



Rules for telco deployments

Get to know the rules on new mobile phone base stations

There are Commonwealth laws that allow telecommunications companies (Telcos) to install smaller types of telecommunications equipment, such as cables and antennas, without the need for planning approval from local government. Larger types of installations, such as freestanding towers or poles are subject to local planning laws, including requirements for community consultation.

Telcos are expected to engage with communities in a meaningful and sensitive way about

proposed deployments. Telcos are required to notify landowners and land occupiers if they are planning to undertake upcoming works, advise landowners of their right to object to proposed activities, the available grounds for objection (such as the location of the facility, or the use of the land), the right to have a decision reviewed by the [Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman](#), and the applicable timeframes for lodging objections.

The [Industry Code for Mobile Phone Base Station Deployment](#) (the Deployment Code) sets out processes Telcos should follow when installing equipment not requiring development approval. It is designed to ensure communities are informed before a mobile phone base station is constructed, and that council and community views are taken into account.

Participation in the community consultation process is the appropriate channel to raise concerns about a proposed installation or maintenance activity, including any potential impact on your property and broader visual amenity.

Mobile phone base stations must comply with safe electromagnetic energy (EME) limits and Telcos demonstrate compliance by providing an Environmental EME Report showing the level of RF EME from the base station.

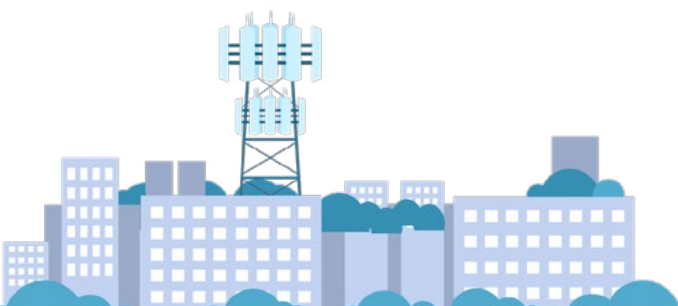
Information about proposed and current mobile phone base stations is available on the Radio Frequency National Site Archive (RFNSA) at www.rfnsa.com.au. You can subscribe to receive information about future installations of telecommunications equipment at a particular site or area.



Small cells

Small cells are installed by Telcos to provide improved coverage and capacity in local areas for both 4G and 5G services. They can be installed on light poles, bus stops, railway stations, and advertising panels. Small cells are preferred over macro cells in local areas because they use less power, have smaller antennas, can be installed inside buildings, and provide coverage of 50 to 200 meters. They may be installed as a network across a number of streets in a local area to give the same coverage as a macro cell.

Local government approval is not required to install and maintain small cells as they are a low-impact facility covered by Commonwealth laws. However, Telcos must comply with the notification requirements set out in the Deployment Code.



How to complain about a proposed mobile phone base station

The location and timing for the deployment of mobile phone base stations are commercial decisions determined by the relevant Telco having identified areas which would provide the greatest coverage for use by the community. The Australian Government does not have a role in these decisions.

If you believe a Telco has not followed the rules in the Deployment Code, you can make a complaint to the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA). You will need to specify the part or parts of the Deployment Code you think have been breached, and provide copies of your complaint to the Telco and the Telco's response.

The ACMA will determine whether or not to investigate the complaint and if the Telco is found

to have breached the code, the ACMA can issue a formal warning or direct the Telco to comply with the Deployment Code in the future.

Complaints about a Telco's compliance with its obligations under the Deployment Code or Telecommunications Act 1997 can be made to the ACMA on 1300 850 115 or by email to info@acma.gov.au.



For more information visit www.eme.gov.au