



Australian Government

Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency

26 May 2016

Ref No. MC16-020582



Dear 

Thank you for your letter of 25 April 2016 to the Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care, the Hon Ken Wyatt AM MP, regarding electromagnetic energy. Due to the announcement of the federal election and the Australian Government entering caretaker mode, I am responding on behalf of the Assistant Minister.

The Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA) provides expert advice on radiation protection and nuclear safety matters to the Australian Government. In order to provide the best advice on the protection of the Australian public from the effects of radiation, ARPANSA undertakes its own research and reviews the relevant scientific research, including exposure to radiofrequency (RF) electromagnetic energy (EME) emissions from wireless devices such as Wi-Fi.

The RF EME emissions from Wi-Fi and other wireless devices used for communication are regulated by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA). The ACMA's regulatory arrangements require wireless devices to comply with the exposure limits in the ARPANSA RF Standard. The ARPANSA Standard is designed to protect people of all ages and health status against all known adverse health effects from exposure to RF EME. The ARPANSA Standard includes a requirement to minimise unnecessary or incidental exposure to RF EME.

Measurement surveys have shown that exposure to RF EME from Wi-Fi is expected to be much lower than the limit for public exposure specified in the ARPANSA Standard. Health authorities around the world, including ARPANSA and the World Health Organization have examined the scientific evidence and have concluded that there is no established scientific evidence that the low exposure to RF EME from Wi-Fi adversely affects human health including effects on the cardiovascular system.

On the basis of current scientific information, ARPANSA sees no reason why Wi-Fi should not continue to be used in hospitals and in other places. While there are no established health effects from Wi-Fi, the application of the precautionary minimisation requirement in the ARPANSA standard could see good engineering principles applied to Wi-Fi installations in order to reduce exposure.

*E-mail: info@arpansa.gov.au
Web: www.arpansa.gov.au
Freecall: 1800 022 333 (a free call from fixed phones in Australia)
ABN No: 613 211 951 55*

*PO Box 655, MIRANDA NSW 1490
Phone: +61 2 9541 8333, Fax: +61 2 9541 8314
619 Lower Plenty Road, YALLAMBIE VIC 3085
Phone: +61 3 9433 2211 Fax: +61 3 9432 1835
3-5 National Circuit, BARTON ACT 2600
Phone: 1800 022 333*

How the precautionary minimisation principle is applied in engineering installations in hospitals is a matter for the hospital or relevant department.

ARPANSA continues to review the research into the potential health effects of the RF emissions from Wi-Fi and other wireless devices in order to provide accurate and up-to-date advice to the Australian Government and the Australian people.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carl-Magnus Larsson', written in a cursive style.

Carl-Magnus Larsson

CEO of ARPANSA