



Consultation Response

Electronic Communications Code: Proposed amendments to Paragraph 20 and 33 Template Notices

Response by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS).



Introduction

The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) is pleased to respond to this consultation by OFCOM. Please feel free to publish any or all of this response as OFCOM judges necessary, there is no private information contained within it.

Established in 1868, RICS is the largest organisation of its kind for professionals in property, construction, land, and related environmental issues, setting and upholding professional standards for 125,000 qualified professionals and over 10,000 firms. RICS regulates both its individual qualified professionals and those firms that have registered for regulation by RICS.

Over 80,000 of our qualified professionals work in the UK, where our goal is to deliver a healthy and vibrant property and land sector as a key pillar of a thriving economy while addressing the need for the creation of green, safe communities.

We are not a trade body; we do not represent any sectional interest, and under the terms of our Royal Charter the advice and leadership we offer is always in the public interest.

RICS role in telecoms

RICS welcomes the opportunity to respond to the consultation on proposed amendments to Paragraph 20 and 33 Template Notices under the Electronic Communications Code.

RICS recognises the criticality of telecoms to the UK's national infrastructure and our members work in varied roles across this complex and dynamic sector. As a professional body for those working in the built and natural environment, RICS takes an active role in addressing the challenges we face. RICS is a participant of the UN Global Compact, the world's largest corporate sustainability initiative and we are committed to supporting delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within our sector.

RICS supports this sector in a number of ways, including Dispute Resolution Services, designed to reduce the time and expense of telecoms disputes, through conferences which help set the industry agenda, and through the continuous professional development of our members, all of which help us deliver confidence in the market.

Consultation response

Do you have any comments on the proposed changes to the template notice set out in Annex 1?

No.

Do you have any comments on the proposed changes to the template notice set out in Annex 2?

No.

Do you have any comments on the proposed changes to the template notice set out in Annex 3?

No.

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We, the RICS, are familiar with ADR. The RICS Dispute Resolution Service (DRS) is the world's oldest and largest provider of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) services in the land, property and construction industries. Over the last four decades, DRS has appointed dispute resolvers in nearly a quarter of a million cases. Internationally, DRS resolves around \$2 billion US dollars' worth of disputes every year – keeping these cases out of the courts. In 2022 we started offering a tailored ADR service for telecommunication disputes (The Telecoms Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Service ([rics.org](https://www.rics.org))). We hope and expect that this service will be one that many in the industry will choose to use, to comply with s.69 of the Product Security and Telecommunication Infrastructure Act.

As an organisation involved in this service provision, we are aware that many potential protagonists are not familiar with the ADR process, its costs or consequences. We believe more needs to be done to support parties in their knowledge of ADR. We note that, as part of the HS2 Project, the Department of Transport provided a paper explaining what ADR is and its potential benefits (a copy is attached to the covering e-mail for convenience). We consider that a similar paper, published as part of OFCOM's support for this legislation and referred to in the notes to the Template Notices, would make a significant difference to the use and uptake of the ADR Process.

As part of our commitment to the ADR process, we offer support in the drafting of a brochure similar to that prepared by the DoT for telecommunication disputes stemming from the Code.