

# Regulatory impact assessment

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The Wireless Telegraphy (Exemption)  
(Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2026

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# 1. Regulatory impact assessment

## Introduction

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- 1.1 Ofcom acts in accordance with Government practice that, where a statutory regulation is made, a Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) must be undertaken. We also comply with our duty under section 7 of the Communications Act 2003 (the “2003 Act”) to undertake impact assessments.
- 1.2 On 11 December 2025 Ofcom published a Statutory Notice entitled [“Notice of proposed regulations”](#) (the Notice). The analysis in this document is a regulatory impact assessment relating to Ofcom’s decision to make the Wireless Telegraphy (Exemption) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2026 (the “Regulations”). It is consistent with the Government practice on RIAs and Ofcom’s duty under the 2003 Act.
- 1.3 Regulatory impact assessments are a valuable way of assessing different options for regulation and showing why the preferred option was chosen. They form part of best practice policy-making and are commonly used by many regulators. In producing the assessment in this document, Ofcom has had regard to such general guidance as it considers appropriate, including Cabinet Office guidance.)

## Proposal, purpose and intended effect

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- 1.4 The Regulations amend the Wireless Telegraphy (Exemption) Regulations 2021 (the “2021 Regulations”) and set out which wireless telegraphy equipment is exempted from the need to be authorised under a Wireless Telegraphy Act 2006 (“WT Act”) licence. The 2021 Regulations were assessed for their regulatory impact at the time of their making.
- 1.5 In the following documents we have consulted and made decisions on the policies behind the changes that the Regulations implement (full impact assessments have been undertaken where relevant and appropriate):
  - a) Our March 2024 [consultation and statement](#) on increasing use of the 27.5-30 GHz band;
  - b) Our August 2024 [consultation](#) to expand spectrum access for fixed links in the 32 GHz band;
  - c) Our February 2025 [statement](#) to increase use of the 27.5-30 GHz and 32 GHz bands;
  - d) Our January 2025 [consultation](#) on updating wireless telegraphy exemptions
  - e) Our October 2025 [statement](#) to update wireless telegraphy exemptions; and
  - f) Our December 2025 [Notice](#) which proposed amendments to the 2021 Regulations.
- 1.6 Therefore, this RIA should be read in conjunction with the above documents.
- 1.7 We consider that our decision regarding licence exemption, 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. We note, in this regard, that the Regulations:
  - a) support the introduction of new and innovative technologies that will be of benefit to consumers and citizens in general; and

- b) expand the use of radio equipment on a licence-exempt basis, which reduces the regulatory and administrative burden on our stakeholders and helps to secure the optimal use of spectrum.

## Consultation responses

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- 1.8 Ofcom consulted on its proposals to make the Regulations from 11 December 2025 until 22 January 2026 and received 7 stakeholder responses. After carefully considering the responses received, we decided to proceed with making of the Regulations, subject to some editorial changes to improve clarity and precision of the drafting, in particular some minor amendments to the wording regarding AMRDs and Coastal Station Radio Training Schools.

## Benefits to citizens and consumers

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- 1.9 We consider there are a number of benefits for consumers and businesses to arise from the decisions we have taken including:
- a) aligning our exemption criteria with other European countries so that manufacturers are able to benefit from economies of scale which should then lead to lower prices and increased choice and range of equipment available for UK citizens and consumers;
  - b) expanding the use of radio equipment on a licence-exempt basis, including to remove a previous requirement to hold a licence, which reduces the regulatory, financial and administrative burden on our stakeholders and helps to secure the optimal use of spectrum; and
  - c) supporting the introduction of new and innovative technologies that will be of benefit to consumers and citizens in general.
- 1.10 We expect that the Regulations for licence exempt equipment will benefit consumers and businesses, as it will encourage innovation and lower costs.

## Costs to Ofcom

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- 1.11 The costs to Ofcom of introducing new and updating existing exemptions, relate mainly to the implementation costs of making the Regulations.
- 1.12 We consider these administrative costs to be small relative to the potential benefits of making the Regulations. Without them the policy changes that Ofcom has consulted on and decided upon would not be given full effect in regulations. This could result in uncertainty and unnecessary costs for stakeholders.

## Cost to business, including small business and the voluntary sector

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- 1.13 Ofcom's decision to make licence exemption regulations can have a range of implications for businesses, including small enterprises and organisations in the voluntary sector. While licence exemption typically removes the need for individual licensing and associated fees, the broader impact on stakeholders warrants careful consideration.
- 1.14 Exemption normally removes direct licence fees and simplifies regulatory obligations, particularly beneficial for SMEs with limited legal or regulatory capacity. Small businesses often lack dedicated regulatory teams, so exemption can significantly reduce overheads and

improve operational agility. By facilitating easier access to spectrum for low-power devices, exemption can encourage innovation and reduce barriers to entry for new services and products.

- 1.15 In this regard we note that licence exemption for Coastal Station Radio Training Schools and Fixed Wireless Access licensees in the 5.8 GHz band will mean that over 1000 current licensees and future operators will no longer be subject to the regulatory burden of obtaining a licence and the associated fees. This translates into an approximate saving for licensees of just over £50,000 per year.
- 1.16 In this case we do not expect that there would be any additional costs to business.

## Conclusion

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- 1.17 Having assessed the impact of making the proposed exemption changes, Ofcom considers that the benefits of making the Regulations justify the associated costs.

## Declaration

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- 1.18 I have read this regulatory impact assessment and I am satisfied that the benefits justify the costs.

Signed:

David Willis  
Group Director of Spectrum Group  
For and by the authority of the Office of Communications  
Date: 8 April 2026

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