

Presentation to the Willoughby City Council on the health risks of “Smart Cities” enabled by 5G and Internet of Things (IoT) - Dr. Priyanka Bandara

Honourable Mayor and the councillors of the Willoughby City Council,

Today, I am addressing you on health risks of “Smart Cities and 5G” not only as a long-term resident of Sydney, but also as a rare Australian expert in the health effects of radiofrequency electromagnetic radiation (RF-EMR) or “wireless radiation”. I have been an invited expert speaker on this topic in Australia and overseas and I have published in peer-reviewed scientific literature.

The Australian Financial Review reported on the 7th Oct 2019 how the wireless industry is responding to increasing public protest to 5G technology: “the industry was taking some significant steps to ramp up its education initiatives mainly by engaging media, governments and local councils”. So, councillors, you are being targeted by propaganda of the wireless industry that is pushing on you 5G technology and related initiatives for building so-called “Smart Cities” with self-driving cars and internet of things (IoT) where even a humble park bench or a garbage bin becomes a wireless transmitter. In this process, large amounts of invisible RF radiation, mostly in the microwave range is added to our environment to enable wireless communications.

Unfortunately, there is a sinister side to this environmental electromagnetic pollution that the wireless industry is not telling you about. Our health regulator in this field, the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA) is also conflicted in this issue because it is partnering with the wireless industry and funded by the same – indirectly via ACMA. Even the International EMF Project at the World Health Organization receives funding by the wireless industry. Strangely, it is headed by an electrical engineer, not a medical professional. ARPANSA also cannot give you advice that you can rely on as per the disclaimers on their website and ARPANSA lacks medical expertise in this area.

I am one of the 252 experts from 43 countries who have signed the International EMF Scientist Appeal to the WHO and the UN for immediate measures to protect health and wellbeing of humans and other species from man-made electromagnetic fields- the most widespread of which is wireless RF radiation. Other Australian signatories to this expert appeal include the former long-serving Chief Medical Officer of Telstra, Dr. Bruce Hocking, Dr. Peter French who was at St. Vincent’s Hospital as the head of the immunology research unit, leading neurosurgeons Dr. Charlie Teo and Dr. Vini Khurana. These distinguished Australian professionals found in their research credible scientific evidence linking wireless radiation to cancer – in people living near wireless transmitters, in laboratory studies and as brain tumours associated with mobile phone use respectively. Their findings are hardly mentioned in the Australian media anymore. Only a few proponents of the wireless industry who are funded by it dominate our media now. Sadly, they are not even properly qualified to address this medical matter, but the unsuspecting public wouldn’t know that. None of the four individuals who formed the expert panel in assessing the health risks of wireless radiation for ARPANSA (TRS-164 Report, 2014) had formal biomedical training. How was this possible?

The Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) is the government regulator of wireless radiation levels allowed to be released to the Australian environment. How can it be an independent regulator to protect public health from this invisible environmental pollutant when it is at the same time collecting billions of dollars from telecommunication companies by selling the spectrum permitting the telcos to add the same pollutant to our environment? ACMA also controls media and we can see that even our public media channel the ABC has become an apparent industry hand in recent years. In a shocking move, the ABC retracted its flagship scientific investigation program Catalyst in 2016 in which a top public health expert Prof. Bruce Armstrong from the University of Sydney was upfront about the increased risk of brain tumours associated with mobile phone use. Prof. Armstrong who headed the Australian arm of the 13-country INTERPHONE study that found mobile phone use for 30 min/day over 10 years to significantly increase the brain tumour risk is strangely silent these days. It is also rather odd that this top Australian medically-qualified cancer epidemiology expert was not chosen by ARPANSA to analyse Australian brain tumour data. Instead, ARPANSA scientist Dr. Ken Karipidis who is a physicist turned epidemiologist, led this analysis with psychologist Professor Rodney Croft as the senior author. However, it appears to be a study aimed to deliver good news to the wireless industry. They excluded all the Australians over 59 years age from this study and declared that there is no significant increase in brain cancer rates in the Australia population. So, this study suggests that mobile phone use should be safe. However, data from other countries, including British data show that when the entire population is included, without excluding people over 59 yrs of age, there is a significant increase in the brain cancer rates. The most aggressive brain cancer, glioblastoma multiforme rate has more than doubled in England over 20 years since 1995. This effect is mostly in people over 60 years who also happen to be the long-term users of mobile and cordless phones.

What would you like to see - the inconvenient true data or the comforting distorted data?

In contrast to the wireless industry and ARPANSA which have financial conflicts of interests, independent scientists at Oceania Radiofrequency Scientific Advisory Association (ORSAA) have volunteered their time to evaluate the scientific evidence of harm from wireless technology. ORSAA has now built the world's largest categorised database of scientific studies on RF radiation that anyone can access to investigate the biological impact of wireless radiation (www.orsaa.org). Our findings are very clear – most of the studies show biological interference by wireless radiation, even at low levels of exposure. We found that ARPANSA's review of the scientific literature to be grossly flawed. Our findings were presented at the annual conference of the Australasian Radiation Protection Society in 2017 and published in their official journal. However, ARPANSA continues to ignore this evidence.

Intriguingly, ARPANSA has not employed a single suitably qualified biomedical expert to review this scientific evidence to reliably assess the health risks including cancer. Only four people, whose academic training was limited to physical sciences, epidemiology and psychology did ARPANSA's main review, TRS-164 titled "Review of Radiofrequency Health Effects Research – Scientific Literature 2000 – 2012".

I brought this lack of medical expertise in the ARPANSA review panel to the attention of the Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer Prof. Chris Baggoley in 2016 who then asked the head of ARPANSA to answer. However, my question was evaded by ARPANSA acting head at the time. Your health is dependent on this ARPANSA risk evaluation.

I leave you with just one task. Please find a single medically-trained person who can state that he/she has assessed the health risks of wireless radiation for ARPANSA and finds it to be safe.

Australia unfortunately has the world's highest new cancer diagnosis rate out of 185 countries. Doesn't this tell you that causes of cancer are not well controlled in our country?

We also have highest rates of allergic immune diseases in a global scale. The scientific evidence shows that wireless radiation can increase the risk of a range of diseases, not only cancer and immune diseases, but even mental health problems such as stress, anxiety and depression. Our health statistics are looking ominous. And there is evidence that our exposure to RF radiation is relatively higher.

Please do not let 5G to increase our exposure to this toxic environmental pollutant even more. Please act now to stop 5G in your local area like several European cities have done. We must encourage the use safe wired communication over risky wireless keeping wireless to a minimum. We need to have an intelligent discussion on this serious health matter.

Thank you.

Dr. Priyanka (Pri) Bandara

Researcher/Educator in Environmental Health

Advisory Board Member, Environmental Health Trust, USA (<http://ehtrust.org/>)

Executive Member, Oceania Radiofrequency Scientific Advisory Association (<http://www.orsaa.org/>)

Associate Editor - ACNEM Journal (<https://www.acnem.org>)

Sent from my WIRED computer using FASTER, SECURE and SAFER internet through ethernet