



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

The Welsh Local Government Association
Local Planning Authorities in Wales
Federation of the Electronics Industry
Mobile Phone Operators
Business Wales

Eich cyf . Your ref
Ein cyf . Our ref

31 January 2003

Dear Sir/Madam

MOBILE PHONE OPERATORS' 10 COMMITMENTS

In line with the Report of the Independent Expert Group on Mobile Phones' (the Stewart Report) recommendation for a precautionary approach to mobile phone technology, the Federation of the Electronics Industry (FEI), on behalf of the mobile phone operators, undertook to implement in 2001 ten best siting practice commitments.

On 24 May 2002, we wrote to individual local planning authorities and the FEI seeking views on progress being made by the mobile phone operators in relation to the following commitments:

- a. securing improved consultation (at pre-application and application stages) with local communities;
- b. participating in pre-roll out and pre-application consultation with the authority;

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- c. achieving mast/site sharing (where deemed appropriate);
- d. establishment of development workshops;
- e. provision of certificates of compliance with ICNIRP guidelines; and
- f. submission of standard supporting documentation for all applications.

Twelve of the 25 local planning authorities replied and attached are summaries of their, and the FEI's, responses.

However, in the meantime, the FEI has appointed an auditing firm to undertake an "Implementation Review of the Ten Commitments. The main emphasis of the review will be on the site acquisition process for mobile base stations but it will include a high level summary on progress regarding all 10 commitments. The auditors will be responsible for forming an **independent opinion** on whether the operators have made demonstrable progress in implementing the commitments. The report will also advise on "the minimum standards needed for any future assurance carried out within each operators' business.

It is difficult to arrive at any firm conclusions as to the extent to which these particular commitments are being progressed by the industry. This is because:

- a. there was a relatively low response rate;
- b. the responses to the majority of the commitments were very mixed, particularly as regards those relevant to consultation with authorities and communities, and mast/site sharing; and
- c. there has been a relatively short period since the launch of the commitments.

The FEI say that the independent review is scheduled to be completed by the end of this month and we hope that the findings will give a much clearer picture as to progress being made by the operators. We will continue to monitor the position particularly in the light of the results of this audit.

Yours faithfully

LINDSAY J ROBERTS
Planning Division