



7 August 2020

Ref: 2020/01077

Steve J. Toneguzzo
Environment and Communities Safe from Radiation (ECSFR)
Steve@toneguzzo.com

Re: Request for Evidence through administrative access

Dear Mr Toneguzzo

Thank you for your email on the 30 June 2020 to the Chief Executive Officer of ARPANSA, Dr Carl-Magnus Larsson, regarding radio waves from mobile telecommunications sources. Dr Larsson has asked me to reply. Noting that ARPANSA has already provided you with a range of advice through our Talk to a Scientist program, I will focus on the questions you raise.

ARPANSA and other health authorities such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) assess all available evidence using a health risk-assessment approach. The basis for health advice on non-ionising radiation, including from radio waves, is therefore the whole body of evidence rather than individual peer-reviewed studies.

ARPANSA's approach is consistent with key international reviews¹ and with that taken by other health authorities. An example of this approach can be found in ARPANSA's Technical Report 164 - Review of Radiofrequency Health Effects Research – Scientific Literature 2000 – 2012. ARPANSA is fully transparent and regularly publish our advice on our website where it can be considered by those in government including the Commonwealth Department of Health.

ARPANSA's assessment and recommendations on the safety of mobile telecommunication networks extend across all age groups, where the exposure from telecommunication sources remains within the ARPANSA safety standard. We provide general information on our website on how this type of exposure can be reduced as a public service in recognition that some concern remains in the community regardless of health advice.

ARPANSA did provide various recommendations for areas of further research in **Technical Report 178 - Radiofrequency Electromagnetic Energy and Health: Research Needs** including prospective cohort studies of children and adolescents investigating exposure to radio waves. ARPANSA made these recommendations in order to build on the current body of knowledge. Continuous research is always important in order to reassure Australians.

I note that you raise several questions, including in relation to ARPANSA's expertise. Advice on health impacts determined from scientific studies conducted by health researchers is different to clinical

assessments that medical professionals perform for individuals. In the event of concern about individual symptoms, medical assistance should be sought for individual clinical assessment. As described above, the assessment of health effects is necessarily broader than individual medical cases.

ARPANSA also recently had input to the recent federal *Inquiry into 5G in Australia* (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Communications and the Arts) including through a submission which dealt with a range of these matters in more detailⁱ.

While we recognise that you still have concerns around the science and ARPANSA more broadly, we at ARPANSA take our role seriously, especially our independence from any commercial interests or biases. We continue to endeavour to respond in good faith to any new concerns if we have not previously responded.

Yours sincerely



Dr Rick Tinker
Director, Assessment & Advice Section
ARPANSA

ⁱ Public Health England's review by the Independent Advisory Group on Non-ionising Radiation titled "Health effects from radiofrequency electromagnetic fields"

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/333080/RCE-20_Health_Effects_RF_Electromagnetic_fields.pdf

The Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCENIHR)'s opinion "Potential health effects of exposure to electromagnetic fields (EMF)"

https://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/emerging/docs/scenihr_o_041.pdf

ⁱⁱ <https://www.arpansa.gov.au/news/arpansa-contributes-5g-inquiry>