



NEW ZEALAND TELECOMMUNICATIONS FORUM

Engagement Guidelines for Installing or Upgrading Wireless Telecommunications Facilities

October 2026

Purpose

These Guidelines set out a process for engaging with occupiers of neighbouring properties in residential areas when a Wireless Network Operator is installing a new Wireless Telecommunications Facility or making a significant upgrade to an existing facility.

Defined terms

Network Operator has the meaning given to it in section 5 of the Telecommunications Act 2001.

New Facility means a Wireless Telecommunications Facility at a location where one does not already exist and can include free-standing structures and those located on buildings, light poles or other similar structures.

Primary Residential Purposes means that a property or group of properties is zoned and occupied for residential use.

Significant Upgrade means a substantial physical change to an existing Wireless Telecommunications Facility, such as adding multiple new antennas, poles, cabinets, or similar equipment, including for the purpose of co-location. It does not include routine maintenance or minor works.

TCF means the New Zealand Telecommunications Forum Incorporated.

Telecommunications means the conveyance by electromagnetic means from one device to another of any sign, signal, impulse, writing, image, sound, instruction, information, or intelligence of any nature, whether encrypted or not, but excluding broadcasting.

Wireless Network means an end-to-end telecommunications network made up in part of multiple Wireless Telecommunications Facilities.

Wireless Network Operator means the legal entity that owns, controls, or operates a Wireless Network or part of a network.

Wireless Telecommunications Facility means an antenna, cabinet, pole, structure, or related equipment used to provide wireless telecommunications services.

Working Day has the same meaning as in the Planning Act 2026.

Who the guidelines apply to

The Guidelines apply to TCF members that are Wireless Network Operators and are voluntary. Members may choose to undertake further engagement in line with their community engagement policies and processes.

When the guidelines apply

The Guidelines apply when:

- the work is for a New Facility or a Significant Upgrade; and
- the area is zoned and occupied for Primary Residential Purposes; and
- there are dwellings or other properties immediately adjacent to a proposed or chosen location.

Engagement process

Overview

The purpose of the engagement process is to inform and provide timely information to occupiers of neighbouring properties about a proposed New Facility or Significant Upgrade. If the Guidelines apply, the Wireless Network Operator should, as far as is reasonably possible, provide written information to the occupiers about the proposed site, expected construction timing, and how to get further information. The process will depend on whether the proposal is for:

- a New Facility (where there may be a two-stage process), or
- a Significant Upgrade to an existing facility (where there is a one-stage process).

Engagement under these Guidelines does not give a person a right to require the Wireless Network Operator to change, delay, or stop a proposal. However, a Wireless Network Operator may choose to change a proposal after considering feedback, site constraints, planning requirements, or other relevant matters.

The process for new facilities

Engagement for a New Facility may have two stages:

- Stage one: initial engagement about the proposed work and proposed site, and
- Stage two: a pre-construction notice once a site has been chosen.

Stage one: notice of proposal to build a New Facility

Before lodging a resource consent application, or applying for a certificate of compliance, or establishing the facility without applying for a certificate of compliance, the Wireless Network Operator should provide information to the occupiers of properties immediately adjacent to the proposed location.

The information provided should include:

- the general nature of the works
- any plans
- where the facility would be located
- why the location has been chosen
- the process used to choose the location

- the planning approval being sought and confirmation the facility will comply with applicable regulations
- who to contact with any questions
- where to obtain further information about telecommunications facilities.

Stage two: engagement before construction starts

Once a site has been confirmed, and at least 10 working days before construction starts, the Wireless Network Operator should provide information to the occupiers of properties immediately adjacent to the chosen location.

The information provided should include:

- any updated plans
- confirmation of the location
- the expected timing for construction to start and finish
- who to contact with any questions
- where to obtain further information about telecommunications facilities.

If the first stage of engagement took place more than 12 months before the proposed construction start date, the Wireless Network Operator should repeat the relevant engagement before construction starts. This helps ensure that new occupiers are informed.

The process for significant upgrades

Engagement for a Significant Upgrade to an existing Wireless Telecommunications Facility has a one stage process. At least 10 working days before construction starts, the Wireless Network Operator should provide information to the occupiers of properties immediately adjacent to the existing site.

The information provided should include:

- why the significant upgrade is needed at that site
- the general nature of the works
- the expected timing for construction to start and finish
- any plans
- the planning approval being sought and confirmation the facility will comply with applicable regulations
- who to contact with any questions
- where to obtain further information about telecommunications facilities.

Proximity

Wireless Network Operators must evaluate the location or proposed location of the Wireless Telecommunications Facility to determine whether it is immediately adjacent to a neighbouring property.

How information may be provided

Information required under these Guidelines may be provided by post, email, direct delivery, or another method that is reasonable in the circumstances that is likely to bring the information to the attention of the intended recipient. A Wireless Network Operator may use more than one method where appropriate.

Contact details

Wireless Network Operators should make contact details available for people who have questions about New Facilities or Significant Upgrades.

At a minimum, Wireless Network Operators should provide an email address for enquiries. They may also provide a phone number, website information, or links to recognised information about Wireless Telecommunications Facilities and radiofrequency fields.

Wireless Network Operators should ensure that enquiries are directed to staff or representatives who can respond to questions about the proposal, the location, the construction process, and the relevant planning process.

Reviewing the guidelines

The TCF will review the Guidelines every five years. Members can submit a proposal for review at any time.