

**Amended proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the minimum health and safety requirements regarding the exposure of workers to the risks arising from physical agents (electromagnetic fields and waves)**

**Update on Negotiations.**

**September 2003**

All,

Negotiations at the Social Questions Working Group level are now complete. I have enclosed a copy of proceedings and as you will see much has been achieved to bring the text into line with UK views, although some issues still remain unresolved. In particular;

**Health Surveillance**

Member States were unable to reach a consensus view and this will now go to COREPER (a meeting comprising senior representatives of Member States) to be resolved. The UK will continue to press strongly to retain a simple statement for a general requirement similar to that stated in the most recent proceedings.

**Static Magnetic Fields (and implications for magnetic resonance imaging (MRI))**

Static Magnetic Fields have been removed from the exposure limit values but there will still be a requirement to undertake a risk assessment at the Action levels according to Table 2.

This is because the Council feels that it is not yet possible to address the health effects resulting from occupational exposure to static magnetic fields while there are still uncertainties in existing knowledge. An updated review of the scientific evidence has not yet been completed but the International Commission for Non Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) are currently undertaking work to address these issues and developments will be monitored. This could eventually lead to amending the Directive.

**Future Progress**

After COREPER it will then pass to Council to secure political agreement and there is a meeting scheduled for 20 October. It will then eventually go to the European Parliament for its Second Reading.

We will provide further updates when appropriate.