

**The purpose of this leaflet is to tell you about a Register that has been established for those people whose work brings them in close proximity to transmitting antennas on telecommunication, broadcasting masts and other similar structures. If, having read it, you would like more information, then please feel free to contact a member of the Register Team.**

### **What is the National Register of RF Workers?**

In 1999 the Minister of Public Health asked the Radiation Protection Division of the Health protection Agency (formerly the National Radiological Protection Board [NRPB]) to set up an independent expert group to examine the possible effects on health of mobile phone telecommunication technologies. The group under the chairmanship of Sir William Stewart published its report in May 2000. One of the main conclusions was that there was no evidence to date to suggest that exposures to Radiofrequency (RF) radiation below the guidelines of the NRPB and the International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) cause adverse health effects.

Nevertheless the report recommended the establishment of a register of occupationally exposed workers to facilitate studies into cancer incidence, mortality and other potential harmful effects. This would help determine whether such workers have any higher incidence than would normally be expected in the general population.

As a result the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) formed a working group to discuss how the recommendations should be implemented, consisting of representatives from across the whole industrial sector. This group agreed to the establishment of a register of RF workers with a potential for exposure to radio-frequency radiation, confined to people whose work brings them in close proximity to transmitting antennas on telecommunication and broadcasting masts and other similar structures. The information is maintained in a centralised database called The National Register of RF Workers. A new body known as the Steering Group consisting of representatives from across the industry including Broadcasters, the HSE and contractors, has been created to monitor the database and future research projects.

### **What data will the Register need?**

The information that will be held for each worker on the Register consists of:

- ❑ Name
- ❑ Date of birth
- ❑ Gender
- ❑ Home address or first three characters of the postcode
- ❑ Job title
- ❑ Length of time in current post (years)
- ❑ Total number of years employed in jobs involving RF exposure
- ❑ Details of any known high exposure incidents experienced.

### **Who owns the data and the database?**

The data submitted to the register by a company or individual remains the property of that company or individual; as such it can be accessed at any time. The database is owned by the HSE and is currently being administered by the Institute of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (IOEM), University of Birmingham. The Steering Group, consisting of representatives from the HSE and industry decides which specific research projects will be allowed to make use of the register.

**How long will it last and what will happen to the register in the future?**

Established in 2002, the register will be recruiting participants until 2011. During this period proposals will be developed and assessed with regards possible future studies.

**Will the information be kept confidential?**

Yes. All the information provided to the IOEM is entirely confidential to the study. It will be dealt with in strictest confidence by the Research Team, held in a secure database and not passed on to any third party other than those involved in the subsequent analysis of data.

**What are the benefits of participation?**

There has been speculation that long-term RF exposure might cause adverse health effects, both occupationally and in the general public. This is the first Register of its kind anywhere in the world that aims to investigate whether there are any effects of long-term occupational RF exposure. Your involvement and help in this study is essential in order to ensure meaningful analysis of any health effects.

**What should I do now?**

If a consent form is enclosed, please complete this and return to your company contact person.

If you have not received a consent form please contact a member of the research team (details below)

**If you do have any further questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact the following:**

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