

Submission on the Draft National Environmental Standards for Telecommunications Facilities 2015

TO	Council
FROM	Andrew Wharton - Senior Policy Planner
DATE	24 March 2015
SUBJECT	Submission on the National Environmental Standard for Telecommunications Facilities

1 Purpose of Report

The government is amending the National Environmental Standards for Telecommunications Facilities (NESTF), and is calling for submissions before 17 April 2015.

2 Background

National Environmental Standards (NES) set national rules and standards about resource management topics or issues. They overrule any district plan or regional plan rules, unless the NES states otherwise. NESTF (2008) provides national consistency for the placement of low-impact telecommunications infrastructure in road reserves, and sets a limit for human exposure to radio-frequency fields for all telecommunications infrastructure.

The 2015 NESTF revision would expand the range of telecommunications facilities permitted nationally, but would add some areas where district plan rules could still apply. A discussion document is posted at: <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/rma/rma-legislative-tools/national-environmental-standards/nes-telecommunication-facilities-1>.

3 Issue

Staff do not have any concerns with the amended NESTF rules and standards about telecommunication facilities. However staff would like to ask for clarity about when the district plan rules can apply as well as the NESTF.

4 Discussion

The NESTF should allow district plan provisions to apply to telecommunication facilities in the following areas:

- Areas subject to natural hazard risk
- Historic heritage: buildings, archaeological sites, character areas, sites of significance to Maori, etc.
- Maximum building height and other restrictions near airfields to protect safe airfield operations and airfield expansion.
- Outstanding natural features and landscapes
- High and outstanding natural character.

5 Suggested Resolution(s)

That the Council:

1. Receives the report.
2. Directs staff to lodge a submission on the NESTF that supports district plan provisions

applying to telecommunication facilities within areas of natural hazards, outstanding landscapes, natural character, historic heritage and airfield height restrictions.