) (Training Schools); and

⁸ This Spectrum Access licence covering these frequencies were returned to Ofcom in April 2024.

ii) 5.8 GHz (5725-5950 MHz) Fixed Wireless Access (FWA).

- A2.6 This document also consults on further proposals for staged payments which would:
- a) Reduce the payment threshold from which licensees become eligible to make staged payments for WT Act licence invoices from more than £100,000 to more than £75,000;
 - b) Automatically default to monthly instalments as the payment method for licensees in qualifying licence classes where the invoice value is more than £75,000, while allowing payment in a single lump sum on request; and
 - c) Amend the timing of the spectrum licence staged payment schedule from 10 to 12 monthly instalments.
- A2.7 Subject to stakeholder responses, we would seek to include these changes in the Proposed Regulations and implement them alongside the changes that we have already decided to make and set out in full in Section 3 of this document.
- A2.8 We consider that our decisions regarding licence fees, taken as a whole, will help us to meet our statutory duties in relation to the management of spectrum and our more general duties to further the interests of citizens and consumers.
- A2.9 In exercising our regulatory functions, we are also required to have regard to the desirability of promoting economic growth (the 'growth duty').⁹ In particular, we must consider the importance for the promotion of economic growth of exercising the regulatory function in a way which ensures that regulatory action is taken only when it is needed, and any action taken is proportionate. Section 110(3) of the Deregulation Act 2015 requires us to have regard to the Growth Duty Statutory Guidance.

Benefits to citizens and consumers

- A2.10 We consider there are a number of benefits for consumers and businesses to arise from the decisions we have taken including:
- a) Reflecting the introduction of a more precise and consistent pricing mechanism for both GSO and NGSO satellite gateway services. This should facilitate both efficient use of spectrum and competition between these two types of satellite services, leading to benefits for UK consumers and citizens;
 - b) Benefits of consistency and operational efficiencies across satellite gateway operators;
 - c) Ensuring optimal uses of spectrum in the 1900 MHz band, including:
 - i) the provision of critical national rail infrastructure (FRMCS); and
 - ii) benefits to citizens from improved emergency service (the ESN) particularly in rural areas;
- A2.11 Updating the fee regulations to reflect Ofcom's decisions on the Spectrum Access 32 GHz, 5.8 GHz FWA and CSR Training schools supports proportionate regulation. By removing provisions from the 2020 Regulations which are no longer needed, this will help ensure the regulations are kept up to date and align with the licences currently on issue. This provides clarity to stakeholders.

⁹ See section 108 of the Deregulation Act 2015, which was extended to Ofcom's regulatory functions by The Economic Growth (Regulatory Functions) (Amendment) Order 2024

- A2.12 We consider that the proposals to amend the regulations for making stage payments supports the removal of the regulatory and financial burdens placed on certain operators. Lowering the threshold for staged payments to over £75,000 and extending the schedule for the payment of licence fees to 12 months will particularly benefit businesses as it will give them greater flexibility in managing financial and operational licensing obligations.

Costs to Ofcom

- A2.13 There are one-off administrative costs to Ofcom associated with making Statutory Instruments. We consider these administrative costs to be small relative to the potential benefits of making the Proposed Regulations. Without them the policy changes that Ofcom has consulted on and decided upon, would not be given full effect in regulations. Stakeholders would not benefit from being able to consult the Proposed Regulations to see the appropriate fees for relevant licences. This could result in uncertainty and unnecessary costs for stakeholders.
- A2.14 There are also some costs to Ofcom associated with applying the updated fees to Satellite (Earth Station – Non-Geostationary) and Satellite (Permanent Earth Station) licences. These costs relate to modifications to the licensing fee engine in order to apply the new AIP based fee formula to NGSO licences. However, as this builds on the existing formula that is already used to calculate Satellite (Permanent Earth Station) licence fees, we do not expect significant implementation costs.
- A2.15 We do not expect that the amendments required to enable staged payments will incur costs on Ofcom as the changes will be implemented through routine internal system updates.

Cost to business, including small business and the voluntary sector

- A2.16 Ofcom's decision to make new licence charges regulations can have a range of implications for businesses, including small enterprises and organisations in the voluntary sector.
- A2.17 Depending on whether the proposed regulations increase or decrease the level of associated fees, the broader impact on stakeholders warrants careful consideration.

NGSO and GSO satellite Gateway licences

- A2.18 While the fees we have decided to implement for NGSO satellite gateways are larger than the current cost-based fees, we consider this is appropriate and proportionate to reflect the opportunity cost of spectrum use, and therefore, align with our pricing principles for spectrum management.
- A2.19 Our updated fees policy is calibrated to incentivise spectrum use, with measures taken to cap costs that could be incurred at a single location. For example, a maximum of 10 antennas will be charged for a specific site and band. This means that fees could range from a few thousand pounds to tens of thousands of pounds.
- A2.20 We have examined similar Ofcom licences that are subject to AIP and our view is the fees outlined are at comparable levels. For instance, in our policy statement we provided a hypothetical example of a Satellite (Earth Station – Non-Geostationary) gateway

deployment across 3 bands with a fee of £20,900 and noted that a similar GSO gateway incurred an annual fee of £17,400.¹⁰

- A2.21 In our view the scalable fee framework means that operators using less spectrum would pay lower fees, facilitating efficient entry from newer competitors and preventing fees from scaling excessively for operators.

Authorisation of 1900-1920 MHz band

- A2.22 We do not expect that our decision to authorise new services in the 1900-1920 MHz band for FRMCS and ESN services and a new fee structure would impose significant costs on business. The Proposed Regulations would only apply to a limited number of operators either contracted or wanting to obtain licences to provide the relevant services.

Spectrum Access 32 GHz band

- A2.23 We do not expect that our decision to update the 2020 Regulations to reflect the frequencies now allocated for Spectrum Access 32 GHz licences would impose any cost on business. This is an administrative change to reflect the decision by Ofcom to allocate some of this unused spectrum to Fixed Link licences.

Removal of licence classes due to licence exemptions

- A2.24 As the use of equipment for CSR and 5.8 GHz FWA is now licence exempt, it is no longer appropriate to charge a licence fee. Removing these licence products and their associated fees from the list of chargeable services will not impose costs on business. Instead, it will not only save businesses money but will also end the administrative burden of managing these licences.¹¹

Changes to staged payments

- A2.25 We do not expect that our proposals to make changes in relation to staged payments would impose costs on business. On the contrary we consider the reduction in the threshold for making stage payments, defaulting to payment by instalments and increasing the payment schedule from 10 to 12 months are all supportive measures that reduce the regulatory and financial burden on licensees.

Equality impact assessment

- A2.26 We have given careful consideration to whether our decision and proposals will have a particular impact on persons sharing protected characteristics (broadly including race, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership and religion or belief in the UK and also dependents and political opinion in Northern Ireland), and in particular whether they may discriminate against such persons or impact on equality of opportunity or good relations. This assessment helps us comply with our duties under the [Equality Act 2010](#) and the Northern Ireland Act 1998.¹²
- A2.27 When thinking about equality we think more broadly than persons that share protected characteristics identified in equalities legislation and think about potential impacts on various groups of persons (see paragraph 4.7 of [Ofcom's impact assessment guide](#)).

¹⁰ For more details see Annex 1 of our March 2026 [Statement](#).

¹¹ At the time of our [decision](#) we had approximately 500 CSR licensees charged at £20 per licence. We also had 50 FWA licences on issue at £50 per licence and authorising a total of 1070 pieces of equipment at £1 charged per terminal, subject to a minimum fee of £50 per licence.

¹² Further detail is set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

- A2.28 In particular, section 3(4) of the Communications Act 2003 also requires us to have regard to the needs and interests of specific groups of persons when performing our duties, as appear to us to be relevant in the circumstances. These include:
- a) the vulnerability of children and of others whose circumstances appear to us to put them in need of special protection;
 - b) the needs of persons with disabilities, older persons and persons on low incomes; and
- A2.29 the different interests of persons in the different parts of the UK, of the different ethnic communities within the UK and of persons living in rural and in urban areas.
- A2.30 We examine the potential impact our policy is likely to have on people, depending on their personal circumstances. This also assists us in making sure that we are meeting our principal duty of furthering the interests of citizens and consumers, regardless of their background and identity.
- A2.31 We do not consider that our proposals will affect any specific groups of persons (including persons that share protected characteristics under the 2010 Act or the 1998 Act) differently to the general population.
- A2.32 The benefits of the services that will be available as a result of these proposals, would apply equally to all users. Our decisions to remove licence products and associated fees would also apply equally to all users. Similarly, our proposals in relation staged payments would also apply equally to all users. We therefore do not consider that our policies will have negative impacts on any groups sharing protected characteristics.
- A2.33 Ofcom can provide information in a [variety of formats](#) on request, e.g. accessible PDF, large print, easy read, audio recording or braille. If you let us know what information you require and in what format, we will consider the request and respond within 21 days.

Welsh language

- A2.34 The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 made the Welsh language an officially recognised language in Wales. This legislation also led to the establishment of the office of the Welsh Language Commissioner who regulates and monitors our work. Ofcom is required to take Welsh language considerations into account when formulating, reviewing or revising policies which are relevant to Wales (including proposals which are not targeted at Wales specifically but are of interest across the UK).¹³
- A2.35 Where the Welsh Language Standards are engaged, we consider the potential impact of a policy proposal on (i) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language; and (ii) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language. We also consider how a proposal could be formulated so as to have, or increase, a positive impact, or not to have adverse effects or to decrease any adverse effects.
- A2.36 We do not consider our proposals have any impact on our Welsh language obligations. We do not consider that our proposed changes have any impact on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language or treating the Welsh language less favourably than the English language. We also do not think there are ways in which our decisions on updating the fees

¹³ See Standards 84 – 89 of [Hysbysiad cydymffurfio](#) (in Welsh) and [compliance notice](#) (in English). Section 7 of the Welsh Language Commissioner’s [Good Practice Advice Document](#) provides further advice and information on how bodies must comply with the Welsh Language Standards.

for wireless telegraphy devices could be formulated to have, or increase, a positive impact, or, not have adverse effects or decrease any adverse effects. This is because our planned changes and decisions relate to implementing licence charges regulations for licence products that are available to anyone within the UK.

A3. Responding to this consultation

How to respond

- A3.1 Ofcom would like to receive views and comments on the issues raised in this document, by 5pm on **Friday 4 December 2026**.
- A3.2 You can download a response form from [here](#). You can return this by email or post to the address provided in the response form.
- A3.3 If your response is a large file, or has supporting charts, tables or other data, please email it to regulations@ofcom.org.uk as an attachment in Microsoft Word format, together with the cover sheet. This email address is for this consultation only and will not be valid after Friday 4 December 2026.
- A3.4 We welcome responses in formats other than print, for example an audio recording or a British Sign Language video. To respond in BSL:
- > send us a recording of you signing your response. This should be no longer than 5 minutes. Suitable file formats are DVDs, wmv or QuickTime files; or
 - > upload a video of you signing your response directly to YouTube (or another hosting site) and send us the link.
- A3.5 We will publish a transcript of any audio or video responses we receive (unless your response is confidential).
- A3.6 We do not need a paper copy of your response as well as an electronic version. We will acknowledge receipt of a response submitted to us by email.
- A3.7 You do not have to answer all the questions in the consultation if you do not have a view; a short response on just one point is fine. We also welcome joint responses.
- A3.8 It would be helpful if your response could include direct answers to the questions asked in the consultation document. The questions are listed at Annex 6. It would also help if you could explain why you hold your views, and what you think the effect of Ofcom's proposals would be.
- A3.9 If you want to discuss the issues and questions raised in this consultation, please contact regulations@ofcom.org.uk.

Confidentiality

- A3.10 Consultations are more effective if we publish the responses before the consultation period closes. This can help people and organisations with limited resources or familiarity with the issues to respond in a more informed way. So, in the interests of transparency and good regulatory practice, and because we believe it is important that everyone who is interested in an issue can see other respondents' views, we usually publish responses on the Ofcom website at regular intervals during and after the consultation period.
- A3.11 If you think your response should be kept confidential, please specify which part(s) this applies to and explain why. Please send any confidential sections as a separate annex. If

you want your name, address, other contact details or job title to remain confidential, please provide them only in the cover sheet, so that we don't have to edit your response.

- A3.12 If someone asks us to keep all or part of a response confidential, we will treat this request seriously and try to respect it. It is however for Ofcom to decide whether or not information is confidential. Sometimes we may consider it necessary to publish all or part of a response, including those that are marked as confidential (for example, so we can explain our decisions and people can understand our reasoning or in order to meet legal obligations).

Where this is the case (and the relevant information is not already in the public domain), we will normally first explain our intention to publish information from your response and give you the opportunity to raise concerns about the proposed publication. We will generally try to resolve any objections you may have through constructive dialogue. If we remain of the view that we need to publish all or part of your response and you continue to object, we will give you advance warning prior to publication.

- A3.13 To fulfil our pre-disclosure duty, we may share a copy of your response with the relevant government department before we publish it on our website.
- A3.14 Please also note that copyright and all other intellectual property in responses will be assumed to be licensed to Ofcom to use. Ofcom's intellectual property rights are explained further in our Terms of Use.

Next steps

- A3.15 Following this consultation period, Ofcom plans to publish a statement in February 2027.
- A3.16 If you wish, you can register to receive mail updates alerting you to new Ofcom publications.

Ofcom's consultation processes

- A3.17 Ofcom aims to make responding to a consultation as easy as possible. For more information, please see our consultation principles in Annex 4.
- A3.18 If you have any comments or suggestions on how we manage our consultations, please email us at consult@ofcom.org.uk. We particularly welcome ideas on how Ofcom could more effectively seek the views of groups or individuals, such as small businesses and residential consumers, who are less likely to give their opinions through a formal consultation.
- A3.19 If you would like to discuss these issues, or Ofcom's consultation processes more generally, please contact the corporation secretary:

Corporation Secretary
Ofcom
Riverside House
2a Southwark Bridge Road
London SE1 9HA
Email: corporationsecretary@ofcom.org.uk

A4. Ofcom's consultation principles

Ofcom has seven principles that it follows for every public written consultation:

Before the consultation

1. Wherever possible, we will hold informal talks with people and organisations before announcing a big consultation, to find out whether we are thinking along the right lines. If we do not have enough time to do this, we will hold an open meeting to explain our proposals, shortly after announcing the consultation.

During the consultation

2. We will be clear about whom we are consulting, why, on what questions and for how long.
3. We will make the consultation document as short and simple as possible, with an overview of no more than two pages. We will try to make it as easy as possible for people to give us a written response.
4. When setting the length of the consultation period, we will consider the nature of our proposals and their potential impact. We will always make clear the closing date for responses.
5. A person within Ofcom will be in charge of making sure we follow our own guidelines and aim to reach the largest possible number of people and organisations who may be interested in the outcome of our decisions. Ofcom's Consultation Champion is the main person to contact if you have views on the way we run our consultations.
6. If we are not able to follow any of these principles, we will explain why.

After the consultation

7. We think it is important that everyone who is interested in an issue can see other people's views, so we usually publish the responses on our website at regular intervals during and after the consultation period. After the consultation we will make our decisions and publish a statement explaining what we are going to do, and why, showing how respondents' views helped to shape these decisions.

A5. Consultation coversheet

Basic details

Consultation title:

To (Ofcom contact):

Name of respondent:

Representing (self or organisation/s):

Address (if not received by email):

Confidentiality

Please tick below what part of your response you consider is confidential, giving your reasons why

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| > Nothing | ☐ |
| > Name/contact details/job title | ☐ |
| > Whole response | ☐ |
| > Organisation | ☐ |
| > Part of the response | ☐ |

If you selected 'Part of the response', please specify which parts:

If you want part of your response, your name or your organisation not to be published, can Ofcom still publish a reference to the contents of your response (including, for any confidential parts, a general summary that does not disclose the specific information or enable you to be identified)?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Declaration

I confirm that the correspondence supplied with this cover sheet is a formal consultation response that Ofcom can publish. However, in supplying this response, I understand that Ofcom may need to publish all responses, including those which are marked as confidential, in order to meet legal obligations. If I have sent my response by email, Ofcom can disregard any standard e-mail text about not disclosing email contents and attachments.

Ofcom aims to publish responses at regular intervals during and after the consultation period. If your response is non-confidential (in whole or in part), and you would prefer us to publish your response only once the consultation has ended, please tick here.

Name

Signed (if hard copy)

A6. Consultation questions

Please tell us how you came across this consultation.

- ☐ Email from Ofcom
- ☐ Saw it on social media
- ☐ Found it on Ofcom's website
- ☐ Found it on another website
- ☐ Heard about it on TV or radio
- ☐ Read about it in a newspaper or magazine
- ☐ Heard about it at an event
- ☐ Somebody told me or shared it with me
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Question 1: Do you have any comments on our drafting of the Proposed Regulations? Please give reasons for your views.

Question 2: Do you agree with our proposal to reduce the licence invoice eligibility threshold for staged payments from more than £100,000 to more than £75,000. Please give reasons for your views.

Question 3: Do you agree with our proposal to automatically default to payment by instalments for licensees in the qualifying licence classes where the invoice value exceeds the proposed threshold of more than £75,000? Please give reasons for your views.

Question 4: Do you agree with our proposal to amend the timing of the spectrum licence staged payments from 10 to 12 monthly instalments? Please give reasons for your views.

Question 5: Do you have any comments relating to any other matter in this Notice?

The overview section in this document is a simplified high-level summary only. The proposals we are consulting on, and our reasoning are set out in the full document.