

POLICY NOTE

THE NON-DOMESTIC RATES (TELECOMMUNICATION INSTALLATIONS) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2016

SSI 2016/122

The above instrument is made in exercise of the powers conferred by section 153 of the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994. The instrument is subject to the negative resolution procedure.

Purpose

The purpose of these Regulations is to provide for 100% non-domestic rates relief from 1 April 2016 up to 31 March 2021 for new mobile telecommunication masts located in three eligible pilot areas to incentivise mobile operators to build masts and/or improve the viability of mobile operators' business case to provide mobile services in those areas. Two of these eligible areas are located in Arran and the third in Cairngorm and each is set out by a delineated area in a reference map.

Policy Objective

Achieving improved mobile coverage in Scotland is an integral element of the Scottish Government's wider vision of achieving world class digital connectivity across Scotland by 2020. The non-domestic rates relief is part of the Scottish Government's commitment to working in collaboration with the mobile industry to set the right conditions to incentivise infrastructure investment in non-commercial areas (so-called "notspots"). The Scottish Government's expectation is that new mobile masts built in the eligible areas will provide mobile services (2G/3G/4G) to notspots in (and potentially around) the eligible area. If this pilot is successful, the Scottish Government will consider widening the relief to include other areas in Scotland.

Consultation

There is no statutory obligation to consult on these Regulations.

Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment

BRIA's are prepared where proposals introduce additional burdens or costs on business or the third sector. As this SSI will reduce the rates burden on qualifying businesses, no BRIA is required.

Financial Effect

The decrease in the amount of non-domestic rates payable by businesses is in line with the policy objective as outlined above.

Local Government Division
February 2016