

ELECTRIC AND MAGNETIC FIELDS

Background

As a licensed electricity undertaker, GTC designs, constructs and maintains its electrical infrastructure in compliance with the legal requirements of the Electricity, Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations 2002. In order to satisfy these requirements and other industry best practice recommendations, GTC's equipment is procured and installed inline with British and European Standards, Electricity Supply Industry (ESI) guidance and technical specifications produced by the Energy Networks Association (ENA).

In common with ENA guidance, GTC directs all enquiries relating to Electric and Magnetic Fields to two specific websites, from which relevant documents can be downloaded providing information on the best practice design for electrical infrastructure, the design philosophy adopted by GTC for all of its infrastructure:-

- <http://www.energynetworks.org/electricity/she/emfs.html>
- <http://www.emfs.info/policy/sage/>

On the ENA website a document entitled "Electric and Magnetic Fields the Facts", is available for download, this document provides the electricity supply industry perspective on these topics and which sets out best practice.

On the Stakeholder Advisory Group on extremely low frequency electromagnetic fields (SAGE) website, both of their "Phase 1 and 2 Interim Assessments" are available for download. In order to direct you to the more appropriate of the two documents, the "Phase 2 Interim Assessment" covers distribution networks of the type owned and operated by GTC.

The recommendations contained within this document relating to distribution substations are part of GTC's design criteria and as GTC does not construct, own or indeed operate any overhead lines, these recommendations are therefore not included in GTC's design standards.

UK Planning Policies

The issue of Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMFs) as it relates to planning policy is one where Central Government has set clear national guidelines. The policy sets out what measures are deemed appropriate and what measures are not deemed appropriate. Given that clear national policy exists, local planning authorities are required to operate within this policy; it is not an option for them to set local policies that contradict national policy.

National policy is set, on the advice of the relevant independent scientific authorities (Public Health England and its predecessors), to provide an appropriate level of protection to the public. There is no need for a local planning authority to set its own policies to protect the public, because the public are already protected through the national policy.

The national EMF policy as it applies to planning is set out in four core documents:

- Written Ministerial Statement of 2009 ¹ and accompanying document ² (issued jointly by Department of Health, Department for Communities and Local Government, and Department of Energy and Climate Change)

This sets the overall principles of EMF policy, and the application of that policy to overhead lines.

- Government response to the SAGE Second Interim Assessment, 2011 ³ (issued jointly by Department of Health, Department for Communities and Local Government, and Department of Energy and Climate Change)

This extended the Written Ministerial Statement of 2009 to give the application of the policy to distribution equipment including substations.

- Code of Practice on Compliance ⁴

As GTC follows industry best practice which in turn complies with national policies, GTC is of the opinion that infrastructure constructed, installed and maintained by GTC, meets the relevant planning policy requirements.

Requests for Further Information

Further enquiries should be submitted to:-

EMFenquiries@gtc-uk.co.uk

or

Electricity Network Operations Manager
GTC
Energy House
Woolpit Business Park
Woolpit
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk
IP30 9UP

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<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm091016/wmstext/91016m0001.htm>

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http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130107105354/http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_107124

³

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/215380/dh_130702.pdf

⁴

<http://www.emfs.info/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/PowerlinesDemonstratingcomplianceVCoP2012resaved.pdf>