

WHO International EMF Project

International Advisory Committee meeting

New Zealand country report 2023

Policies and legislation on EMF exposures

Legislation and Standards

The Resource Management Act, through which exposures to many sources of RF fields, and ELF fields from national power grid infrastructure, are regulated, is due to be replaced soon. It is expected that the existing regulations governing exposures to EMFs will be carried through into the new legislation.

Policies

The Interagency Committee on the Health Effects of Non-Ionising Fields met twice during the year to provide the New Zealand Director General of Health with scientific and technical advice on any potential health effects from exposures to ELF and RF fields. The results from recent research considered by the Committee have not given cause for concern or to change existing recommendations.

An updated *Report to Ministers* has been published and is available on the Manatū Hauora - Ministry of Health website*. The report updates the 2018 version, drawing on more recent research and research reviews, and includes summaries of those reviews. It also adds discussions of recent technologies, such as 5G, and includes a new appendix that discusses how research is reviewed to draw conclusions on health effects. Overall it concludes that current policies and recommendations on exposures to ELF and RF fields are still valid.

Public concerns and information activities

The Manatū Hauora Ministry of Health website is updated regularly to add new topics of interest and add links to new information of relevance (such as national and international reviews of recent research). The full range of information on NIR is most easily accessed at www.health.govt.nz/our-work/radiation-safety/non-ionising-radiation.

The Royal Society Te Apārangi has published a Fact Sheet *Radiation: Harnessing it safely to benefit our daily lives*†. It discusses the risks and benefits from the use of, and exposure to, ionising and non-ionising radiation and how knowledge allows the safe use of radiation while mitigating the possible risks to health and wellbeing.

There have been no major public concerns over the past year.

* www.health.govt.nz/publication/interagency-committee-health-effects-non-ionising-fields-report-ministers-2022

† www.royalsociety.org.nz/what-we-do/our-expert-advice/all-expert-advice-papers/radiation/

Research activities

Researchers at the University of Auckland have published an updated paper examining glioma trends in New Zealand and whether these are correlated with increased use of mobile phones*. They conclude that there is no relationship.

Te Whatu Ora – Health New Zealand

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* Elwood et al. Trends in brain cancers (glioma) in New Zealand from 1995 to 2020, with reference to mobile phone use. Cancer Epidemiology 2022;80:102234