



Community response to ARPANSA's statement of 17 February 2016 following the ABC's airing of an episode of Catalyst titled *Wi-Fried?*

Members of Stop Smart Meters Australia are very disappointed with the [response](#) of the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA) to the airing of the ABC's episode of Catalyst titled [Wi-Fried?](#)

ARPANSA's statement contains claims which are likely to mislead the public and creates an impression that does not accurately reflect scientific opinion.

The claim that "It is the assessment of ARPANSA and other national and international health authorities, including the World Health Organization (WHO), that there is no established scientific evidence that the use of mobile phones or Wi-Fi devices cause any health effects" fosters the impression that there is unanimous agreement on this point.

This simply is not true; there are other radiation protection and health authorities which consider that mobile phones and Wi-Fi do cause health effects. This diversity of opinion has not been acknowledged in ARPANSA's statement.

For example, the Russian National Committee on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection stated in *Recommendations of the Russian National Committee on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection of the necessity to regulate strictly the use of Wi-Fi in kindergartens and schools* that "Electromagnetic radiation from Wi-Fi creates an additional burden for the child brain...".ⁱ

Another example is Israel's Ministry of Health and Environment and Health Fund which stated, in a report titled *Environmental Health in Israel 2014*, that findings in Israel, as a result of their participation in the INTERPHONE research project, "clearly indicated a link between cellphone use for more than 10 years and the development of tumors in the salivary glands, particularly among people who held the telephone on the same side where the tumor developed and individuals in the highest category of exposure (heavy use in rural areas)".ⁱⁱ

The Vienna Medical Association's longstanding *Ten Medical Rules for Cell Phone Use*ⁱⁱⁱ prescribes that cell phones should not be placed in trouser pockets as the microwave radiation can interfere with male fertility. These rules also stipulate that users should keep a few metres courtesy distance from other people as the radiation is also harmful to them.

More recently, it was reported that the Vienna Medical Association called for cell-free zones, with reference made to court decisions, such as the Italian Supreme Court decision which awarded the applicant compensation for 80% of permanent disability caused by cell phone use.^{iv}

Our members are also concerned that ARPANSA's statement trivialises adoption of precautionary approaches by implying that this advice is only relevant to "people who are concerned". ARPANSA's tips, although providing a solid starting point, also fall short of the recommendations provided by some other authorities.

For instance, ARPANSA's fact sheet on [How to Reduce Exposure from Mobile Phones and Other Wireless Devices](#) states that you can reduce your exposure to RF EME by limiting the amount of power your phone uses, but does not fully explain the reasons for avoiding using your mobile phone in areas such as lifts and moving vehicles. Israel's Ministry of Health's advice provides further information; in addition to explaining that in weak reception areas the "level of radiation from the device is high" the Ministry of Health (MoH) refers to increased field strength caused by reflective boundaries, stating, "The MoH recommends not using cellphones in closed places (for example, elevators, buses, trains) due to amplified radiation in such places".^v The Vienna Medical Association has also provided longstanding, unequivocal advice on this aspect of mobile phone use in its *Ten Medical Rules for Cell Phone Use*, stating that cellular telephones should not be used in vehicles (cars, buses, trains) because the radiation there is higher. The Cyprus National Committee on Environment and Child Health is another body which considers that children, in particular, are entitled to protection from radiation from mobile phones and Wi-Fi and has used the medium of video to more powerfully deliver this message.^{vi}

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ⁱ Russian National Committee on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection, 2012, *Recommendations of the Russian National Committee on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection of the necessity to regulate strictly the use of Wi-Fi in kindergartens and schools*, Available in Appendix F, Section 22, BioInitiative 2012:
http://www.bioinitiative.org/report/wp-content/uploads/pdfs/sec22_2012_Precautoin_Action_Global_advice.pdf

ⁱⁱ Environment and Health Fund and Ministry of Health, 2014, *Environmental Health in Israel 2014*, p. 71, Available: http://www.health.gov.il/publicationsfiles/bsv_sviva2014e.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ Vienna Medical Association, *Ten Medical Rules for Cell Phone Use*, Earlier translated version, Available: http://www.buergerwelle.de/assets/files/radiating_information.pdf?cultureKey=&q=pdf/radiating_informatio_n.pdf
2013 (untranslated) version, Available: http://www.aekwien.at/media/Plakat_Handy.pdf

^{iv} Electromagnetic Health blog, 2012, *Vienna Medical Association Calls for Cell Phone Free Zones in Public Spaces*, Available: <http://electromagnetichealth.org/electromagnetic-health-blog/vma-cell-free-zone/>

^v Environment and Health Fund and Ministry of Health, 2014, *Environmental Health in Israel 2014*, pp. 69-70, Available: http://www.health.gov.il/publicationsfiles/bsv_sviva2014e.pdf

^{vi} National Committee on Environment and Child Health, 2015, Advice, *Protect the Children from the Radiation of Mobile Phones and Wi-Fi*, Video (translation provided by Environmental Health Trust), Available: <http://stopsmartmeters.com.au/2016/01/15/cyprus-government-campaigns-to-protect-children-from-wireless-technology/>
Original available: <http://www.cyprus-child-environment.org/easyconsole.cfm/id/344>