

## **THAILAND**

### **Report on EMF National Activities 13th International Advisory Committee Meeting Berlin, Germany 19-20 June 2008**

#### **1. General research activities**

In 2005, the Department of Medical Sciences of the Thai Ministry of Public Health, in collaboration with Health Canada, carried out measurements of ground-level RF fields near base stations in Bangkok and surrounding areas using an instrumentation system developed by and made available from Health Canada. The system is referred to as "GLOBE" which stands for Geographically Located Observations of Base-Station Emissions. The system measures and records the total power density at a location from all frequency bands used by cellular/digital service providers, simultaneously recording the location using a global positioning system (GPS) receiver. The GLOBE system is battery-powered and designed to be operated from the roof of a car. Ten series of measurements were made in the urban and suburban areas of Bangkok. Measured data were compared with the limits specified in Health Canada's RF exposure guidelines for the general public (Safety Code 6). The maximum level of exposure measured for any of the locations in this study was found to be at least 1,000 times lower than the maximum allowable level. Based on the measurement results, it can be safely concluded that RF fields from the base stations surveyed in Bangkok should not be considered a health hazard.

For proper risk assessment, in 2006–2007, additional measurements of ground-level RF fields near base stations in other parts of Thailand were carried out by the Department of Medical Sciences with financial support from the WHO Country Office for Thailand. The conclusion of the location measurements undertaken is that ground-level emissions level at all locations measured fall significantly below the exposure limit specified in Safety Code 6 for any of the locations. Based on the measurement results, it can be safely concluded that RF fields at ground-level emissions from the base stations surveyed in Thailand should not be considered a health hazard. However, at present, there are over 24,500 base stations nationwide and the number is increasing significantly with the introduction of third generation technology. Therefore, it is essential that site inspections and enforcement be carried out so as to ensure the safety of the public.

## **THAILAND**

### **2. New policies and legislations**

2.1 Notification of the National Telecommunications Commission on Safety Standards and Guidelines to Protect Human Health from Exposure to RF Electromagnetic Fields from Telecommunication Equipment.

2.2 Notification of the National Telecommunications Commission on Regulation and Basic Restrictions to Protect Human Health from Exposure to RF Electromagnetic Fields from Telecommunication Equipment.

These notifications have been issued under the Organization to Assign Radio Frequency and to Regulate Broadcasting and Telecommunication Services Act, B.E. 2543 (2000), and the Telecommunications Business Act, B.E. 2544 (2001), together with the Radiocommunications Act, B.E. 2498 (1955). The laws have come into force since 5 May 2007.

2.3 Traffic law on the use of mobile communication devices while driving: a ban on the use of cell phones without hands-free devices while driving or a ban on cell phone driving, according to the Land Traffic Act (No. 8), B.E. 2551 (2008). The law bans the use of mobile phones while driving unless assisted by a hands-free device. The law has been enforced since May 8, 2008 and will entail a 400-1000 baht fine for any violation.

### **3. Areas of public concern**

- 3.1 Health issues regarding mobile phones and cell sites
- 3.2 Health issues regarding electric power lines
- 3.3 Communication base stations on the roof and nearby residential areas
- 3.4 Fears from residents living near the mobile phone base stations and Sub-power station

### **4. Public information activities**

- 4.1 Dialogue sessions are often held to allow the concerned residents to have a better understanding on RF radiation
- 4.2 Publication of pamphlets and booklets to provide general information on EMF exposure to the general public, local authorities, etc.