

WHO International EMF Project

International Advisory Committee meeting

New Zealand country report 2017

Policies and legislation on EMF exposures

Legislation and Standards

The updated *Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Telecommunication Facilities) Regulations 2016* came into force at the beginning of 2017*. These Regulations continue to mandate use of NZS 2772.1:1999 *Radiofrequency Fields Part 1: Maximum exposure levels – 3 kHz to 300 GHz* (whose limits are based on the ICNIRP 1998 Guidelines), and now cite the updated exposure assessment Standard AS/NZS 2772.2:2016: *Radiofrequency Fields Part 2: Principles and Methods of Computation – 3 kHz to 300 GHz*. A draft User Guide is now available.

An evaluation of the effectiveness of the 2008 National Policy Statement on Electricity Transmission (NPSET) and 2009 Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Electricity Transmission Activities) Regulations (NESETA) is still in progress. The NPSET requires that any local planning rules covering the electricity transmission network (national grid) must be based on the ICNIRP 1998 Guidelines, and recommendations from the WHO 2007 review, or revisions thereof. The NESETA covers specified maintenance activities on transmission lines forming part of the national grid, and require that EMF exposures after the maintenance comply with the 1998 ICNIRP Guidelines.

Several local authorities have included provision for transmission line corridors in their planning rules, as required under the NPSET. While the primary motivation for this requirement is to avoid reverse sensitivity effects and facilitate maintenance of the lines, it also has the effect of helping reduce EMF exposures as recommended by the WHO 2007 review.

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 and no change to existing recommendations.

The Committee has noted, however, the rise of wearable devices incorporating RF transmitters, devices incorporating machine to machine communication and the increasing use of wireless power transfer, all of which highlight the need for keeping abreast of changing technology and the assessment of exposures it produces.

An update of the Committee's *Report to Ministers* is being prepared.

Public concerns and information activities

The 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

* Information on the Regulations is available at <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/rma/legislative-tools/national-environmental-standards/national-environmental-standards-0>

full range of information on NIR is most easily accessed at www.health.govt.nz/our-work/radiation-safety/non-ionising-radiation.

Based on media reports, queries and correspondence there have been no major public concerns over the past year.

Research activities

Researchers at the Massey University Centre for Public Health Research (CPHR) have contributed to further papers based on the INTEROCC data. CPHR researchers have submitted their data for the New Zealand part of the MOBI-Kids study.

The TNE Research Group at the Massey University School of Engineering and Advanced Technology expect to complete their research project analysing exposures from 5G telecommunications deployment later this year.

New Zealand Ministry of Health
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