

Singapore

Report on EMF Activities

9th International Advisory Committee Meeting on EMF

June 2004

1. New policies and legislation regarding EMF exposure

At present, Singapore does not license or control the devices and users of static fields, ELF & RF.

However, under the present Radiation Protection Act in Singapore, a draft on Radiation Protection (Radio-Frequency Radiation) Regulations, in line with ICNIRP guidelines, has been prepared.

It is targeted to be in operation by year 2005.

2. Research activities related to EMF health

There is no information on the research activities carried out in Singapore.

3. Data on exposure levels to general public or workers for static fields, ELF & RF

Workers with radar stations, radar facilities, communication facilities, base stations / antennas etc are not licensed under the Act.

However, their exposure levels are kept within the recommendation made by ICNIRP guidelines.

4. Public concern and national responses

The main concern from the public is “Communication Base Stations on the Roof”.

In Singapore, the telecommunication service providers would have to first seek approval and obtained licence from IDA (Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore) before they installed any base station.

Their site selection, maximum power output and frequency would be checked before a licence from IDA was issued.

At present, there are about 4,300 units of outdoor base stations and 1,400 indoor base stations in Singapore.

In some instances, after obtaining licences from IDA, the service providers would still face resistance from residents as they are able to obtain reports, through web-sites, friends and other sources, on adverse effects that may have caused by RF radiation from communication base stations.

Some people would even request the service provider to purchase insurance policy to ensure that no one could become a cancer victim because of RF radiation from the base stations.

The residents would raise their concerns to the building management or the property owners, regarding their worries about the amount of RF radiation that they are receiving from the base stations.

Upon request, the Centre for Radiation Protection, CRP would conduct site inspections and carry out RF radiation measurements on the roof, ground level and within the concerned housing units. Survey report would then be produced to the management.

Dialogue sessions are often held to allow the concerned residents to have a better understanding on the RF radiation.

The public often do not know the difference between ionising radiation and non-ionising radiation, the differences in radiation characteristics and biological effects, etc.

After thorough discussion and careful explanation on the effects of RF radiation, and the criteria on licensing control by IDA in Singapore as compare to other countries, the residents usually would accept the proposals from the service providers for installing the base stations.

The second concern from the public is the radiation from “Hand Phones”.

In Singapore, all hand-phones importers would have to get clearance and approval from IDA (Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore) before they are allowed to market their phones.

The limit on value of SAR in line with ICNIRP guidelines is used.

Other concern include fears from residents living near the “Sub-power station”, computer screen interference caused by “High Tension Room” or unknown sources nearby. Similarly, site inspections are often carried out to measure the magnetic fields to ensure the safety of the public members. ICNIRP guidelines are used for advice given to the concerned residents and workers involved.