

EMC Advice Leaflet EMC 18

Guide for reporting harmful interference to Ofcom

This guide outlines the steps to report harmful interference to Ofcom for investigation. Ofcom does not charge for this service, except in specific cases as outlined below. The later section in this guide provides an example of the type of wording to use when contacting Ofcom to request an investigation. Once Ofcom responds, you will need to agree some basic terms and conditions, which will include accepting any charges for their services as detailed below.

We recommend that you email your report to Ofcom using the following address:
interference.report@ofcom.org.uk

Your report should be written in your own words, but keep it concise and focused on the harmful interference itself. Avoid using amateur radio jargon, acronyms, or unnecessary technical terms. Refer only to interference on frequencies within the amateur radio allocations and use specific frequencies rather than frequency bands. For example, use "the 14 MHz allocation" rather than "the 20m band."

The example wording below follows the definition of harmful interference as set out in the **Wireless Telegraphy Act 2006** Section 115 (4) and (5) ¹ It also describes the interference as an "electromagnetic disturbance" rather than using terms like "QRM," "noise," or "unwanted transmissions," as these may not meet the legal definition of "harmful interference." In the event of an on-site investigation visit, Ofcom will expect you to demonstrate that the interference meets the legal definition.

It is important not to speculate about the source of the interference unless you are certain of its origin. For instance, you may be able to identify the interference source if it's clearly linked to something like an arcing insulator on a power line. However, avoid guessing or making assumptions without clear evidence.

Misconceptions About Charges for Interference Investigations

There is a common misconception that Ofcom charges for investigating interference. In fact, Ofcom will only charge for an investigation if the source of the interference is found to be on your premises, under your control, or due to a fault in your own receiving system. Therefore, it is essential to rule out these possibilities before contacting Ofcom.

To eliminate the possibility of the interference originating from within your home, try turning off all household power and battery-powered devices. This should help you confirm whether the source of

¹ See paragraphs (4) and (5) of section 115 in the following reference regarding the definition of "harmful" interference

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/36/section/115>

the interference is internal. Additionally, use a second receiver (ideally a different model) to ensure that the interference is not a receiver artifact or appears due to a fault in your own equipment.

EMF Compliance Record

If Ofcom visits to investigate the interference, they will likely ask to see your **Electromagnetic Field (EMF) compliance record**. Make sure this record is up-to-date and available for review before their visit.

Example Text for Submitting Your Report to Ofcom

The following text provides an example of how you might structure your report to Ofcom. However, please use this as a template and ensure that your report is written in your own words.

Full name and address

Callsign and licence number

Day time telephone number

I wish to request an investigation into ongoing harmful interference as defined in Section 115 (4) (5) of the Wireless Telegraphy Act 2006. This harmful interference is having a severe detrimental impact on reception of all but the very strongest signals from other amateur radio stations across the entire HF amateur radio allocations from 3.5MHz to 29MHz.

It is not always present but I can keep a log of when it has been present and forward it to you.

The harmful interference takes the form of a wide band electromagnetic disturbance, with discernible peaks every 40KHz I have taken all practicable measures to improve the immunity of my station to harmful interference and have both installed and adjusted the controls of my transceiver as per the manufacturer's instructions. I have conducted tests by switching off the entire mains electricity supply to my property and removing batteries from equipment not connected to the mains electricity supply but the harmful interference remains present.

Despite my best efforts, I have been unable to trace the source of this harmful interference myself using my own portable equipment.

I have attached photographs showing the harmful interference as received by my station equipment.

Yours sincerely

Name here