

UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM



APPLIED HEALTH  
RESEARCH

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF RF WORKERS



## **WHAT IS THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF RF WORKERS?**

In 1999 the Minister of Public Health asked the Radiation Protection Division of the Health protection Agency to set up an independent expert group to examine the possible effects on health of mobile phone telecommunication technologies. The group under the chairmanship of Sir William Stewart published its report in May 2000. One of the main conclusions was that there was no evidence to date to suggest that exposures to Radiofrequency (RF) radiation below International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) guidelines caused adverse health effects.

Nevertheless the report recommended the establishment of a register of occupationally exposed workers to facilitate studies into cancer incidence, mortality, and other potential harmful effects. This would help determine whether such workers have any higher incidence than would normally be expected in the general population.

The group agreed to the establishment of a register of RF workers with a potential for exposure to radio-frequency radiation, above public exposure guidelines. The information is maintained in a centralised database called The National Register of RF Workers.

The Register Steering Group, consisting of representatives from across the industry including Broadcasters, the HSE, and contractors, has been created to monitor the database and future research projects.

## **WHAT DATA WILL THE REGISTER NEED?**

The information that will be held for each worker on the Register consists of:

- Name
- Date of birth
- Gender
- Home address or first three characters of the postcode
- Job title
- Length of time in current post (years)
- Total number of years employed in jobs involving RF exposure
- Details of any known high exposure incidents experienced

## **WILL MY PARTICIPATION BE CONFIDENTIAL AND INFORMATION SECURE?**

University of Birmingham is the sponsor for this study based in the United Kingdom. We will be using information from you and your medical records in order to undertake this study and will act as the data controller for this study.

This means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. The University of Birmingham will keep identifiable information about you for five-years after the study has finished. Your rights to access, change or move your information are limited, as we need to manage your information in specific ways in order for the research to be reliable and accurate. If you withdraw from the study, we will keep the information about you that we have already obtained. To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personally-identifiable information possible.



You can find out more on how we use your information by contacting University of Birmingham's Information Compliance Manager on [legalservices@contacts.bham.ac.uk](mailto:legalservices@contacts.bham.ac.uk)

### **HOW LONG WILL IT LAST AND WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE REGISTER IN THE FUTURE?**

Established in 2002, the Register expects to continue recruiting participants until at least the end of 2020. During this period proposals will be developed and assessed with regards possible future studies.

### **WHAT IF THERE IS A PROBLEM?**

Should a problem arise or if you have any complaints about your treatment during the course of the study or harm you feel has been caused to you, this can be addressed by contacting either the researcher directly to discuss these concerns or if this is not appropriate then you are asked to contact the chief investigator, Ian Litchfield or to follow the university complaints procedure by contacting the University of Birmingham Research Governance Team on **0121 415 8011** or [researchgovernance@contacts.bham.ac.uk](mailto:researchgovernance@contacts.bham.ac.uk)

### **WHAT ARE THE RISKS AND BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION?**

There has been speculation that long-term RF exposure might cause adverse health effects, both occupationally and in the general public. This is the first Register of its kind anywhere in the world that aims to investigate whether there

are any effects of long-term occupational RF exposure. Your involvement and help in this study is essential in order to ensure meaningful analysis of any health effects. In gratitude for your time and you will be entered into an annual prize draw worth £250 presented as a gift voucher. There are no risks to your health anticipated due to this project relating to data collection only.

### **WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?**

If a consent form is enclosed, please complete this and return to your company contact person.

If you have not received a consent form please contact a member of the research team.

If you do have any further questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact the following:

**Ian Litchfield PhD, Research Fellow**

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[www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/activity/mds/projects/HaPS/IOEM/rf-register/index.aspx](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/activity/mds/projects/HaPS/IOEM/rf-register/index.aspx)

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