

EUROPEAN COMMISSION
HEALTH AND CONSUMERS DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Public health
Director

Luxembourg,
sanco.ddg1.c.2(2014) 2423238

Ms Eileen O'Connor
Eileen@radiationresearch.org
sent by e-mail only

Subject: Reply – BioInitiative Working Group's SCENIHR letter and exhibits

Dear Ms O'Connor,

Thank you for your letter of 28 April 2014 regarding the SCENIHR draft opinion on potential Health Effects of Exposure to Electromagnetic Fields (EMF), in which you expressed your concerns questioning the independence of members of the SCENIHR and the methods used in the working group on electromagnetic fields leading to selection/exclusion of scientific papers.

After receiving your letter, I asked the Secretariat of the Scientific Committee to look into this matter thoroughly.

A full investigation was carried out by the Secretariat to clarify the working methods used by the working group and the different allegations. The Secretariat went through our records painstakingly and also asked key members in the SCENIHR and the working group on electromagnetic fields for their input on this matter.

It can be concluded from this investigation that all members of the working group had ample opportunity to express their opinion without any bias or imposition. The draft opinion on potential health effects of exposure to electromagnetic fields and in particular the conclusions were discussed at three consecutive meetings and subsequently agreed upon in writing by all members of the working group on electromagnetic fields. Thus, the draft preliminary opinion sent to the SCENIHR for approval received the full agreement by all members of the working group on electromagnetic fields.

With regard to the scientific papers, the preliminary opinion states in the Chapter 3.2. Methodology that studies included in the document are those published between 2008 and the beginning of 2013. The Secretariat could not identify any facts or information which would suggest that certain studies were deliberately excluded or disregarded in the process of elaborating the opinion.

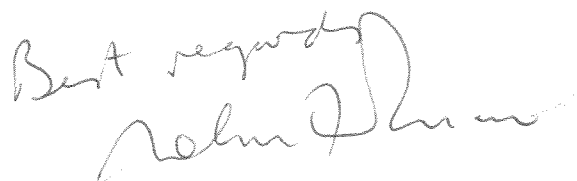
The public consultation carried out on the preliminary opinion aimed *inter alia* to collect studies which were not considered in the document. The studies by Professor Hardell

which you have brought to our attention were submitted in the framework of public consultation and therefore will be considered in the finalisation of the opinion. It should also be noted that previous studies by Professor Hardell are included and discussed in Chapter 3.5.1.1 (case-control studies) of the preliminary opinion. There is nothing therefore to support your claim that the SCENIHR considered these studies to be "unworthy", as you stated in your letter, in fact, their consideration and inclusion is proof to the contrary.

As far as an alleged conflict of interest of members of the SCENIHR and the working group on electromagnetic fields is concerned, the Secretariat concluded that, based on the available declarations of interest and further information provided by the experts, no facts were established which would put into question the independence of Committee's members or of the external experts involved in the preparation of the preliminary opinion on potential health effects of exposure to electromagnetic fields.

Thank you again for expressing your concerns about transparency and impartiality, which are indeed among the guiding principles of the independent Scientific Committees. The committees' high ethical standards attract leading scientists to volunteer their time and energy with the aim of protecting public health, and those who are selected to participate are carefully screened to ensure that they are indeed unbiased and free from conflicting interests. I assure you that we take every care to safeguard the committees' excellent reputation and work diligently and honourably for the public good.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Best regards" followed by a large, stylized signature.

John F. Ryan
Acting Director