

The MOA logo consists of the lowercase letters 'moa' in a white, sans-serif font, positioned inside a dark blue, teardrop-shaped graphic that points downwards and to the right.

moa

mobile  
operators  
association

responsible  
network  
development

# Developing Mobile Networks

## Ten Commitments to best siting practice

With 47 million mobile phone users throughout the UK, network operators are committed to providing the radio base stations required to meet customer service demands.

However while many people are benefiting from mobile phone technology, there are still some concerns about potential unknown health risks, particularly relating to radio base stations.

In line with the Stewart Report's recommendation for a precautionary approach to mobile phone technology and health, the mobile phone operators are addressing these concerns directly.

The operators believe communication and consultation are imperative in ensuring that the process of building mobile phone networks is transparent, and that the public is involved and informed.

The Ten Commitments to best siting practice are the operators' means of making sure that these goals are achieved.



# What are the Ten Commitments?

The operators are implementing ten best siting practice commitments to:

- 1 develop, with other stakeholders, clear standards and procedures to deliver significantly improved consultation with local communities
- 2 participate in obligatory pre-rollout and pre-application consultation with local planning authorities
- 3 publish clear, transparent and accountable criteria and cross-industry agreement on site sharing, against which progress will be published regularly
- 4 establish professional development workshops on technological developments within telecommunications for local authority officers and elected members
- 5 deliver, with the Government, a database of information available to the public on radio base stations
- 6 assess all radio base stations for international (ICNIRP) compliance for public exposure, and produce a programme for ICNIRP compliance for all radio base stations as recommended by the Independent Expert Group on Mobile Phones
- 7 provide, as part of planning applications for radio base stations, a certification of compliance with ICNIRP public exposure guidelines
- 8 provide specific staff resources to respond to complaints and enquiries about radio base stations, within ten working days
- 9 begin financially supporting the Government's independent scientific research programme on mobile communications health issues
- 10 develop standard supporting documentation for all planning submissions whether full planning or prior approval



# What is the aim of the Ten Commitments?

The second and third generation mobile phone operators - 3, O2, Orange, T Mobile and Vodafone - are implementing the Ten Commitments to improve transparency of the process of building mobile phone networks, provide more information to the public and local authorities, and increase the role of the public in the siting of radio base stations.

The Ten Commitments to best siting practice were launched by the operators in 2001 to supplement Government planning regulations, in an effort to strengthen links with the community through open dialogue. They were developed in consultation with other stakeholders and have received support from the Local Government Association and activist groups such as Mast Action UK.

The operators believe this combination of current planning laws and the implementation of the Ten Commitments is the best way to address community concerns about radio base station siting.

At the heart of the Ten Commitments is the aim to ensure that a proper balance is struck between access to highly popular mobile services in the UK, and a need for greater environmental and social responsibility in building the networks which support those services.

"The balance of evidence indicates that there is no general risk to the health of people living near base stations, on the basis that exposures are expected to be small fractions of guidelines"

Stewart Report  
May 2000



"None of the recent reviews have concluded that exposure to RF fields from mobile phones or their base stations causes any adverse health consequence."

World Health Organisation,  
Fact Sheet 193,  
June 2000



## What does this mean on a practical level?

The operators are implementing the Ten Commitments in a number of ways. A programme of stakeholder roundtables has been initiated, the mobile industry is funding half the Government's £7 million independent research into mobiles and health, and the method of complaints and enquiries handling by operators has been improved.

Consultation with key local government and community stakeholders is being implemented, using specially-designed cross-industry criteria to determine the amount and type of public consultation that is required for any proposed radio base station site. This public consultation is undertaken by the operator in addition to that required to be carried out by the local authority. In addition, once a year each operator will share its network building plans for the forthcoming twelve months with local authorities.

Operators are conducting forums and seminars throughout the UK to ensure planners and local councillors are aware of the current planning regulations concerning radio base stations, and are aware of the rights of both the local community and the operators in the issue of radio base station siting.

### Further Information

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