



Australian Mobile
Telecommunications
Association

AMTA – ARPANSA Liaison Forum

Summary of the Meeting

Held on 28 July 2015



Australian Government
Australian Radiation Protection
and Nuclear Safety Agency

The Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of the Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association (AMTA) and the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA) met at ARPANSA's Melbourne office on Tuesday 28 July 2015.

The objectives of the AMTA-ARPANSA Liaison Forum are to provide an open, frank and transparent exchange of information and views on radiation safety and radiation protection issues especially in the area of Electromagnetic Energy (EME), with due regard to the different roles the organisations play.

ARPANSA UPDATE

ARPANSA has updated its website to improve navigation to information and advice most relevant to the community by introducing a new "For the Public" section (<http://www.arpansa.gov.au/Public>). This includes the revamp of fact sheets and introducing a "Frequently Asked Questions" section and a "Talk to a Scientist" program where members of the public can call ARPANSA within specific times and speak to a scientist.

The ARPANSA CEO met the CEO of the National Health and Medical Research Council in June 2015. Part of the discussion with the NHMRC CEO and staff focused on health research and its funding in relation to EME. AMTA would support a review of EME funding, which is provided by industry via a licence levy and administered by the NHMRC. Industry remains supportive of continued funding.

Other updates include:

- ARPANSA is relying more on international best practice and trusted international standards – working closely with bodies like the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) and the World Health Organization (WHO) to influence the development of Standards and Guidelines.
- ARPANSA is continuing to undertake measurement of EME exposures in the environment.
- New membership of ARPANSA's Radiation Health and Safety Advisory Council has been appointed this year – its involvement in EME issues so far has been on the precautionary approach.

AMTA UPDATE

The soaring demand and the rapid development of mobile phone technology have led to a need for more telecommunications infrastructure. Significant investment has been made i.e. in the 4G technologies and intensive network deployment program that includes 6000 sites (new and upgraded sites). The industry continues to work on improving accessibility of safety information for workers and the general public around mobile phone base stations; this is reflected by the launch of www.mobilesitesafety.com website last year.

Industry considers EME concerns as an important issue and supports independent research in this area. Industry is supportive of ARPANSA's presence as a non-industry authoritative body to continue providing evidence-based advice to members of the public.

Industry commented on a move in the United States by Berkeley to require retailers to distribute flyers to customers at point of sale of mobile handsets to warn of "potential risks" to health from electromagnetic energy (EME) emissions. AMTA said such information was inaccurate and misleading because all mobile phones sold in Australia were independently tested to prove they operated below Australian safety standards using internationally agreed compliance procedures.