



Let's Talk Towers



Radiocommunications in Canada

Canada

Radiocommunications - the Invisible Link

Every day, millions of Canadians connect via the electronic radiocommunication highway. Radiocommunication links the country, providing radio and television broadcasts, radiotelephone service, emergency information, data exchange and a variety of other services.

Canadians have access to a world class radiocommunication infrastructure and are quick to realize the benefits that new wireless services can provide. At the same time, improved access to global communication networks offers potential social and economic benefits for all Canadians. The challenge is to accommodate growth while respecting community concerns.

Role of Industry Canada

Industry Canada is responsible for regulating radiocommunication in Canada and for authorizing the location of radiocommunication facilities. The Department believes that dialogue between all involved parties is essential to the orderly introduction of radiocommunication services into a community.

The Department has developed this pamphlet to address commonly expressed concerns regarding the construction of radiocommunication antenna towers and related facilities. This pamphlet outlines requirements and procedures for:

- establishing new towers and facilities or modifications to existing ones
- land-use authority consultation
- aeronautical safety
- radiofrequency field emissions
- the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*

1. Requirements for Antenna Structures and Radiocommunication Facilities

Proponents for new or modified structures must meet the following requirements:

- Where a significant antenna structure or modification is proposed, the proponent is required to consult with the land-use authority.

- Where applicable, antenna structures must comply with Transport Canada's painting and lighting requirements for aeronautical safety.
- Radiocommunication facilities must be installed and operated in a manner that complies with Health Canada's limits of exposure to radiofrequency fields.
- Where Industry Canada authorizes a specific site for a radiocommunication facility, an environmental assessment may be required in order to comply with the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*.

2. Land-use Authority Consultation

What are the issues?

Industry Canada recognizes that the local community should have an opportunity to influence the location of a radiocommunication tower. As a result, the Department requires proponents of significant antenna structures to consult with land-use authorities about their proposals.

Industry Canada encourages land-use authorities to participate in the consultation process, to bring forward local concerns, and to work on behalf of their community to arrive at an equitable solution.

Industry Canada expects that all involved parties will examine the proposal, consider each other's concerns and attempt to develop a solution that does not unduly restrict the location of the proposed radiocommunication facility. This consultation process is designed to resolve community concerns at the local level.

The participation of land-use authorities in the consultation process does not transfer any federal decision-making authority, nor does it confer a right of veto in the location of the radiocommunication facility.

Role of Participants in the Consultation

The proponent and the land-use authority share the responsibility for finding a mutually acceptable arrangement.

Land-use Authority

Local land-use officials represent the community in discussions with the radio station proponent. Issues relating to the proposal may be raised, discussed and dealt with through formal presentations, public meetings and/or direct representation from citizens.

Industry Canada expects the land-use authority to make its views known to a proponent within 60 days of receiving a proposal. All aspects of the consultation should be completed within 120 days of receiving a proposal.

The Proponent of the Radiocommunication System

Anyone proposing the installation or modification of a significant antenna structure is required to consult on their plans for the proposed facility with the appropriate land-use authorities. The proponent of a radiocommunication system is expected to work with these authorities to examine the proposal, consider local concerns and when needed, attempt to arrive at alternative solutions. The proponent should be prepared to outline for Industry Canada the details of the consultation.

If a proponent considers that the proposed installation or modification of the antenna structure is not significant and chooses not to consult with local authorities, then the proponent must accept any consequences of this decision.

Decision-making Process

Industry Canada has the authority, under the *Radiocommunication Act*, to approve the location of radiocommunication facilities.

The consultation process is designed to allow all concerned parties to make their views known. If the proponent for a radiocommunication facility and the land-use authority cannot reach an agreement, Industry Canada will decide as to what action needs to be taken based on the information provided by the proponent and the land-use authority.

3. Aeronautical Safety

Antenna towers are an important consideration in air navigation. Painting and lighting requirements are set by Transport Canada to ensure aeronautical safety.

4. Radiofrequency Field Emissions

Industry Canada requires all radiocommunication facilities to be installed and operated according to the safety guidelines established by Health Canada's Radiation Protection Bureau in its publication, *Limits of Exposure to Radiofrequency Fields at Frequencies from 10 kHz - 300 GHz*. This document is also known as Safety Code 6.

5. The Canadian Environmental Assessment Act

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Act requires Industry Canada to consider environmental concerns when reviewing an application for a radiocommunication facility at a specific site. Most radiocommunication towers have no significant effect on the environment and are excluded from environmental assessment under the authority of the CEEA: *Exclusion List Regulations*. However, the proponent must submit an attestation so that this can be confirmed. The Department reviews the attestation and any other information it considers pertinent to determine whether an environmental assessment is required.

Further Information

For further information on Industry Canada's procedures for the location of radiocommunication antenna towers, please contact the Industry Canada - Spectrum Management office nearest you or visit our Internet site at:

<http://strategis.ic.gc.ca>.

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Services Canada 1997

Catalogue No.: C2-320/1997

ISBN: 0-662-63039-4

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