

Tunisia

Report on EMF Activities to 16th International Advisory Committee, 16-17 May 2011

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Evolution of the legislative and statutory framework

▪ **June 24th, 2010:** formalization, by ministerial decree, of the national technical committee for studying health impacts of non ionizing radiation at the ANCSEP. This committee is in charge of:

- ❖ Following and sitting up scientific publications.
- ❖ Promoting the legislation to prevent potential risks.
- ❖ Promoting communication and information to professionals and citizens.
- ❖ Claims management (claims from citizens about BTS and other EMF sources).
- ❖ Answering public inquiries related to EMF health exposure.
- ❖ Set up the procedures concerning BTS installation and define the role of each stakeholder.

Research activities related to EMF

- Few research activities related to EMF exposure and health risks are conducted in Tunisia until now. The principal research activities are conducted by the Laboratoire de Physiologie Intégrée, Faculté des Sciences de Bizerte. These researches are, specially, interested on static magnetic fields, ELF and 900 MHz frequency and their effects on biological functions of rats. More than 30 articles are published since 2000.
- The technical committee is using the scientific researches provided by WHO and other national and international agencies and bodies.
- ANCSEP is conducting bibliographic studies and publishing technical opinions and advises to the departments upon request or without referral to take measures to prevent potential health risks.

Public concerns

Base stations are still the main focus of public concern in Tunisia. The number of mobile phone base stations has been increased to about 5000 after the permission of the 3rd mobile phone

operator on 2009 and the development of the 3G mobile services by the 3 operators. Tunisians complain that BTS threaten their safety, their security and the urban esthetic, and cause noises. Then, they applied to avoid BTS installation on the urban areas. These concerns are due to global mediation of this issue and are enhanced by **the scientific uncertainties on potential risks**. The number of claims of citizens about BTS installation has increased since 2004 and has attained about 300 claims in 2010. Already, some cases are addressed to courts.

Policies and measures regarding the exposure to EMF and EMF risk management

With about 5000 BTS installed in all the Tunisian territory, the national agency of frequencies (ANF) is in charge of controlling the levels of the electric field strength on the BTS sites all around the country. Since 2006, 365 measures have been done. They are below the ICNIRP exposure limits. From 2006 to 2008, the measures (165 measures) covered only GSM 900 MHz and DCS 1800 MHz. Since 2009, the protocol of the national agency of frequencies of France (2004 version) is used to conduct the measures. The parameter measured is the total average of electric field strength. The measure in one site covered all radiofrequencies between 30 MHz and 3 GHz (HF, FM, PMR, TV, Radar, GSM 900, DCS, DECT, UMTS). The total average of electric field strength is then compared with the lowest level of the frequency detected in site (fixed on the ICNIRP guidelines, 1998). 73 % of the measures are below 1 V/m and 88 % are below 2 V/m. The maximum level measured is 8.2 V/m and 2 % of measures exceeded 5 V/m.

Current activities

- A project of decree fixing exposure limits to EMF from 0 to 300 GHz based on ICNIRP guidelines is in phase of publication.
- Execution of the communication program to professionals and citizens with stakeholders and the consumer organization (workshops, press articles, flyers, posters, etc.).
- A project of carte-radio is in conception and will be introduced nearly at the web page of ANF (www.anf.tn) to inform citizens about their exposure to radiofrequencies in all the national territory.