



SACTA STATEMENT ON BASE STATIONS

The SA mobile network operators and manufacturers, through the South African Cellular Telecommunications Association (“SACTA”), have undertaken substantial work in proactively providing factual, current and responsible information on health and safety issues related to cellular telecommunication, to public and government.

1. How the locations are determined?

The mobile industry determines the construction of base stations in terms of governmental regulation and international best practice. Both the provincial and local authorities within the various provinces and municipalities have stringent processes and procedures that need to be complied with before permission is granted for the construction of masts.

For example, the following legislation and regulation determines the location, size and exterior requirements when planning on a site:

- The National Environmental Management Act, No 107 of 1998
- The Environmental Conservation Act, No 73 of 1989
- National Buildings Regulation and Building Standard, Act 103 of 1977
- The Development Facilitation Act, No 67 of 1995
- Provincial Town Planning Ordinances

Prior to building a site, various permissions and consents must be obtained in terms of strict governmental processes. For example, DEAT must first issue an Environmental Record of Decision (“ROD”).

2. What kind of danger/health risk they pose, if any to plant, animal and human life?

Current research suggests that exposure to radio signals below the levels set out by international guidelines do not constitute health problems for the general population. In South Africa, electromagnetic frequency signal levels from base stations in areas of public access are generally far below the International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (“ICNIRP”) guidelines.

In respect of any new studies being conducted, kindly refer to the recent reviews issued by the UK Independent Advisory Group on Non-Ionizing Radiation and the Health Council of the Netherlands. Access thereto can be obtained by accessing the following sites:

<http://www.hpa.org.uk/radiation/>

<http://www.gr.nl/adviezen.php>

3. What types of tests are carried out and are these conclusive?

ICNIRP has, in conjunction with the World Health Organization (“WHO”), developed scientifically based safety guidelines for public and occupational exposure to radio frequency (“EMF”) fields and in light of global harmonization these recommendations have now become the de-facto world standard.

Measurements have shown that the EMF energy emitted from GSM base station antennas gives rise to public exposure levels that are considerably below the safety guidelines recommended by ICNIRP. The cellular industry follows the best practice guidelines promulgated by the WHO which includes recommended adherence to the ICNIRP safety standard. There is therefore no reason to believe that base station masts deployed in accordance with the recommended best practice guidelines could present a potential health hazard to people.

4. Are schools, churches etc being used as soft targets?

No. Claims that base stations are harmful to health are not borne out by established scientific opinion. The WHO’s position is that the electromagnetic EMF fields around base stations are typically a fraction of the safety guidelines and therefore do not constitute a health risk. This view is supported by the South African Department of Health.

The mobile operators are committed to the health and safety of all South African, regardless of age, disability or residence. The building of base stations are pertinent to ensuring that everyone has access not just to communication services but effective and efficient cellular communication services.

5. Do you have clear guidelines and have you evaluated the long term implications of exposure to radiation?

SACTA does not directly evaluate any implications of exposure to EMF, however, the GSM operators who are members of SACTA, have informed SACTA that they adhere to the ICNIRP and WHO guidelines and have developed processes, procedures and measurement methods for monitoring EMF and complying to such guidelines.

In addition, SACTA and its members on a continual basis collate media, technical and research information, specifically on the research undertaken by the European commission (presently 14 projects), on EMF emitted from mobile telecommunication equipment. To keep abreast of developments in this area, this information is analysed and distributed to interested parties, as requested or necessary.

During 2007, SACTA representatives attended and participated in the following international events, WHO/ICNIRP/EMF-NET Joint Workshop on Current Trends in Health and Safety Risk Assessment of Work-Related Exposure to EMFs and The Bioelectromagnetics Society’s 29th Annual Meeting, thereby ensuring that international

knowledge and expertise relating to EMF and the effects thereof, if any, is brought to South Africa.