Tunisia

Report on EMF Activities
18th International Advisory Committee on EMF
06-07 June 2013

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Evolution of the legislative and statutory framework

▪ A project of ministerial circular of the ministry of health is under adoption to coordinate the interventions between all health stakeholders in the field of BTS installations and claims treatment (ANCSEP, Regional Departments, and Central Department).
▪ The others projects of legislations fixing exposure limits to EMF from 0 to 300 GHz and SAR of telecommunication terminals are under final discussions between all stakeholders before their publication.

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". The last publication was:

"Static Magnetic Field Induced Hypovitaminosis D in Rat."
2013. Aïda L, Frédéric L, Soumaya G, Philippe H, Mohsen S, Hafedh A.

▪ The technical committee studying health impacts of RNI at ANCSEP is using the scientific researches provided by national and international agencies and bodies. It is conducting bibliographic studies and publishing technical opinions and advises to the departments 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 being exploited by the 3 operators has been increased to about 5800 and it will increase in the future after the permission of the development of the 3G mobile services by the three operators actually. Tunisians complain that BTS threat essentially their health and their safety. Then, they request 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 150 claims in 2012. Already, some cases are addressed to courts.
▪ In august 2012, a student engineer at the National Agronomic Institute in Tunisia (specialty: sanitary engineer) realized a one month training at ANCSEP to analyze the origin of claims, their objects and the principle causes of claiming. The report cites that:

- ✓ 95% of claims evoked that BTS cause impact on health such as headache, insomnia, cancer, potential effects on pregnant women, children, patients and people with pacemakers etc...
- ✓ 37% of claims mentioned the need to adopt the Precautionary Principle.
- ✓ 32% of claims suggest the presence of sensitive institutions such as hospitals, kindergartens, schools, etc. near BTS.

- ✓ 20% of claims suggest that BTS are installed on very dense urban areas.
- ✓ 18% of claims evoke the problem of noise produced by BTS.
- ✓ Other causes are evoked such as esthetics, security and the lack of neighbor's information.

▪ A web site realized by the National Agency of Frequencies (ANF) present measures taken at the national territory of Tunisia to inform citizens about their exposure to radiofrequencies (www.cartoradio.tn).
▪ Execution of the communication program to professionals and citizens with stakeholders and the consumer organization (workshops, press articles, etc.). (www.ancsep.rns.tn)
▪ ANCSEP had organized three interregional seminars (3, 4 and 5 of December 2012) for professionals of the communes, the regional departments of health, of education, of children protection, of civil protection, and NGO to promote their knowledge in this issue. Also, ANCSEP is even invited to participate on many scientific and information workshops and seminars to present the actual scientific knowledge about RF and health, such as the seminar organized by the Tunisian Association of Telecommunications Technologies (A3T) on June, 20th 2012.

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

With about 5800 BTS installed in all the Tunisian territory, the ANF is in charge of controlling the levels of the electric field strength on the BTS sites all around the country. 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, DCS, DECT, and UMTS). The total average of electric field strength is then compared with the lowest level of the frequency detected in site (28 V/m). On 2012, ANF had measured 98 sites. 44 % of the measures are below 2 V/m and 80 % are below 6 V/m. The maximum level measured is 11.2 V/m. It is noted that the annual average of measures increased from 0.82 V/m on 2009 to 3.22 V/m on 2012. This is due to the augmentation of the number of BTS, the deployment of the 3G services by the 3 operators, and the development of the number of FM radio Channels.