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EME UPDATE

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EVIDENCE OF A LINK TO CANCER WOULD HAVE BEEN DETECTED BY NOW SAYS ICNIRP

A review of population studies by the International Commission for Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP), which developed the underlying safety guidelines used by many countries around the world including Australia, says a link with malignant brain cancer and mobile phones should have been detected by now if there was one.

ICNIRP examined the impact of the latency period because it has been widely expressed that it's too soon to see the effect of a cancer risk from mobile phones, which are a relatively new technology.

What is important is how soon the effects might start to be detected by studies and not when the maximum risk might occur, they said.

"However, the important issue is not how long it takes for maximum risk to occur, but how long before detectable risk is present. Even for asbestos, a carcinogen that has a



notoriously long induction period, detectable elevations in risk occur 10 – 14 years after first exposure.

"Furthermore, it has been argued that RF fields cannot plausibly initiate cancer since they do not damage DNA, and that if RF acts at a later stage in carcinogenesis, the effects on tumour occurrence should be relatively rapid," the researchers said.

Mobile phones have been in widespread use for more than 20 years; therefore, some effect from mobile phones would have been detected by now.

Overall, ICNIRP concluded in their review that mobile phone use is not associated with brain cancer for up to 10 years.

Furthermore, even though there are problems with the methodology of some population studies and limited data available, ICNIRP say there is no convincing link beyond ten years with fast-growing brain tumours. However, the induction period for slow-growing tumours is still too short.

"In our opinion, overall the studies published to date do not demonstrate a raised risk within approximately 10 years of use for any tumour of the brain or any other head tumour..." the review concluded.

"The data for long-term phone use of more than 10 years are still sparse, and any increased risk of slow-growing tumours may not have become manifest."

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The ICNIRP review of the available population studies on mobile phone and tumour risk can be found at:

[WEB LINK >](#)

ICNIRP based much of its review on data obtained from the individual national studies that make up the INTERPHONE project, many of which have already been published. Because of the methodological problems that have plagued the INTERPHONE project and other population studies, ICNIRP carefully considered the limitation of this type of research.

POPULATION STUDIES DETAILED BUT BIASED

The researchers said the participant surveys and interviews used in population studies to gather data obtained a large amount of detail, “but at the price of compromised

accuracy and increased potential for recall and reporting bias”. Studies which checked the claims of participants against mobile phone records have shown participants both over and underestimate their exposure and this is highly dependant on how long ago they are asked to recall their mobile phone usage patterns. “Validation studies have shown that healthy individuals have a tendency to overestimate the length of their calls and to underestimate the frequency. This pattern was dependent on the amount of use; heavy users tended to overestimate, whereas light users underestimate their use.

“A validation study including both brain tumour cases and healthy controls found a similar pattern among cases; however, the overestimation by cases increased with increasing time



Lead author
Prof Anders Ahlbom

before interview, which was not seen among controls. The potential differential exposure misclassification in studies using self-reported phone use, especially for more distant time periods, may cause positive bias in estimates of disease risk,” the review concluded. ICNIRP also points out participants might tend to over-report that they used a mobile phone on the same side of their head as their brain tumour was diagnosed if they believe mobile phones caused the tumour.

“If cases believe that mobile phone use may have caused their tumour, they might over-report mobile phone use on the same side as the tumour,” the researchers said.

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HEALTH AUTHORITIES DISAGREE WITH AUSTRALIAN BRAIN SURGEONS

Two health authorities have reviewed Dr Vini Khurana's and Dr Charlie Teo's research paper and disagreed with the conclusions of the Australian neurosurgeons that mobile phone use might be associated with an increased risk of brain tumours.

Health agencies have criticised Dr Khurana's earlier online report because it was not published in a peer-reviewed scientific research journal.

More recently, Dr Khurana joined Dr Teo and controversial Swedish researcher, Dr Lennart Hardell, and others to publish a paper in the science journal *Surgical Neurology*.

[WEB LINK >](#)

The paper concludes that there is adequate evidence from existing population-based studies to



Neurosurgeon Dr Vini Khurana told *Today Tonight* there is evidence of a link between prolonged mobile phone use and brain tumours.

suggest a link between prolonged mobile phone usage and the development of brain tumours on the same side of the head a phone is typically used.

The paper attracted considerable media interest and Dr Khurana appeared on *Today Tonight* and *Lateline*.

Dr Khurana's paper, an analysis of existing research, was reviewed by the UK's Health Protection Agency and it said:

Epidemiological [population] studies of brain tumours have given mixed findings, but these differences are not taken fully into account in the meta-analysis of Khurana et al. If allowance is made for the heterogeneity of the findings, there is little evidence for an association.

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In addition, the Australian Centre for RF Bioeffects Research (ACRBR) recently produced a commentary on the paper and concluded:

The pre-existing data they consider are not synthesised in a meaningful fashion. Many

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of the conclusions made in the paper contradict those made by international expert committees, without providing adequate reasons for rejecting the standard view.

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Drs Khurana and Teo have also claimed they have seen a disturbing trend in young people getting brain cancer in recent data from the USA.

The ACRBR also reject this view saying that:

Given that the use of mobile telephony has increased dramatically since the 1980s, if mobile phones were indeed causing brain tumours then one would expect that brain tumour incidence rates would also be increasing. So far such



Neurosurgeon Dr Charlie Teo on Andrew Denton's *Enough Rope*.

increases in incidence rates have not been found.

Furthermore, the ACRBR say the claim that there is a related increase in recent USA data is misleading because this is based on a relatively small sample which is not consistent with the figures released from the substantially larger International Agency for Research on Cancer's (IARC) *World Cancer Report 2008*.

In relation to brain cancer rates and mobile phone use the report says:

After 1983 and more recently during the period of increasing prevalence of mobile phone users, the incidence has remained relatively stable for both men and women.

The IARC *World Cancer Report* can be downloaded at:

[WEB LINK >](#)

"While doctors, especially brain surgeons, command great respect from the public as a result of their years of study relating to cure and prevention of illness, the mobiles industry relies on the advice of international health authorities who specialise in the identification and cause of disease in the population," AMTA CEO, Chris Althaus, said.

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INTERPHONE WILL NOT PROVIDE SOLID EVIDENCE AUSTRALIAN EXPERTS SAY

A new research paper by the Australian Centre for Radiofrequency Bioeffects Research (ACRBR) says the largest population study looking at mobile phones and brain cancer will not provide clear answers due to the inbuilt limitations of the study.

The comprehensive review, led by Professor Rodney Croft of Swinburne University, examined all the population studies published to date looking at head and neck cancers and found mobile phone users are no more likely than non-users to be diagnosed with brain cancer.

The review includes a section on the upcoming results of the INTERPHONE project, which the authors say will provide the largest and most meticulous epidemiological assessment of mobile phone use and tumours to date. They say it will be useful to consider how the INTERPHONE results might impact the current scientific consensus.



“...even if INTERPHONE unambiguously demonstrated either a strong association or no association, this would not provide sufficient evidence for or against causation. This is because there are limitations with the methodology that leave open alternate explanations,” the authors state. Although there have been individual papers that report associations between mobile phone (MP) use and tumours – particularly with acoustic neuroma, a cancer of the ear nerve, and glioma, a malignant brain cancer – the researchers say these studies are not consistent and on balance do not provide clear evidence of a link.

“The reported associations are in need of replication with methods designed to minimise such bias before they can be treated as more than suggestive,” the researchers said.

“When the epidemiology literature pertaining to MP use and brain and head tumours is considered as a whole, there is no convincing evidence to date of an association. The only possible exception to this is for research that has looked at acoustic neuroma and glioma cases that have used MPs for > 10 years, and on the same side of the head as the tumour. This data indicates a possible association, but it is too premature to conclude that there is an association,” Professor Croft and colleagues concluded.

“Furthermore, while the forthcoming combined INTERPHONE analysis will be able to confirm/refute the majority of the above conclusions, it is still not clear that it will have sufficient power to clarify whether

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there is an association between acoustic neuroma or glioma and ipsilateral MP use for greater than 10 years.”

The ACRBR review can be found at:

[WEB LINK >](#)

More evidence to support their conclusions come from an examination of research on the incident and mortality rates of the tumours studied, Professor Croft and his research team said.

“In the four studies assessing trends over time within populations (Switzerland, New Zealand, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland), no evidence was found of an increase in intracranial tumour incidence or mortality rate that corresponded to the increased use of MPs in these countries (since late 1980s-early 1990s).

“These null findings are supported by the only large-scale retrospective



Professor Rodney Croft of Swinburne University

cohort study and the four hospital-based case-control studies, where an association between MP use and intracranial tumours was not found. This suggests that there is not a strong association between MP use and intracranial tumours, but leaves open the possibility that MPs may result in a small increase of intracranial tumours,” the researchers said.

In explaining the reasoning for their conclusion, the authors provide an analysis of confounding factors that influence the strength and validity of some research studies.

They say methodological issues such as results related to which side of the head participants say they usually used their phone, small numbers in data sets, and recall and other biases associated with surveys and interviews, could all have impacted the results.

“In addition, as discussed in this paper, reported associations with laterality [side of the head] are prone to such significant uncertainty, due to the effect of reporting bias and other systematic biases, that they are unlikely to be of utility unless the laterality comparison results are very stark indeed,” the researchers said.

ACRBR’s review received funding from the GSM Association.

More information about ACRBR can be found at:

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MOBILE INDUSTRY TAKES STEPS TO HELP PROTECT GORILLAS' HABITAT IN CONGO



The Melbourne Zoo has spearheaded a national campaign to raise awareness of the plight of gorillas in the Congo, which they say are threatened by illegal mining of coltan – an ore extracted and refined to make tantalum metal – which is used in modern electronics equipment.

The campaign called “They’re calling on you” collects mobile phones, which are refurbished and sold in other less developed nations. Zoos around Australia will raise money to support the Jane Goodall Institute’s primate conservation work in Africa through the sale of the phones once refurbished.

In publicity for the campaign, the Zoo said that the large turnover in the number of mobile phones sold each year in Australia

exerts pressure on the mining of resources within the Democratic Republic of Congo.

However, the mobile phone industry shares concerns about the plight of gorillas in the Eastern Congo and handset manufacturers take steps to help protect their habitat from destruction.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association (AMTA), Chris Althaus, said handset manufacturers required suppliers of coltan, which is used in some handset capacitors, to verify and certify that it was not obtained from the environmentally-sensitive regions in the Congo.

“The mobile phone industry requires suppliers of coltan to

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expressly declare that they only use legal sources of the mineral and supplies do not come from the region where the endangered gorillas are found in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

“The mobile telecommunications industry condemns the activities of illegal miners in the environmentally-protected regions of the DRC,” he said.

Mr Althaus said the mobile telecommunications industry had taken further steps to help protect the gorillas in the Congo by minimising the use of tantalum in handsets to a bare minimum.

However, he said tantalum was still used in some mobile phone handsets that required superior voice qualities for people, such as those with a hearing impairment.

Mr Althaus said: “Not all capacitors in such a handset use tantalum. For example, in a handset used for people with hearing impairments one or two capacitors out of more than 100 would contain tantalum.

“In such a phone, this equates to less than 0.04g of tantalum, which is about 0.04% of the phone’s weight.”

Also, a United States Geological Survey (USGS) in 2007 says Australia produced more than half of the world’s supply of coltan, which was also mined in Brazil and Canada.

According to USGS, the Democratic Republic of Congo amounted to less than one per cent of the worldwide supply of coltan.

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However, a 2008 UN Security Council report on the DRC includes information from a French agency which says coltan production in the DRC in 2007 was 393 tons which is illegally smuggled through neighbouring countries. If correct this would make Congolese coltan production similar to Australia.

Mr Althaus said: "The mobiles industry recognises that it is difficult to get a clear understanding of the origins of coltan and this is why we have asked our suppliers to verify in writing that they do not source tantalum from the DRC and minimised our use of the capacitors containing tantalum."

He said it was estimated that the mobile telecommunications industry used less than 2% of the yearly worldwide production (not from Africa) of tantalum.



The mobile telecommunications industry condemns the activities of illegal miners in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Tantalum is used in a wide range of products, including computer motherboards, computer disc drives, video camcorders, engine control units, surgical equipment, turbine blades in jet engines and lining chemical reactors.

Mr Althaus said the mobile telecommunications industry is

working with the environmental movement and consumers to explore other measures that could effectively safeguard the gorillas' habitat in the DRC.

MobileMuster, the official recycling scheme of the mobile telecommunications industry, is AMTA's commitment to an environmentally sustainable industry, which minimises the use of resources through product stewardship, including recycling.

It is the only industry-wide program for electronic waste offering free recycling for all mobile phone brands in Australia. It is believed to be the only such scheme in the world.

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LARGEST STUDY ON CANCER RISK 'SUBMITTED FOR PUBLICATION'

The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), the health authority in charge of coordinating the INTERPHONE project, published a statement in May saying the first paper with the final combined results of the project has been submitted to a scientific journal for publication.

The INTERPHONE project is the largest case-control study investigating the risks related to mobile phone use and cancer.

IARC Director Dr Christopher Wild released the statement, in consultation with project partners the Centre for Research in Environmental Epidemiology



IARC Director
Dr Christopher Wild

(CREAL) and the International Union Against Cancer (UICC). "Since January 2009, IARC has taken a new initiative to work with all co-authors to finalize a first manuscript from all collaborating centres on gliomas and meningiomas; this manuscript has been submitted for publication to a scientific journal and is now subject to the normal peer-review process; and work is on-going to prepare subsequent manuscripts for publication," Dr Wild said.

"It is further hoped that the publication process of this first paper should be relatively quick. As soon as a publication date is decided on by the scientific journal, the three partner Institutions, under the stewardship of IARC, will prepare a media statement, under embargo, to summarize the study findings and the methodology used. The usual appropriate media communication channels will then be used, jointly by the three partner Institutions, to publicize the findings," Dr Wild said.

The INTERPHONE statement can be found at:

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION THROWS SUPPORT BEHIND SAFETY STANDARDS

The European Commission has warned member nations against setting stricter safety standards for mobile phone electromagnetic field (EMF) emissions for fear the public may find reason to doubt the science.

The European Commission's *Enterprise & Industry Magazine* published an article in June reporting the current legislation and safety standards for mobile phone emissions provides a high level of health protection.

Acknowledging growing public concern about the issue, the European Commission held a workshop on EMF and health in February where about 180 researchers, policy makers and stakeholders gathered to debate the way forward.

In recognising that current regulation and recommendations

provide a high level of safety and health protection for its citizens, the Commission noted a theme from the workshop that warned against policy makers implementing stricter standards.

"In general, there is a risk that public concern about EMF will be fed by incoherent public policies, a lack of information and a lack of involvement of the public in decisions made on their behalf. This was a key message from the workshop. In particular, where policy-makers set limits more strictly than is called for by scientific evidence, citizens find reason to doubt the science," the Commission said.

The *Enterprise & Industry Magazine* article can be found at:

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The *Enterprise & Industry Magazine*, published by the Commission's Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry, reported the European Union (EU) regularly reviews the scientific research to ensure legislation and recommendations provide a high level of protection and health safety for citizens.

"The European Commission's strategy is based on recommending safety limits of factor 50. In other words, emissions limits are set at one-fiftieth of the lowest levels at which experiments have shown harmful effects. To implement this strategy, the European Commission makes necessary recommendations to EU Member States on a harmonised set of precautionary measures, reviewing them as scientific knowledge develops," the Commission reported.



"Scientific experiments indicate that exposure at levels present in the environment or in the home that stay below recommended limits are not known to be harmful."

The Commission said confidence can be drawn from the fact that mobile phones and base stations have been consistently shown to operate well below the safety standards.

"Handsets sold in the EU operate well below the limits set by current standards. The maximum exposure they produce is, in addition, only achieved in worst-case scenarios (defined as when used at more than 10 km from a base station). So far, only one handset has been found to have breached the standards, and it was voluntarily withdrawn from the market by the manufacturer," the Commission said.

"Meanwhile, the regulation and licensing of base or transmission masts is at the discretion of Member States. Some have introduced more stringent limits for masts than is called for by EU recommendations. Studies have shown that the exposure from such masts is a factor 100-1000 times below recommended maximum levels."

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The Commission said public concern has centred on self-reported symptoms of a variety of health problems, including cancer, leukaemia, and a variety of symptoms generally classified as “electromagnetic hypersensitivity”.

“However, as conference participants stated, the scientific evidence available to date does not suggest that either the use of mobile phones, or proximity to base stations, has any detrimental effect on human health. Still, long-term studies are needed to fill gaps in the research. Since the mass use of mobile phones is a relatively new phenomenon and cancer has a long incubation period, scientists have not had the data needed for such studies,” the Commission said.

The article noted the publication of the EU’s Scientific Committee



on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCENIHR) most recent report, published in February.

After considering the more than 200 new scientific papers published since the 2007 opinion, SCENIHR concluded: “Based on current evidence, the main conclusions remain that radio frequency fields

used in wireless communication technologies are unlikely to lead to an increase in cancer in the human population at large”.

SCENIHR’s 2009 opinion can be found at:

[WEB LINK](#)

The European Commission’s Enterprise and Industry Directorate-General presents its policies and activities in the *Enterprise & Industry Magazine*, which covers issues related to innovation, entrepreneurship, environmental protection, industrial policies and better regulation.

More information about the European Commission’s Enterprise and Industry DG can be found at:

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TEENS DON'T ACCURATELY RECALL MOBILE PHONE USE



An Australian study of year 7 secondary school students in Melbourne has shown that teenagers don't accurately recall their level of mobile phone use. The results have important implications for population studies which often rely on questionnaires to determine each kid's exposure to radio waves from their mobile phone.

The study, conducted as part of a larger study by the Australian Centre for Radiofrequency Bioeffects Research (ACRBR) on more than 300 teens from 20 Melbourne secondary schools, looked at what teenagers could recall in a questionnaire about the number of calls they made and on average how long the calls were

each week. For the 59 selected participants they then compared this with accurate data collected from the modified phones which the participants used.

The research paper can be found at:

[WEB LINK >](#)

The authors concluded that their recall of mobile telephone use was only modestly accurate. The teens studied were better at recalling the number of calls they made each week than the duration of calls – which they tended to overestimate.

“This study supports previous findings in adults that mobile phone

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recall correlates better with number of calls than duration of call," the authors said.

This study has important implications for the major studies involving children which are underway since the use of phones by adolescents has increased in recent years.

Australia researcher, Professor Malcolm Sim, recently announced his involvement in MOBI-Kids – a five-year study which will involve 10 to 24 year olds who have had brain cancer as well as people of a similar age who have not and will recruit participants from Australia, New Zealand, Spain, The Netherlands, France, Germany,

Austria, Italy, Greece, Israel and Canada.

Further information on the Australian arm of the study can be found here:

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"The overall very modest agreement between recalled and validated phone use in this study would argue for caution in the interpretation of results of epidemiological studies investigating health effects of mobile telephone use generally, but particularly in adolescents," the authors concluded.



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MOBILES LEADERS ARGUE BASE STATIONS ARE ALREADY PRECAUTIONARY

In the midst of a number of governments in Europe taking more precautionary approaches, two mobiles industry leaders argue in a new paper that mobile phone base stations are already inherently precautionary.

Mike Dolan, Executive Director of the Mobile Operators Association, and Jack Rowley, Director of Research and Sustainability for the GSM Association, both based in London, have co-authored a paper in the most recent issue of *Environmental Health Perspectives*.

In the paper they argue that “conservative exposure standards, technical features that minimize unnecessary exposures, ongoing research, regular review of



Mike Dolan, Executive Director
of the Mobile Operators Association

standards, and availability of consumer information make mobile communications inherently precautionary.”

The full copy of the paper can be downloaded here:

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In response to public concern and the perceived level of scientific uncertainty there are continuing calls for the application of the precautionary principle (PP) to radiofrequency exposures from mobile phones and base stations.

However, there is already a great deal of precautionary protection built into the regulation of base stations and the voluntary actions taken by the industry.

For example, base stations create exposures in public areas that are only 0.002-2% of the international safety limits and they were developed using conservative assumptions and already include

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precautionary safety factors, Dolan and Rowley say.

In addition, the telecommunications industry incorporates technical features that minimise unnecessary exposures, provides support for health research, provides up-to-date information to consumers and the general public, and ensures that base station sitings are done with transparency and an effective communication program, they say.

Furthermore, in legal cases relating to mobile phone base station siting in Australia, New Zealand and the UK, the courts have decided that in the absence of credible

evidence of risk, compliance with existing exposure guidelines is an appropriate cautionary approach, they say.

“We argue strongly that application of the PP [precautionary principle] to mobile communications is not justified because the threshold of scientific plausibility (the COMEST term) has not been crossed and there is no convincing theoretical basis that a hazard is likely to be established in the future,” Dolan and Rowley say.

In addition, there is evidence that adopting precautionary measures may increase, rather than decrease, public concern, they say.



Jack Rowley, Director of Research and Sustainability for the GSM Association

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FRENCH ANTENNA REMOVAL BASED ON FEAR NOT SCIENCE, SAYS MEDICAL ACADEMY

Two recent high-profile French court rulings ordering mobile phone carriers to remove antennas because of fears regarding the potential health risks posed by network infrastructure have drawn fierce criticism from the nation's top medical association.

France's National Academy of Medicine attacked the court decisions, saying the order to remove the antennas as a precautionary measure was irresponsible and alarmist.

In separate cases in February, mobile phone carriers Bouygues Telecom and SFR were ordered by the courts to remove their network infrastructure, after losing their respective trials over the installation of antennas in different towns.

Following the controversy created by the court decisions, the Prime Minister of France, François Fillon, took an unprecedented move in



Prime Minister of France, François Fillon.

announcing roundtable discussions with the public and stakeholders on the debate of mobile phone technology and health.

A French Government statement on the roundtable discussions can be found at:

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NATIONAL ACADEMY OF MEDICINE RESPONDS

In response, the National Academy of Medicine issued a statement in March criticising the court decisions. The Academy said mobile phone antenna radio frequency emissions are 100 to 100,000 times lower than the emissions from mobile phone handsets, which are all well within international safety standard limits. The statement said there are no known health risks from the emissions of mobile phones or their base stations.

“There is no known mechanism by which electromagnetic fields in this energy range and frequency could have a negative effect on health. WHO [World Health Organisation] and SCENIHR [European Commission's Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified

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Health Risks] were unanimous on the absence of risk of these antennas,” the Academy stated.

The National Academy of Medicine’s statement can be found at:

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THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT’S ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

In May, the French Government released a report at the conclusion of the six-week roundtable stakeholder discussions. The report identified 10 themes for further discussion, which included measures to provide more information to the public about the deployment of mobile phone network infrastructure. These included a web portal and information campaign, a publicly

available database of infrastructure sites and a precautionary approach to the deployment of network infrastructure.

The report also confirmed the safety of mobile phone base stations, concluding that research has found no health risk from exposure to the low powered emissions.

“Over the past fifteen years, numerous studies have examined the potential link between RF transmitters and cancer. These studies have not provided evidence linking the increased risk of cancer and exposure to radio frequency transmitters. Similarly, the long-term studies in animals have not shown increased risk of cancer by exposure to radiofrequency electromagnetic fields, even at levels much higher than those produced by the relay antennas and

mobile networks,” the roundtable report stated.

The roundtable report produced by the French government can be found at:

[WEB LINK >](#)

Mobile Carriers Forum (MCF) Program Manager Matt Evans welcomed the results of the French roundtable report, saying the report highlights the importance of the MCF’s own initiatives.

“The Australian mobile phone industry implemented the ACIF Deployment Code and created the National Site Archive online database to provide more information to the public. The French roundtable’s themes are a complement to the success of our own initiatives which have been implemented for many years now,” he said.

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GERMAN PRESS NOW LESS SENSATIONAL ON MOBILES AND HEALTH



Press reports about mobile phones and health have become less sensational a German study has found. Most newspapers now acknowledge that adverse health effects have yet to be found and now provide more detailed information on the topic.

The study conducted by the Technical University of Dresden, the University of Heidelberg, and the Max Delbrück Center for Molecular Medicine in Berlin looked at newspaper coverage of mobile phones and health in Germany between 2002 and 2007 – 17 regional and national daily newspapers were analysed along with weekly journals.

The abstract can be found at:

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“Since most people do not make use of scientific databases, the print media are key actors in informing the public about scientific developments concerning potential health risks from mobile telecommunication,” the authors said.

“However, in recent years, a slight shift in the foci of reporting can be observed. As these results show, newspapers increasingly acknowledge the existence of scientific uncertainty and provide more detailed information on the topic,” the authors concluded.

The number of articles per year did not reveal any significant trend whereas, in comparison, the number of scientific papers on mobile phones and health published over this period almost doubled, according to data from

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GERMAN PRESS NOW LESS SENSATIONAL ON MOBILES AND HEALTH

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the German Research Center for Bioelectromagnetic Interaction (FEMU).

Keywords such as, danger, risk, effect, or burden; and limit or precautionary value tended to decline over the period studied.

“Media coverage shows a decreasing tendency to report on the relation between mobile phones and unspecified adverse effects from 2002 to 2006,” the authors reported.

The words, electromagnetic; mobile or cell phone radiation; fear; electrosmog; and electrosensitivity remained constant.

“The words ‘fear’ and ‘electrosmog,’ triggering implicit associations with electromagnetic fields, are both used in a quarter of all articles,” the authors reported.

However, the proportion of articles mentioning brain tumors or cancer exhibited a marked increase from 4% in 2002 to 17% in 2006. These were associated with reports about the INTERPHONE study.

“Whereas the majority of newspaper articles in 2002 present the issue of mobile phones and health as a topic of official debate and only a minority (5%) report that mobile phones do not pose a health risk, this share had changed considerably by 2006.

Overall, media coverage notably changed towards better informing and educating of the public. In 2006, the general picture drawn in German newspapers is predominantly one of mobile phones being safe from potential health risks from their radio wave emissions.

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RATS FAIL TO SHOW SENILITY EFFECTS FROM MOBILE PHONES

A Japanese study has failed to reproduce an earlier study which was widely reported to show that mobile phones could cause teenagers to go senile in the prime of their lives.

In 2003, a study found low levels of microwaves cause proteins to leak across the blood-brain barrier of young rats. Led by Swedish researcher Professor Leif Salford, the study indicated mobile phone radiation could possibly penetrate the blood-brain barrier of humans, damaging brain neurons.

He also claimed that the results from 12 to 26-week-old rats, which have a comparable developmental age to teenagers, can be applied to the 'growing brains' of teenagers. Professor Salford said that it was possible the neurons would repair themselves in time. But, he said, neurons that would normally not become 'senile' until people reached their 60s may now do so when they were in their 30s.



The study received worldwide media attention resulting in fears that teenagers might be at risk of becoming senile in their 30s.

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The Japanese study published in the July edition of *Radiation Research* attempted to replicate Salford's research. The study looked at whether albumin leakage and dark neurons were present in rat brains 14 and 50 days after a single two-hour exposure to mobile phone emissions as reported by Professor Salford in 2003.

However, no albumin leakage was observed in the exposed groups of rats. The authors concluded their study failed to confirm the results of Salford *et al.*

The abstract can be found at:

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The well-established scientific process of replication and validation are required before the results can be accurately assessed within the whole body of scientific evidence.

The importance of replication was also demonstrated in Australia by the results of the research at Adelaide's Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science (IMVS). The IMVS research could not reproduce the results of a 1997 pilot study that found digital mobile phone emissions doubled the cancer rate in genetically engineered cancer prone mice.

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FDA UPDATES CELL PHONES AND HEALTH WEBSITE

The United States Government agency responsible for protecting public health has updated its website on health issues related to mobile phone use, saying there is no danger posed to the public from using mobile phones.



The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) updated its website in June stating the weight of scientific evidence has not linked mobile phones with any health problems.

“Cell phones emit low levels of radiofrequency energy (RF). Over the past 15 years, scientists have conducted hundreds of studies looking at the biological effects of the radiofrequency energy emitted by cell phones. While some researchers have reported biological changes associated with RF energy, these studies have failed to be replicated. The majority of studies published have failed to show an association between exposure to radiofrequency from a cell phone and health problems,” the FDA state.

The FDA also state scientific evidence does not show a danger to any users of cell phones from RF exposure, including children and teenagers.

The FDA’s updated statement can be found at:

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NSW GOV’T REPORT SAYS MOBILE PHONES HELP CHILDREN GROW

A report released in April by the NSW Commission for Children and Young People has found mobile phone use by children has a positive effect on their lives by providing support for kids to become more independent.



The Commission found mobile phones help kids organise their daily lives, support their relationships including family relationships when parents are separated, provide entertainment, and help them feel safer.

“Mobile phones may play a significant and positive role in helping children

and young people and their families adapt and find new opportunities to grow. We have found that mobiles aren’t simply a convenience for worried parents to exert control over their children, nor have they been captured by contrary teenagers to control parents through manipulative deception. Instead, mobiles are a good thing, part of a communication revolution, helping both children and young people and their parents meet the changing circumstances of modern life,” the Commission said.

“Most importantly, mobiles support the well-being of children and young people by supporting their agency or power to take independent action, increasing their capacity to act independently in their everyday life. Children and young people have previously told us that this agency was fundamental to their well-being.”

The report, titled ‘Mobile Me – Kids speak out about mobile phones’ can be found at:

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GLOBAL PROJECT TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO MOBILES FOR DISABLED AND ELDERLY

A new global information service to help people with disabilities or functional limitations find suitable mobile phones was launched at Parliament House in Canberra in June. In response to requests from disability groups for improved information regarding accessibility, the mobile phone industry developed a worldwide information service for reporting the accessibility features of mobile phones. Called GARI (the Global Accessibility Reporting Initiative), the project includes a new website – www.mobileaccessibility.info – which will allow consumers to search for a mobile



Michael Milligan (MMF), Gunela Astbrink (TEDICORE), Communications Minister "Stephen Conroy and Chris Althaus (AMTA) at the GARI launch.

phone model that suits their specific accessibility requirements. The Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, Senator Stephen Conroy, said the new project was "a landmark announcement for the sector and for members of our community who currently struggle to access the many benefits of mobile communications". Senator Conroy's speech at the launch of GARI can be found at:

[WEB LINK](#)

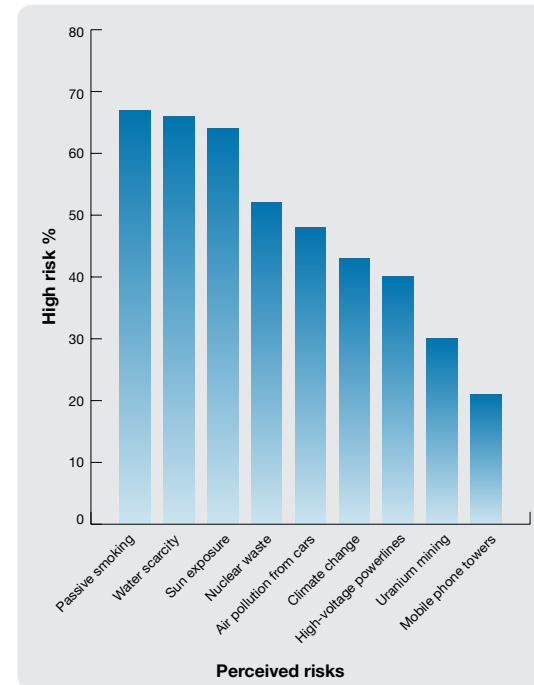
A podcast about GARI and telecommunication issues for people with a disability can be found at:

[WEB LINK](#)

MOBILE PHONE TOWERS THE LEAST OF OUR CONCERNS

Mobile phone towers and the re-use of treated wastewater are the least concerning risks of a group of twenty-three health hazards, according to a survey released in March by the West Australian Government.

The 2009 WA Health Department Survey of more than 1700 people on



The percentage of respondents who rated a perceived risk as high.

perceived environmental health risks found only 21 percent of respondents thought mobile phone towers were a high risk.

Twenty-seven percent of all respondents said mobile phone towers posed a low risk. Men were less worried than women, with only

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18 percent of male respondents highly concerned about mobile phone towers. The young were the least concerned of all, with only eight percent of 18-29 year-olds highly concerned about mobile phone towers.

Passive smoking (67%), a lack of water (66%) and sun exposure (64%) top the list of environmental risk factors which most worry West Australians.

The survey also found people without a tertiary education, those over 55 and those in poor health were most likely to fear environmental hazards. Those under the age of 30 were less concerned than older people by high voltage power lines, uranium mining, genetically modified foods and mobile phone towers.

The 2009 WA Health Department Survey of Perceived Environmental Health Risks can be found at:

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TOP TIPS FOR READING SCIENCE STORIES

A world leading independent organisation dedicated to cancer research has produced a guide with advice to help the public make sense of

science stories in the media.

Cancer Research UK published the guide on their website, providing tips on how to evaluate the merits of research studies and science stories in the media.

The organisation also has advice on how to make sense of mixed cancer messages in the media.

The Cancer Research UK tips for reading science stories can be found at:

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FEWER BRITONS CONCERNED BY MOBILE PHONE MASTS

The UK Mobile Operators Association (MOA) has released the results of a recent survey investigating the attitudes of the British public towards mobile phone towers, finding concern has dropped.

The survey found concern has dropped to levels seen in March 2007, with fewer than one in ten concerned about alleged health risks from mobile phones and/or masts. On prompting,



this increases to roughly one in five. Concern peaked in March 2005, but since then prompted and unprompted concern combined have reached the lowest recorded levels.

The survey also found there was a decrease in the proportion who would object to a mast in their neighbourhood (from 39% in August 2005 to 31% in August 2008). At the same time those who would have no reaction has shown an increase (from 27% in August 2005 to 35% in August 2008).

The results of the MOA's survey can be found at:

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MOBILE PHONE DISTRACTION IN THE SKY PROVES FATAL

Pilot distraction caused by a conversation on a mobile phone was a key reason for a fatal crop-dusting light plane crash in New Zealand's Bay of Plenty, an investigation has found.



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Andrew Wilde, 38, was killed when his Fletcher crop-spraying plane crashed into trees in a small gully about 600m from his crop-dusting target area near Opotiki on November 10, 2007.

The New Zealand Transport Accident Investigation Commission released a report on the accident, concluding the crash was caused by pilot distraction.

Records showed that on the day of the accident, Mr Wilde made 14 mobile phone calls lasting a total of more than 90 minutes and had received and sent text messages.

The investigators found the pilot had been warned previously about his use of a mobile phone while flying, and that this accident was not the pilot's first incidence of mobile phone distraction while flying causing an accident.

The Commission's report on the accident can be found at:

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AMTA's mobile phone and driving safety tips can be found at:

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SAR EXPLAINED ON EMF EXPLAINED

EMF Explained Series

A new fact sheet describing the Specific Absorption Rate (SAR) has been published on the EMF Explained Series website.

SAR is a measure of the rate at which energy is absorbed by the body when exposed to a radio frequency (RF) electromagnetic field. The measurement of SAR is used for compliance of mobile phones, walkie talkies, or when working very close to transmitting antennas. SAR is expressed in units of watts per kilogram (W/kg).

The EMF Explained Series was developed by AMTA in conjunction with the GSM Association (GSMA) and Mobile Manufacturers Forum (MMF).

SAR explained can be found at:

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A video showing how SAR measurements are made is also available:

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NEW OPERA STAGE SHOW ABOUT ELECTROSENSITIVITY

A British band named *Beggars Opera* is working on a new show called 'Electrosensitive', which the band says will help raise awareness about the condition.



The theme of the rock opera revolves around a musician who discovers she lives under a mobile phone mast in her block of flats, and subsequently becomes electrosensitive.

Ricky Gardiner, a guitarist in *Beggars Opera*, claims to have suffered from electromagnetic hypersensitivity (EHS) since 1995.

However, the World Health Organisation (WHO) released a fact sheet in 2005 dismissing electrosensitivity as a medical diagnosis, saying EHS has no clear diagnostic criteria and there is no scientific basis to link EHS symptoms to EMF exposure.

The WHO fact sheet can be found at:

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More information about *Beggars Opera* can be found at:

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