

Telephone Masts & Base Stations

The Jersey Environment Forum had been asked to look at the issues of telephone masts and mobile phone base stations prior to the discussion of this topic in the States on 22nd November, 2006. The Forum considered the report by Health & Social Services dated April 2006 and the report by Stephen Smith (Assistant Director - Health Protection) to the Council of Ministers. Following a period of discussion, the Forum felt that it wished to make the following recommendations to the Environment Minister.

The forum is in agreement with the recommendations at the end of the report by Stephen Smith, whereby "The States should ensure that:

- All base stations are to be subject to the scrutiny of the planning applications process to ensure compliance with internationally agreed standards.
- There should be improved consultation by the 'network operator' with the community prior to the selection of a site for a base station.
- Emissions from base stations, must as a minimum, meet the ICNIRP guidelines for public exposure as expressed in the 'EU Council Recommendation'. However, the States should seek to ensure that 'network operators' voluntarily agree to comply with the levels lower than international guidelines.
- Measurement of the actual levels of radiation from base stations, must be undertaken following commissioning to show compliance, and be a condition of the planning permit.
- Mobile phone 'network operators' deliver, with the States of Jersey, a database of information available to the public on radio base stations.
- There is 'cross industry' agreement on the sharing of sites and masts for radio base stations, whenever possible."

In addition to these recommendations, the Forum would suggest the following:

- Measurement of the actual levels of radiation from all base stations should be undertaken not just on commissioning, but as part of a regular monitoring programme.
- All base station sites established by Jersey Telecom or any other provider prior to health issues being considered as part of the planning process, should be re-examined with health issues in mind, if this has not already been carried out.
- The Forum feels that there may be a broader issue here with regard to other sources of 'non-ionising radiation' within the Island, which may broadcast higher levels of radiation than mobile phone masts and/or base stations. These may already be well regulated, but should at least be considered in this context.

H. A. Forshaw – Chairman, Jersey Environment Forum.