



Welcome to the *Wireless Communications Health Policy Update* (HPU), a joint publication of the Mobile Manufacturers Forum and the GSM Association. HPU provides updates on and links to recent developments concerning radiofrequency (RF) and wireless communications.

GLOBAL

The International Telecommunications Union has issued a pre-publication version of [Recommendation K.61](#): Guidance to measurement and numerical prediction of electromagnetic fields for compliance with human exposure limits for telecommunication installations that was approved in February 2008. This Recommendation helps telecommunication operators to verify compliance with exposure standards promulgated by local or national authorities.

AUSTRALIA

The [Australian Centre for RF Bioeffects Research](#) (ACRBR) has responded to claims by Canberra based neurosurgeon Dr Vini Khurana that there is compelling evidence of a link between mobile phone use and brain tumours. The Centre's [position statement](#) says: "...the review is inexpert and incomplete, containing a number of factual errors. In particular, Khurana fails to consider the relative scientific quality of different studies. This produces an unbalanced analysis of the literature, which is also selective in support of the author's claims".

CANADA

The [Board of Health and Toronto City Council](#) in July endorsed a Prudent Avoidance Policy with the aim that public exposure to RF from mobile communication masts is 100 times below the current Health Canada exposure standard (similar to ICNIRP levels). They are also recommending that parents limit the cellphone use of their children but [Health Canada](#) said [in response](#) that science does not show that cellphones are unsafe.

EUROPE

The European Commission responded to three questions on the health risks associated with exposure to electromagnetic fields. Mr Markos Kyprianou, the commissioner responsible for health and consumer protection, responded to all three questions ([BioInitiative report](#), [children and mobile phone use](#) and [Wi-Fi in schools](#)) concluding: "...no health effect has been consistently demonstrated at exposure levels below the limits of ICNIRP (International Committee on Non Ionising Radiation Protection) established in 1998".

A report by [ALDE MEP Mrs Frédérique Ries](#) (MR, Belgium) was adopted unanimously by the European Parliament Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety. This [report](#) on the mid-term review of the European Environment and Health Action Plan 2004-2010, pointed out that the precautionary principle should remain the cornerstone of the EU's policies on environmental health. It includes a two points with reference to EMF.

In October last year the EMF-NET Fast Response Team produced comments on the BioInitiative Working Group Report (BioInitiative Report) for the European Commission. The response, available from the [GSM Association](#), states: "There is a lack of balance in the report; no mention is made in fact of reports that do not concur with authors' statements and conclusions. The results and conclusions are very different from those of recent national and international reviews on this topic."

On 26 April 2008 the new [EMF Workers Directive](#) was published in the Official Journal of the European Union. The primary purpose of the directive is to change the implementation date to April 2012. This change was made to address concerns about its application to MRI.

DIARY NOTES

Open Questions in the Research on Biological and Health Effects of Low-Intensity RF-EMF

Stuttgart, Germany
17-19 November 2008

http://www.fgf.de/english/research_projects/workshops.html

The 25th Progress In Electromagnetics Research Symposium (PIERS) for 2009

Beijing, China
23 -27 March 2009

<http://piers.mit.edu/piers2k9Beijing/>



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AUSTRIA

Following a hearing before the Council for Scientific Ethics of the [Medical University of Vienna](#), Dr. Hugo Rüdiger, the former Head of the Division of Occupational Medicine and retired as Emeritus Professor in 2007, has withdrawn at least one of two disputed publications regarding the alleged DNA damaging effect of mobile phone radiation.

FRANCE

The French agency for responsible for research and safety for the prevention of accident and disease in the workplace (L'INRS) has [issued guidance](#) on EMF exposures at work. In the absence of specific French legislation, the INRS recommends following the provisions of European Directive 2004/40/EC on occupational EMF exposures.



GERMANY

The Federal Ministry for the Environment (BMU) and the Federal Office for Radiation Protection (BfS) have [jointly stated](#) that according to current knowledge there is no evidence of health risk from mobile phones but potential risks can not be completely excluded. Therefore, BMU and BfS recommend precaution by minimising RF exposures.

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The [Federal Office for Radiation Protection](#) (BfS) has produced a summary of comments (in German) that addresses several key studies and controversial research topics on electromagnetic fields.

IRELAND

In April 2008, the [Commission for Communications Regulation](#) conducted emission measurements at 10 base station sites throughout the country and [concluded](#) (pdf) that the levels were below the relevant ICNIRP guideline limits for general public exposure.

UK

The [British Medical Association](#) (BMA) in Wales issued a statement in June calling for the rules surrounding the use of mobile phones in Welsh hospitals to be relaxed. It follows extensive testing which showed problems with sensitive medical equipment only occur if handsets are very close to it.

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The [Institute of Engineering and Technology](#) issued a warning for governments and policy makers to consider the impact of health related precautionary measures for low-level electromagnetic fields (EMF), after it found no scientific evidence of health risks. A new [position statement](#) (pdf) released by the institute in May, based upon a review of 829 scientific papers by six of the UK's leading scientists and engineers, found no reason for precautionary measures.

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The British [National Health Service](#) (NHS) has responded to an alarming study which found pregnant women who use mobile phones are more likely to have children with behavioural problems, saying the study suffered several weaknesses. "The question of whether or not mobiles are responsible for behavioural problems in children is not answered by this study... This study doesn't offer convincing



evidence that there is a link between exposure while in the womb or after and neurological performance in children,” the NHS behind the headlines report states.

INDIA

The national [Telecom Commission](#) in June approved the adoption of the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) guidelines in the telecom sector in India regarding basic restrictions and reference levels for limiting EMF exposure. A [statement](#) (pdf) issued by the commission says the guidelines will be incorporated in the import license of mobile sets, issued by the Department of Telecommunications.

ISRAEL

The [Environmental Protection Ministry](#) warned the public in July to put half a meter between themselves and any electrical transformer, particularly cell phone chargers. The ministry found that many people slept with the charging phone right next to their head and said that such a small distance between the charger and one’s body could increase the chances of getting cancer.

JAPAN

The [Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications](#) (MIC) will start its Study Group on Possible Biological Effects of

Electromagnetic Fields to reduce anxiety and improve the safety of devices using radio waves.

NETHERLANDS

The Dutch government has launched a [new website](#) providing information for the public on EMF issues. It has been developed in discussion with all the organisations involved in the subject in the Netherlands.

SWITZERLAND

The Swiss Research Foundation on Mobile Communication (FSM) recently published a [commentary](#) (pdf) by Gregor Dürrenberger, Jürg Fröhlich and Heinz-Gregor Wieser on the INTERPHONE study. It provides a detailed overview on the current status of the published results and discusses the robustness of these results and possible factors influencing them, such as selection bias, recall bias and recall errors.

USA

The director of the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute Dr Ronald Herberman issued a [memo](#) (pdf) in July warning 3,000 faculty staff about the possible health risks associated with cell phone use. The advisory recommends against children using cell phones except in emergencies.



www.gsmworld.com

The GSMA is the global trade association that exists to promote, protect and enhance the interests of GSM mobile operators throughout the world.



Mobile Manufacturers Forum

www.mmfai.org

The MMF is an international association of wireless communications manufacturers established to support scientific research in relation to mobile telephony and health.

About Health Policy Update

Wireless Communications Health Policy Update (HPU) is a joint publication of the Mobile Manufacturers Forum and the GSM Association. Planned for quarterly production, HPU provides updates on and links to recent developments concerning radiofrequency (RF) and wireless communications. If you are aware of any developments that you think should be included in future editions of HPU, please contact us at articles@mmfai.info

Disclaimer

The views expressed in the internet sites that are referred to in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the MMF or GSMA.