

20 July 2018

Dear Sir/Madam

Mobile Phone Base Station Deployment Code (DR C564:2018)

LGAT welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the **Mobile Phone Base Station Deployment Code (DR C564:2018)**.

The Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT) is the representative body of Local Government in Tasmania. Established in 1911, the LGAT is incorporated under the *Local Government Act 1993*, with membership comprising all 29 Tasmanian councils.

Our functions being:

- (a) to protect and represent the interests and rights of councils in Tasmania;
- (b) to promote an efficient and effective system of local government in Tasmania; and
- (c) to provide services to member councils, councilors and employees of councils.

As a general response to the issue of planning for and installing Mobile Phone Infrastructure, Tasmanian councils have noted a lack of input into the location of telecommunications towers and other similar infrastructure. Councils believe there needs to be improved consultation with the local council prior to final site determination, and this should apply to all new sites, whether they require a development application or not.

LGAT acknowledges that the Mobile Phone Base Station Deployment Industry Code is designed to:

- allow the community and councils to have greater participation in decisions made by Carriers when deploying mobile phone base stations; and
- provide greater transparency to local community and councils when a Carrier is planning, selecting sites for, installing and operating Mobile Phone Radiocommunications Infrastructure.

However, the Code typically requires Carriers to notify councils and the community of their site selection and the reasons why, this is notification, not engagement. The rationale for a focus on notification is well understood, however in many instances a number of sites may be technically feasible and in circumstances where there are sensitive sites it can only be through early engagement with the local council that these concerns can be understood and potentially then accommodated in the design process.

It is noted that new site selection (clause 4.1.4 (f)) requires the Carrier to have regard to 'the outcomes of consultation processes with Councils and Interested and Affected Parties as set out in clause 6.7', while the concept is strongly supported, the Code does not currently contain a clause 6.7.

LGAT understands that a further update on developments in this area is expected to be provided by the Federal Government later this year, with the Federal Government's Department of Communications indicating it will meet with Australian Local Government Association in the near future and discuss how best to consult further with Local Government.

Early engagement with councils is essential with the planning and development of any infrastructure, and particularly telecommunications, as it assists the Carrier to identify appropriate sites and sensitive communities; and avoids unnecessary conflict.

If you have any questions or would like further information, please do not hesitate to contact Penny Finlay via email: penny.finlay@lgat.tas.gov.au or via phone on (03) 6233 5967.

Yours sincerely



Dion Lester
POLICY DIRECTOR