

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2011-2012, 30/31 May & 3 June 2011

Question: E11-011

OUTCOME 1: Population Health

TOPIC: RECLASSIFICATION OF RADIOFREQUENCY ELECTROMAGNETIC FIELDS

Written Question on Notice

Senator Xenophon asked:

WHO also emphasised the importance of ongoing studies in this area to monitor the risk and collect more information on the possible link.

- a) Is the agency aware of any studies taking place in Australia?
- b) Does the agency have any plans to undertake or support studies in Australia?

Answer:

- a) The Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency is aware of scientific studies funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and making use of funds paid by the Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association (AMTA) through a levy on mobile phone spectrum licensing fees. From information provided by the Department of Broadband Communications and the Digital Economy, ARPANSA understands that from 2000 to 2011 the NHMRC has supported ten grants, each over a number of years.
- b) ARPANSA does not directly financially support or engage in basic research in epidemiology and the biological research areas needed to investigate possible health effects of mobile phone exposure. However, through its participation in the Electromagnetic Energy Reference Group, established under the Committee on Electromagnetic Energy Public Health Issues (CEMEPHI), ARPANSA encourages research as a measure to address public health issues related to use of the radiofrequency spectrum.