

27 October 2020

D. Griffiths

By email: fyi-request-13947-43fc42f4@requests.fyi.org.nz
Ref: H202007725

Dear D. Griffiths

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 10 October 2020 to the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) for:

“1) what data or analysis has been used for the New Zealand government to decide that the roll out of 5g is safe for humans?”

2) Can this data be shared with the public?”

There has been much public interest in 5G recently and the Ministry is continuing to monitor new research on the subject. However, it is important to remember that 5G is just a new application of radio technology, and that existing research on the possible health effects of radiofrequency fields research applies equally to 5G.

The balance of research evidence suggests the radiofrequency fields produced by transmitters that comply with international guidelines do not cause adverse health effects. This includes radiofrequency fields produced by 5G. You can find links to many of the significant review papers prepared by national and international health and scientific bodies that guide the Ministry’s policy and advice on its website (www.health.govt.nz) by searching ‘research into non-ionising radiation’. This page is regularly updated.

The Ministry recommends the use of exposure limits as outlined in New Zealand Standard: NZS 2772.1:1999 Radiofrequency fields – Maximum exposure levels – 3 kHz to 300 GHz. More information about this can be found on the Ministry’s website by searching ‘exposure standards’. This Standard sets limits on exposures to radiofrequency radiation produced by all types of radio transmitters (including 5G transmitters), for both the workplace and the general public. These limits are consistent with international guidelines.

The Ministry also convenes an expert advisory committee, known as the Interagency Committee on the Health Effects of Non-Ionising Fields, to review new research. The Committee meets every six months, and should there be reasonable suspicion of health hazards, or other significant issues, it is required to bring such information to my attention as Associate Minister of Health. The Committee will continue to monitor new research as it becomes available. In addition, the Ministry

participates in a World Health Organization project to assess the health effects of electromagnetic fields.

The Ministry has recently developed a factsheet, 5G and Health, which provides information for New Zealanders about the technology that will be used by 5G, and a 5G questions and answers page. You can find this information on the following web addresses:

- <https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/environmental-health/radiation-environment/cellsites-and-5g>
- <https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/environmental-health/radiation-environment/cellsites-and-5g/5g-questions-and-answers>

I trust this information fulfils your request. Under section 28(3) of the Act you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry website.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D Woodley', written over a thin horizontal line.

Deborah Woodley
Deputy Director-General
Population Health and Prevention