

Dear Mrs Benson

Unfortunately, Justin has left us, but I am more than happy to try and clear up the confusion.

The "Interim Guidelines on Limits of Exposure to 50/60Hz Electromagnetic Fields" that you mentioned, were endorsed by our Council and published on 1 November 1989. This publication was subsequently rescinded by Council on 14 March 2002, has not been replaced by NHMRC and is no longer available.

About ten years ago, ARPANSA took over all responsibility for radiation safety - responsibility for producing any guidelines or advice in this area now rests with them.

Please feel free to phone me if you need further clarification.

Regards

Anna Manzoney  
NHMRC Communications Manager  
Ph: 02 6289 9137  
Mobile: 0422 008 512  
Website: [www.nhmrc.gov.au](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au)

" geoff benson" <platypusses@bigpond.com> on 08/02/2003 01:08:27

To: Anna Manzoney/NHMRC/Health@Health\_gov\_au  
cc:

Subject: Re: Response to questions

Attention : Anna Manzoney,

Dear Ms Manzoney

When my attempts to send the following email failed I phoned and was informed Justin Kerr-Stevens was no longer there. I was further informed to forward correspondence to your email, I would appreciate your assistance to help me further understand the matter addressed below.

Thank you,

Margaret Benson.

----- Original Message -----

From: " geoff benson" <platypusses@bigpond.com>  
To: <Justin.Kerr-Stevens@health.gov.au>  
Sent: Thursday, February 06, 2003 11:46 AM

Subject: Re: Response to questions

> Dear Justin,  
> I thank you for your earlier replies to my questions but I find myself still confused as to the current situation. ARPANSA's information is that the  
> NHMRC has issued 'Interim guidelines on limits of exposure to 50/60Hz electric and magnetic fields'.The recommended magnetic field exposure limit  
> for members of the public (24 hour exposure) is 0.1 millitesla (1,000mg-  
> milligauss). It is my understanding that this comes from the National Health  
> and Medical Research Council; Radiation Health Series No 30: Interim  
> Guidelines on Limits of Exposure to 50/60 Hz Electric and Magnetic Fields  
> (1989).  
> Do I understand from your response attached below that the above quoted  
> interim guidelines no longer apply and in fact haven't since 1998?  
> Could you perhaps resolve my confusion and expand on the above so that I  
may  
> completely understand the current situation in Australia in relation to  
> Australian Exposure Guidelines to these fields?.  
> Please respond as soon as you can,  
> thanking you for your assistance,  
> yours sincerely,  
>  
> Margaret Benson.  
>  
> ----- Original Message -----  
> From: <Justin.Kerr-Stevens@health.gov.au>  
> To: <platypusses@bigpond.com>  
> Sent: Thursday, September 05, 2002 3:12 PM  
> Subject: Response to questions  
>  
>  
> > Dear Ms. Benson,  
> >  
> > I apologise for the delay in responding to your questions.  
> >  
> > Before I respond in detail, you should be aware that until 1998 the NHMR  
C  
> was  
> > responsible for developing guidelines and providing advice on health  
> issues  
> > relating to radiation. This is why you still see a reference to "NHMRC  
> > Guidelines" on this subject on the ARPANSA web site.  
> >  
> > However, in late 1998 the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear

> Safety  
> > Agency (ARPANSA), was set up as a Federal Government agency charged with  
> > responsibility of protecting the health and safety of people and the  
> > environment, from the harmful effects of ionising and non-ionising  
> radiation.  
> > (In a similar manner that NHMRC is now no longer responsible for food  
> standards  
> > - a separate agency has been set up for this as well).  
> >  
> > ARPANSA is developing a Radiation Protection Series of publications  
> through a  
> > review of the Radiation Health Series, formerly published by NHMRC and  
now  
> the  
> > responsibility of ARPANSA, and the Codes published under the  
Environment  
> > Protection (Nuclear Codes) Act 1978 ("the Nuclear Codes"), which  
has now  
> been  
> > repealed. Information on the process for developing the Radiation  
> Protection  
> > Series review process can be found on the ARPANSA website  
> ([www.arpansa.gov.au](http://www.arpansa.gov.au)).  
> > Each publication also contains contact details for the  
Commonwealth,  
State  
> and  
> > Territory Radiation Protection Authorities that were correct at the  
time  
> of  
> > printing of the particular publication, but may have been amended  
since.  
> > With this as background, I can now respond to your questions:  
> >  
> > 1. When were the ARPANSA guidelines adopted by NHMRC?  
> >  
> > NHMRC does not adopt ARPANSA guidelines - ARPANSA are now  
responsible  
for  
> > issuing their own guidelines under their own authority.  
> >  
> > 2. Were any other guidelines considered by the NHMRC?  
> >  
> > See preamble above. For the NHMRC Radiation Health Series  
developed  
> before  
> > ARPANSA came into being, NHMRC followed a detailed process of  
negotiation  
> and  
> > study, such as the active engagement of specialist working parties,  
public  
> > consultations and peer review.  
> >

> > 3. Have the guidelines accepted by NHMRC been updated since?  
> >  
> > I would suggest approaching ARPANSA with this query as they are  
now the  
> > organisation responsible for Radiation safety.  
> >  
> > Kind Regards  
> >  
> >  
> > Justin Kerr-Stevens  
> > Public Affairs Officer  
> > Communications Unit  
> > NHMRC  
> > (p) 02 6289 9176  
> > (f) 02 6289 9197  
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