

Mike Repacholi responds to Microwave News
13 November 2006 issue

Given the continuous criticism of me and WHO's EMF Project by Microwave News I feel it important to set the record straight; especially to address some of the many misrepresentations and innuendos in the 13 November issue. I do not normally bother responding to MW News because anyone that matters to me will know that most of the accusations are untrue. It is also important that all the "activists" that quote MW News religiously and without question will at least have the other side of the story before they propagate the MW News myths.

Having reached the mandatory retirement age for WHO I can choose whatever employment I feel appropriate. Since retirement I have been assisting many national authorities and continue to be asked by them for help. The fact that I provide information to industry as well is my choice. I will continue to promote the excellent work done by the EMF Project to all who want to listen.

To say that I am or was ever influenced by industry in any way is completely ludicrous...I am ONLY influenced by sound science and reasoned arguments.

It is true that I was asked to provide Connecticut Light and Power Company with my opinion on the submission of the Connecticut Department of Health. CDH proposed a "screening level" of 10 mG at the edge of the right-of-way for a new transmission line. In my personal opinion this is out of line with the weight of evidence from the science. Overall the evidence for there being a "causal" relationship between exposure to ELF magnetic fields and childhood leukaemia is weak and unconvincing, as generally agreed by ALL blue-ribbon review panels world wide.

While the "Precautionary Framework" is not yet published, the EMF Project has recommended for some time that precautionary measures should be adopted. This is especially important for ELF magnetic fields where there is evidence for an association between these fields and childhood leukaemia. Precautionary measures are recommended to take account of the consistency in the epidemiological studies, but because the science is weak and not convincing that there is a causal relationship, the precautionary measures should be at no or low cost.

Dr Valberg suggested a screening level of 100 mG at the edge of the right-of-way that he justified as a precautionary measure. My concern was that, while this would be appropriate and quite cautionary, it should not be interpreted as a public exposure limit. It has been stated many times before that the international limits are considered to be protective of all established health effects from ELF field exposure.

The draft Precautionary Framework was provided in my report merely to assist the CDH develop precautionary measures that could be justified by the science, should they so desire. The copy I provided in my report to the Connecticut Siting Commission was that given to the International Advisory Committee in June 2006 for their review. There was no indication on this draft that it could not be distributed further or cited; comments from anyone are always welcome by the EMF Project. In my report it is clearly stated at the top of the annex that the Framework is still a draft and could change.

It is quite hypocritical to accuse me of citing an unpublished draft given that MW News published the full text of an EPA draft on EMF fields some years ago in which it was clearly stated that it was NOT to be distributed further or cited.

There are many statements made by MW News that contain innuendo and misrepresentation. For example it is stated that: "Some see this as a continuation of his activities at the WHO, where Repacholi was often accused of favoring the mobile phone and electric utility industries at the expense of public health." All activities conducted by the EMF Project are based on sound science. Any conclusions and recommendations about health risk are those of a committee of experts convened for this purpose. WHO staff are ONLY the secretariat for these meetings. Thus any statements on EMF health issues can be traced the recommendations of a committee...again MW News has known of this before.

Even when WHO staff publish a scientific paper that was based on the results of an open workshop (on mobile phone base stations and wireless networks) MW News implies that this is in some way a scandalous thing. Dr Valberg was a keynote speaker at this workshop. This is compounded when Slesin states that our paper did not quote the "most disquieting result" about an increased risk of acoustic neuroma. This was not mentioned because the paper Slesin quotes is about mobile phones; that deliver 1000s of times more RF exposure than base stations.

MW News states that funds are sent to Mike Repacholi. NO funds were EVER sent to me. WHO has strict rules on funding and the EMF Project and all its staff have ALWAYS adhered to them.

The fact that the Project receives funding support from industry has been noted in the Project's Progress Reports posted on the WHO web site each year. For example see: http://www.who.int/peh-emf/publications/reports/en/progressreport2003_2004.pdf. WHO does not normally identify individual donors or the amounts they contribute. The EMF Project gives the total amount contributed each year in its financial reports. I should add that MW News has had all this information for years, but regularly produces statements claiming this is new information.

Amazingly MW News has never written anything good about the EMF Project in over 10 years. The Project is the most successful for EMF; it has and still is the umbrella for addressing EMF issues at the international level, in 10 years it has generated over \$250 million for research on possible health risks from EMF, and it has provided sound advice to national authorities since its inception.

Dr Mike Repacholi
15 November 2006